Multicultural Children:

Their Cultural Identities as Communicated by Their Parents

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ABSTRACT

Parents from different cultural backgrounds may often lack information on helping their multicultural children to develop healthy cultural identities. The views and strategies of twenty parents regarding the cultural identities communicated to their children are presented in this interview-based case-study in the greater Tokyo area of Japan. Seventeen respondents are non-Japanese with children to Japanese partners; two are non-Japanese with a non-Japanese partner with a different cultural background; and one is Japanese married to a non-Japanese partner. Six respondents chose to identify their children as *Japanese*; another six chose a *Combined* identity; and eight chose a *Global* identity. Six major factors in the development of a healthy cultural identity emerged: language, visits to parents' home countries, schooling and/or peer groups, religious and/or cultural activities, names, and physical appearance.

Suggestions are made to parents of multicultural children to develop linguistic abilities, to facilitate immersion in target cultures, to develop awareness of relevant cultural activities, and to provide culturally-appropriate names. Parents are encouraged to combine different cultural aspects in different areas of their children's lives, to teach their children about their own cultures, and to remember that each child is unique. In addition, the iceberg metaphor of culture presented by Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005) has been adapted to illustrate multicultural identities. This study has confirmed the need for further qualitative and quantitative studies on the development of cultural identities in multicultural children.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Globalisation is affecting every aspect of our society, including one of the most important institutions, the family. With more international couples having families, a growing number of children are being raised with multiple cultural influences. As the mother of two multicultural children, I first became aware of this issue when my cousin-in-law (five years old at the time) innocently asked on witnessing her cousin's and my relationship develop, "When a Japanese man and a foreign woman get married, will their sons be Japanese and their daughters foreign?" (Y. Ozawa, personal communication, December 1992). This raises the question of what strategies are being used by parents to build a stable cultural identity for their children when the parents themselves are from different cultures. However, the issues involved in raising children in this situation are not widely discussed in current literature.

Statement of the Problem

Recently, increased attention has been given to the identity of biracial, or multiracial, people (Root, 1992). This interest is supported by demographical evidence of a rapid increase in the numbers of multiracial people, along with an awareness of the need for more theory and research in this area (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995). Indeed, the growth in numbers of multiracial people amongst minority groups is becoming evident in certain parts of the world, such as in the United States where projections show minorities comprising more than half of the workforce in 2007 (Mindell, 1998). In other words, the number of people in various minority groups combined will form a new majority. Of these minorities, a growing number are identifying as belonging to more than one race (Root). This highlights the importance of understanding how multicultural identities are formed and of

having the foresight to study the multicultural children who will play a major role in our future society.

The modern global economy is a catalyst for this increase in the number of children born to parents of different cultural backgrounds (Anderson, 1999). Luke and Luke (1998) conclude that one of the key sites where identity is formed is in the family. However, parents of multicultural children have little anecdotal advice on raising children with multicultural identities. It is therefore crucial that we study multicultural families in order to understand how multicultural children's identities are formed. This leads us to this study's two research questions: ***What cultural identities are parents encouraging their multicultural children to have?*** and ***What strategies are being used by parents to build stable cultural identities for their children?***

It should be noted that this study assumes that *race* does not equal *culture*. It accepts the general consensus that although racial background can influence culture, it does not determine it. Race refers to the physical aspects of a person, which is controlled by DNA; culture refers to the social aspects of a person, which is influenced by people. Concepts of race and culture vary around the world. While some Europeans may avoid issues of race (due to memories of Hitler's regime); some American literature talks about biracial children (as the many racial groups in the United States share a common American culture). In Asia, and particularly in Japan where this study is based, race and culture are almost interchangeable. This study is concerned with culture and not race. However, where other writers have referred to race or ethnicity, these terms are used to avoid misrepresentation.

Definition of Terms

Before we can discuss the topic of the cultural identities of multicultural children, we first need to define the terms *cultural identity* and *multicultural*. *Cultural identity* can be broken down into *culture* and *identity*. Many definitions of *culture* are abstract, using such words as *values* and *artefacts*. In addition, the word *culture* has a variety of meanings, ranging from art forms to a *culture* grown in a science laboratory. To avoid confusion, a specific definition is required for this report. A behavioural definition is most appropriate, as this is a study of the practice of parenting. After much searching for the exact definition that I require for this report, I developed the following definition: ***Culture is the complex combination of beliefs (including religion, attitudes, and values), activities (including daily lifestyles and rituals), and ways of communicating (including ways of thinking, a linguistic system, symbols, and non-verbal activities) shared by a particular group of people.*** This definition is designed to include particular words, such as *complex combination* (as culture is comprised of numerous aspects), *beliefs* (as these can be culture-specific), *activities* (as culture is evident in activities such as, eating, socialising, and religious activities), *ways of communicating* (as language and other forms of communication reveal much about a particular culture), and *shared by a particular group of people* (although an individual has a unique combination of cultures, making that person unique, each culture is shared with a group of people).

Kanno (2003) defines *identity as* "our sense of who we are and our relationship to the world" (p. 3). While our sense of identity may come from our relationship to the world, our sense of cultural identity comes from our relationship to and more precisely our

belonging to, certain cultural groups. Using the above definitions of *culture* and *identity*, my definition of *cultural identity* is: **our sense of who we are, based on the complex combination of beliefs (including religion, attitudes, and values), activities (including daily lifestyles and rituals), and ways of communicating (including ways of thinking, a linguistic system, symbols, and non-verbal activities) shared with a particular group of people.** This identity is shared with other members of the same group and an individual may identify with more than one group. Additionally, this identification may change over time and therefore our cultural identities may also change over time.

Most definitions of the term *multicultural* refer to society being multicultural in its attitudes, or being comprised of members from different cultural groups. However, this report requires a definition of multiculturalism within an individual. There are definitions for *biculturalism* which refer to an individual. For example, Buriel and Saenz (1980) define *bicultural* as follows: "an integration of the competencies and sensitivities associated with two cultures within a single individual" (cited in LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993, p.246). It is presumptuous to assume that all parents are monocultural (belonging to one culture) and therefore their children are bicultural (belonging to two cultures). In fact, many parents in this study claimed a cultural background of more than one culture (see Table 1 on pages 37 and 38). So, it would be inappropriate to refer to their children as being bicultural. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the term *multicultural* is used and is inclusive of the term *bicultural*.

Then, what does this term *multicultural* mean? A suitable definition of *multicultural* is obtained by replacing the words *two cultures* with *more than one culture* in

Buriel and Saenz's definition above. Further, Williams' (1992) idea of simultaneous loyalty to more than one culture could be added, to illustrate the idea of the sense of belonging to those groups. Therefore, being *multicultural* is: ***an integration of the competencies and sensitivities associated with, and simultaneous loyalty to, more than one culture within a single individual.*** As the children of the parents interviewed in this study have parents with different cultural identities, they have multicultural influences within their closest realms- their families. Therefore, the term *multicultural* is used to describe these children, although it is appropriate in each case to varying degrees.

Overview

This chapter introduced the topic of the identities of multicultural children and defined related terminology. The following chapter (Chapter II: Literature Review) examines the theories and real-life examples of multicultural identity provided by literature over a variety of disciplines. At the end of the chapter, I identify where this study fits amongst its multi-disciplinary predecessors. Chapter III: Methodology describes the way respondents were obtained and interviewed, including a description of the questionnaire format. This is followed by Chapter IV: Results, which includes an introduction of the respondents (including their photographs), an analysis of the identities they have chosen for their children, and a comprehensive presentation of the ways they are encouraging those identities. Finally, Chapter V: Discussion explains the significance of the results, in relation to both literature and society. The research questions are answered and recommendations are made for further research. Additionally, a list of references, the questionnaire, information sheet and consent form used for the interviews, and photos and identifiers of the respondents are appended to this report for easy reference.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter reviews multidisciplinary and international literature on identity theories including cultural and personal identities. It goes on to discuss the assignation of cultural identities to children within multicultural families. Further, the part language plays in the formation of these multicultural identities is examined. Finally, a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses in this literature reveals the parameters of this study. Due to the diverse nature of multicultural identity research, which embraces many fields, notably business, psychology, linguistics, education, and sociology, this literature review is interdisciplinary, with an intercultural communication focus.

Identity Theories

How we define ourselves and our place in society is a complicated task and consequently a number of theories have been developed. Identity is defined by difference (Woodwood, 1997) and we are often defined by what we are not, rather than what we are, particularly in the case of minorities (JanMohamed, 1995). Furthermore, identities are formed by our parents' unified perception of us (Piskacek & Golub, 1973) through family activities such as language, food and holiday celebrations (Cuellar, Hams, & Jasso, 1980). Identities are also moulded through the process of communicating with others (Collier, 1998; Erikson, 1968; Holliday, Hyde, & Kullman, 2004) and are dependent on others' acceptance of them (Erikson; Greer, 2005). In addition, our identities change over time and according to different situations and roles (Stephan, 1992).

Identity development is further affected by the complex nature of culture. Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005) illustrate the different levels of culture with their iceberg

metaphor (see Figure 1 below). The surface-level culture, or popular culture, is the part of a culture which is easily identifiable and distinguishes it from other cultures. Below this is intermediate-level culture which consists of symbols, meanings, and norms. The next level is deep-level culture which is made up of traditions, beliefs, and values. The deepest layer of the iceberg contains universal human needs which are shared by all human beings.

Figure 1: Ting-Toomey and Chung's Iceberg Metaphor

Surface–Level Culture:
Popular Culture

Intermediate–Level Culture:
Symbols, Meanings, and Norms

Deep-Level Culture:
Traditions, Beliefs, and Values

Universal Human Needs
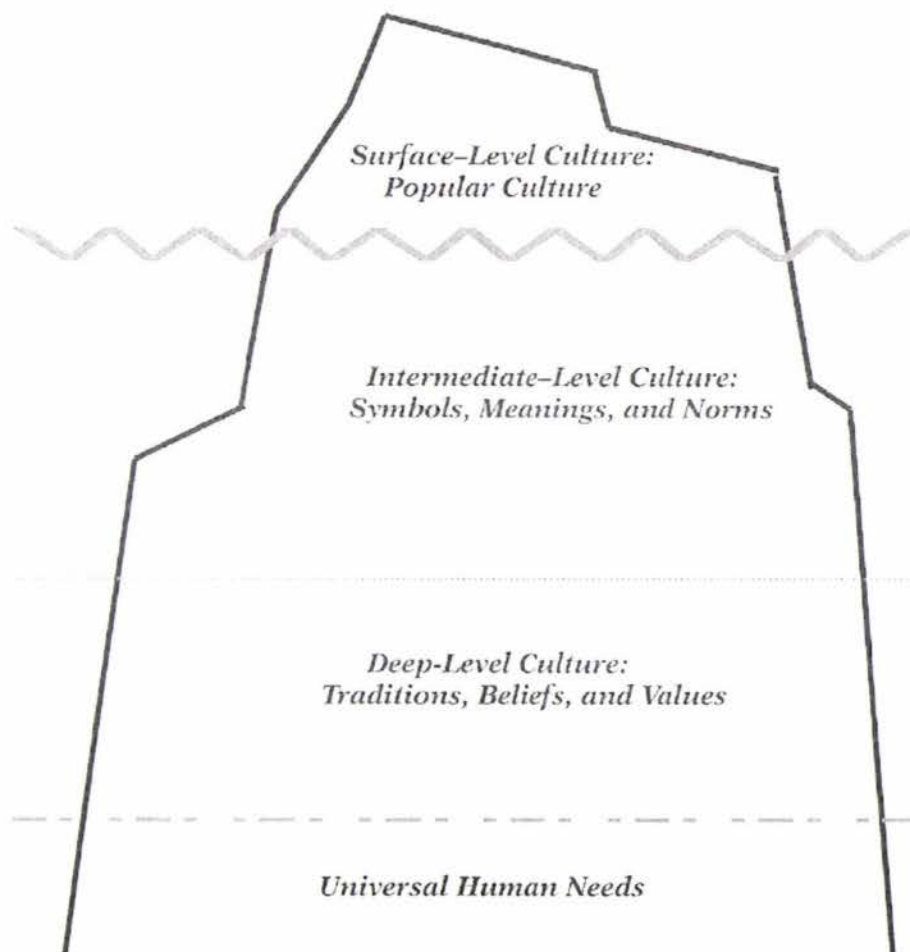
(sourced from Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005, p. 28)

Ting-Toomey and Chung's (2005) definition of culture determines that the intermediate-level and deep-level aspects[1] of a particular culture are shared by individuals to "varying degrees" (p. 28). This means that an individual's cultural identity is not only multi-layered and changeable with a variety of influences, but also unique to that individual. We play a major part in the development of our own unique identities (Kovel, 1991). Holliday et al. (2004) liken this combination of individual choice and outside influences to a card game. Players are dealt a hand of ethnicity, gender, and other cards and choose how to play them. This card metaphor is also used by Luke and Luke (1998) who point out that cards can also be played by other people against us through discriminating by class, gender, or otherwise.

Other writers have created models or identified stages to clarify the complexities of cultural identity development. The first model of biracial identity, the Marginal Person Model, was introduced by Stonequist as early as 1937. In this model, bicultural people associate with both cultures but belong to neither. In 1977, Lacan explained phases which a child passes through in their identity development. He describes an *Imaginary* phase when the child is not aware of itself being separate from the mother. The child's identity formation begins in the *Mirror* stage (as does the need for language), when the child develops a sense of self reflected by the other. This desire to unify with the other (the mother) continues throughout life. The *Oedipal* stage suppresses this desire into the unconscious as the child enters the law of the father. It is here that difference is introduced (e.g. male and female). Cultural differences between parents would also be introduced at this point.

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[1] These aspects are: symbols, meanings, norms, traditions, beliefs, and values.

In addition to psychological models of identity development, social models also exist. Society's influence is emphasized in the five stages of biracial identity development introduced by Poston (1990). The *Personal Identity* stage is when a child is so young that their sense of self is unrelated to ethnic grouping. However, they are pushed to choose an ethnic group during the *Choice of Group Categorisation* stage. Factors that influence this choice are the status of the group, parental influences, language and cultural knowledge, and physical appearance. They then feel confused and guilty about choosing an identity which is not fully expressive of all their cultural influences in the *Enmeshment/Denial* stage. This is followed by an *Appreciation* stage when they learn to appreciate their multiple identities, and finally the *Integration* stage when they experience wholeness.

A further multicultural identity model, which uses common life stages, was designed by Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995). They relate stages in their model to stages in the life cycle. *Preschool* is when racial awareness emerges. *Entry to school* introduces the use of labels. *Preadolescence* brings an awareness of group membership based on physical appearance, language, culture and other factors. *Adolescence* is the most challenging stage when there is peer pressure to choose one racial group over another. An immersion in one culture (and sometimes rejecting other's expectations and accepting bicultural heritage) occurs in the *College-Young Adulthood* stage. In *Adulthood* this develops into an understanding of, and effective functioning in different situations and communities. So far, several models of multicultural identity development have been outlined. In contrast, another model uses a circular framework, within a particular culture.

How an individual functions in a community is illustrated by Du Gay, Hall, Janes, MacKay, and Negus (1997) in their Circuit of Culture model. Their model describes how identities are produced, consumed, regulated, and represented within a culture but it does not allow for individuals to belong in two or more cultural groups. However, it has taken until the new millennium for a model to illustrate the wholeness of a multicultural person. Ironically, this alternative model uses an ancient Taoist symbol, which is illustrated in Figure 2 below. Greer (2005) introduces the yin yang symbol to demonstrate the fluidity of the combination of more than one culture within an individual. These cultures are "separate and flexible, yet interlock to create a unified whole" (p. 7) and the curves suggest a fluidity which allows the influence of one culture to flow into another.

Figure 2: Greer's fluid notion of multi-ethnic identity
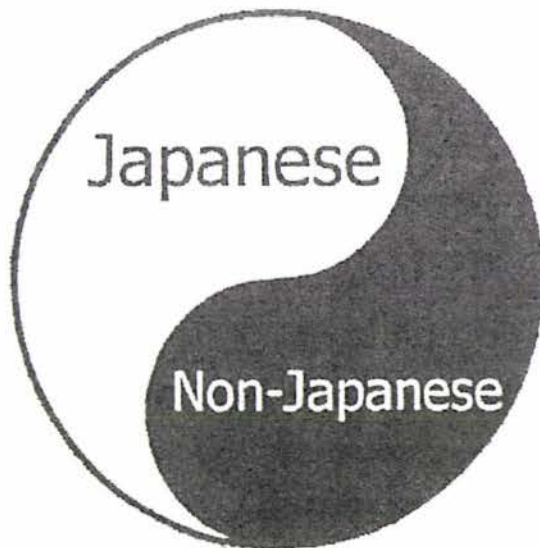
(Sourced from Greer, 2005, p. 7)

The development of this unified whole is "a complicated and important process in the life of any individual whose parents are from different ethnic groups" (Poston, 1990, p. 155). Portes (1996) suggests that this is not an easy task and Bammer (1994), Crohn (1995), New (1999), Sebring (1985), Ting-Toomey and Chung (2005), and Wardle (1987) all urge parents to support children with their identity development. Crohn and Sebring recommend emphasising the positive aspects of each parent's ethnic group(s). Ting-Toomey and Chung state the importance of a secure environment in the home. Additionally, Jacobs (1992) and Sebring suggest parents of multicultural children assist their children in forming a healthy self-concept by providing a biracial label. The suggestions above all indicate the important role parents play in the formation of their children's cultural identities. The following section moves towards multicultural identities in action through both empirical studies and personal accounts. It includes issues such as the assignment of cultural identity by parents and how it feels to be a multicultural person.

Multicultural Children

Multicultural children are growing in number, meaning more parents have the task of creating a healthy self-concept for children with a complex cultural identity. In the U.S., the number of babies born to parents of different races has increased 26 times more than babies born to parents of the same race, irrespective of what that race might be (Smolowe, 1993). This has been attributed to an increase in travel, international migration, and greater acceptance of interracial unions (Tseng, 2003). Furthermore, with United States Census data from the year 2000 revealing 1.3 million racially mixed marriages in the United States (Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005), the number of multicultural children is likely to increase. Likewise, in Japan, the number of multiethnic Japanese is increasing (Debito, 2006) and it

is estimated that one in thirty Japanese marriages involved a non-Japanese partner (Lee, 1998). It is a commonly-held belief, both inside and outside of Japan, that Japan is a homogeneous country (Murphy-Shigematsu, 1993); whereas in reality minority groups constitute approximately five percent of the population (De Vos, Wetherall, & Stearman, 1983). Murphy-Shigematsu provides examples of how these six million people are often ignored in political statements, perpetuating the myth that there is only one racial and cultural group in Japan. He urges the adoption of inclusive terms of identity commonly used in other countries (in the case of Japan, these might be American Japanese or Korean Japanese) and the recognition of minorities' membership in Japanese society.

Murphy-Shigematsu is not the only writer who recognises that a multicultural identity is a political business. Soto (2002) identifies the inevitability of an individual's official choice of cultural identity being used for power plays in politics. Similarly, Ramirez (1996) notes that, in the United States, there will be fewer scholarships available for *Blacks*, if more *Blacks* identify as *Biracial*. Further, Xie and Goyette (1997) argue the importance of parents' decisions regarding the racial identities of their children as the identities they designate will determine how those children will identify themselves as adults. Interview data of ten young adults in Bowles (1993) study supports this claim as it shows that the young adults' perceptions of their race are the same as their parents viewed them. Therefore, the cultural identities parents choose for their multicultural children today, will affect the size of various ethnic populations in the future.

Parents have options when choosing cultural identities for their children. According to Ladner (1984), parents choose between three options: to say their child is human above

all else and colour is irrelevant, to teach their child minority survival skills or to teach their child an interracial identity. Notice that identifying with the majority was not an option in Ladner's study. It is, however, one of the four options provided by Crohn (1995): to identify with the majority cultural group, to identify with the minority cultural group, to identify with both groups, or to identify with neither[2]. Kittaka (1997) found that some Japanese mothers in America thought their children were Americans; some considered their children to be Japanese due to their looks; while others thought their children had a bicultural identity. Meanwhile, the American mothers in Japan in Kittaka's study pointed out that some of their children desperately wanted to be recognised as Japanese and not be called a foreigner; while others were happy to be different.

Dangers of not including the cultural identities of both parents are mentioned by several writers. Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995) advise that belonging to only one of their parents' cultural groups obstructs the child from developing their own cultural identity. Bowles (1993) claims that a child will not only be unable to develop his or her own identity, but will also feel empty and alienated. The parent may also feel alienated; one mother in Kittaka's (1997) study expressed her fears of not having anything in common with her daughter if she grows up to be Japanese. A mother in New's (1999) study expressed her belief that a monocultural upbringing would result in her child ignoring the heritage of one parent and the child's right to grow as they choose. Ramirez (1996) expresses how it feels when cultural heritage is denied. "I felt the frustration, anger, and confusion of someone whose true identity remains unknown, ignored, or disparaged... I no longer live 'between worlds', I live in a multidimensional one" (p. 50).

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[2] Combinations are also possible with Crohn's four cultural identity choices.

Other writers describe the multidimensional identities of teenagers or young adults. Kamada (2005) describes the Canadian-Japanese teenage girls in her study as "Japanese, but they are more than just Japanese" (p. 36). Kanno (2003) details the changes made to individual's identities when they identify with more than one culture. Kanno documents the identity changes of Japanese teenagers who lived overseas for a period of time and then returned to Japan. Famous golfer, Tiger Woods, claims an even more diverse cultural identity (including American Indian, Black, Caucasian, Chinese, and Thai) and refuses to be classified in just one cultural group ("Black America", 1997). Although most of the attention Woods receives is due to his golfing success, all biracial individuals have to deal with positive and/or negative issues related to "specialness" (Bradshaw, 1992, p. 82).

Lee (2003) explains cultural differences between *the East* (represented by China) and *the West* (represented by the United States of America) to business people with the aim of improving business relationships between people from very different cultural backgrounds. These differences are as important as the concepts of privacy, precision or imprecision in language, and methods of decision making. How do multicultural people deal with such contradictions within their individual identities? One individual refers to himself as a chameleon, revealing different parts of his identity as deemed appropriate (Giampapa, 2001). Similarly, this concept of cultural fluidity is evident when Anderson (1999) quotes Gianni, an English-Greek bicultural boy, as saying that it depends on the situation whether he feels Greek or English. This fluidity is not easy, as Kim (2000) explains how difficult it is to navigate two cultures. "Painstakingly I learned that it wasn't possible to speak up and be silent at the same time, or think about the welfare of myself and others simultaneously, or be submissive and assertive in one breath" (p. 118).

Sometimes, people feel stuck between two cultures. For instance, Lee (2005) relates being called *jooksing* (empty bamboo) throughout childhood and feeling caught in the space between the American and Chinese cultures. Becoming a parent and wanting to pass on a strong cultural identity was the motivation behind much soul searching for Lee who eventually implemented a bicultural identity and recognised that it is the space itself which makes the bamboo useful. Conversely, avoiding the issue of racial or cultural identity altogether is another option. McBride (1996), born of a Jewish mother and Black father, praises his mother, who avoided issues of race by saying, "God is the color of water. Water doesn't have a color" (p. 51). Central to understanding cultural identities is an understanding of language. The next section considers the role language plays within multicultural identity.

Language

Language is part of culture and serves to transmit other aspects of culture from one generation to the next, including values, beliefs, and rules for social behaviour (Saville-Troike, 1981). Language is also a tool used to participate in cultural communities (Heller, 1987). Although Okita (2002) found that the choice of first language for a child was not a major influence on the ethnic identity of the child, Noguchi (2001) concludes that "lack of exposure to the minority language and social pressure to be like one's peers may lead children of mixed couples to reject the language of their foreign parent" (p. 265). Similarly, Caldas (2006) states that as parents, his wife and he moulded their children's attitudes regarding language and cultural identity in the first ten years of their lives, but

peers were the main influences during their adolescence. As young adults, they reclaimed their bilingual and bicultural identities provided by their parents during childhood.

Being bilingual, or multilingual, and having a multicultural identity may bring with it social advantages. Yamada (1999) suggests that bicultural individuals are better mentally developed than monocultural individuals. Language plays an important part in this development and Caldas (2006) lists several studies which suggest that multilingual people may have more highly developed cognitive abilities than monolinguals. Half of the world is bilingual (or multilingual) and people who criticize code switching, which is using more than one language in a conversation, tend to be monolinguals who do not understand the linguistics of speaking more than one language (Grosjean, 1992). In fact, code switching is "a highly developed linguistic skill' (Saville-Troike, 1981, p. 3). Analogies are a useful aid in understanding concepts, such as bilingualism. Two such analogies are provided below.

Grosjean (1992) provides an analogy from athletics. "The high hurdler blends two types of competencies, that of high jumping and that of sprinting. When compared individually with the sprinter or the high jumper, the hurdler meets neither level of competence, and yet when taken as a whole the hurdler is an athlete in his or her own right"... In the same way, the bicultural person "combines and blends aspects of the two cultures to produce a unique cultural configuration" (1992, p. 55). In addition, Gilmour (2005) provides another analogy by likening people who speak two languages well to people riding a two wheel bicycle and monolinguals to riding a unicycle. Indeed, it may be easier for bilinguals to go places than it is for people with only one language. Further, Williams (1992) identifies the connection to being bilingual with being bicultural. In fact,

she found that being bilingual necessitates the embracement of both cultures, and therefore being bicultural. Thus, speaking the languages of the cultures you identify with is a necessary part of being multicultural. Having addressed the issues of identity theories, multicultural children, and language, the final section evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of multicultural identity research.

Strengths and Weaknesses in the Literature

There is a strong base in literature on the role of parents in the formation of their children's cultural identities (Piskacek & Golub, 1973; Cuellar et al., 1980). The importance of parents being unified in the identities they choose for their children is highlighted by Piskacek and Golub. Further, Cuellar et al. identify factors in the formation of these identities.

Caldas (2006), Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995), Lacan (1977), and Poston (1990) are among the many writers who demonstrate the strong connection between cultural identity development and physiological and psychological stages of the human life cycle. Additionally, there is a wealth of information on the fluidity of multicultural identities thanks to writers such as Anderson (1999), Giampapa (2001), Greer (2005), and Kanno (2003). Further, the literature identifies a variety of ways multicultural people are able to identify themselves (Crohn, 1995; Kittaka, 1997; and Ladner, 1984).

An additional strength of the literature on the development of multicultural identities is the use of metaphors. For example, Holliday et al. (2004), and Luke and Luke's (1998) card game makes it easy to understand the combination of individual choice

and outside influences on our identities. Also, Ting-Toomey and Chung's (2005) iceberg shows the underlying layers of culture. There is also a wealth of information on the linguistic development of multilingual children and related mental and social benefits (Grosjean, 1992; Saville-Troike, 1981; and Yamada, 1999).

Although much literature exists in the area of bilingualism, there is little in the area of racial identity development in bicultural children (Kerwin, Ponterotto, Jackson, & Harris, 1993). What does exist is spread across disciplines (LaFrombise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), generally has a negative focus as it is about studies of problem adolescents in mental-health clinical settings (Cooney & Radina, 2000), and almost exclusively related to American-born Caucasians and African Americans (Kittaka, 1997).

Studies are required on cultural aspects other than language (Soto, 2002). There are not enough studies on the role of parents and educators in helping bicultural children develop a healthy sense of identity (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995) and on how healthy families integrate conflicting cultural attitudes (Piskacek & Golub, 1973). Such studies should be non-clinical (Cooney & Radina, 2000) and on an individual level in a variety of groups, ages, regions, and socioeconomic status (Johnson, 1992). Greer (2005) has identified Japan as one country requiring more research on growing up multicultural, due to the lack of literature currently available. Ideally, these studies should be conducted by someone who lives a multicultural lifestyle themselves, as they can "ask questions from a position of knowing" (Root, 1992, p. 188).

Researchers need to question fixed notions of identity (Greer, 2005) and overcome the reluctance of academics to have people identify with more than one culture (Wardle, 1987). The existence of multiple ethnic identities needs to be documented (Johnson, 1992), and the multidimensional identities of multicultural people need to be appreciated (Thornton, 1992).

Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995) challenge researchers to answer the question, "What is the role of parents and educators in helping biracial children develop a healthy sense of identity?" (p. 215). This research aims to answer the above question, in relation to parents. The findings, however, should be useful to parents, educators, the business world, and society in general. Parents can be made aware of ways they can influence their children's cultural identities. Others can take note of the multidimensional identities and multicultural influences of a growing population of children and adults in our increasingly internationally-mobile society (Tseng, 2003). Evidence of the need for such research lies in the fact that many respondents agreed to be interviewed in order to have the findings made available to them. They, like me, desire the sharing of knowledge regarding the identities of multicultural children, and the various ways in which those identities are formed. However, this study is not conducted on the reckless whim of a parent of multicultural children. On the contrary, it takes into consideration the suggestions of previous researchers. My responses to these suggestions follow.

Following the advice of Soto (2002), this research is non-linguistic based and focuses on cultural instead of linguistic issues. In addition, it is non-clinical, as recommended by Cooney and Radina (2000). Further, advice from Piskacek and Golub

(1973) is heeded by samples being taken from the normal, healthy, population. Indeed, this research has been carried out on an individual level (as suggested by Johnson, 1992) in a geographical area identified by Greer (2005) as requiring studies, namely Japan. It addresses the need highlighted by Johnson to examine multidimensional identities and how they are developed. Moreover, this study is about the role of parents in helping their children to develop a healthy sense of identity, which is an area of research need identified by Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995). Equally important, it has been undertaken by one such parent, as Root (1992) suggested. Likewise, Wardle's (1987) recommendation to allow for more than one culture to be given as an identity has been adhered to. Above all, it does not assume what that identity might be, as guided by Greer. Therefore, the research questions (as stated in Chapter I: Introduction) are:

Research Question 1: *What cultural identities are parents encouraging their multicultural children to have?*

Research Question 2: *What strategies are being used by parents to build stable cultural identities for their children?*

Chapter III: Methodology

It is highly unlikely that researchers will be able to obtain large representative samples of people in multicultural families due to the difficulty in recognising such families by name or other traditional methods, and their unwillingness to share personal details about their family life (Stephan, 1992). However, since I am in a multicultural family myself, I have connections to others in similar situations. I also believe that I am in a position of understanding, described by Root (1992) above, where people can trust me. Nevertheless, this position can also bring with it a bias, both in the way that interviews are carried out and in how results are interpreted. Accordingly, I took great care not to let my personal situation influence the results in any way. To illustrate this care, when asked by some of the respondents what my thoughts were on the issues discussed with them, I refused to comment, stating that I must keep an open mind and not draw my own conclusions until the research project has been completed. This chapter describes how I conducted this study.

Subject Selection and Description

I posted messages to two internet support groups to which I belong, and approached a third support group - a local group of mothers of multicultural children. I received replies from approximately twenty people and arranged convenient times and places for interviews with most of them. One respondent was too far away for us to meet so we conducted the interview by phone. In a few cases, convenient times and places could not be arranged, and so these respondents were not interviewed. A few further respondents were obtained by 'snowballing', which means that they were referred to me by other respondents.

Twenty independent interviews were obtained from the respondents described above. Nineteen interviews were conducted in face to face meetings, sometimes with children (the respondent's and/or the interviewer's) present. The other interview was conducted over the telephone, due to the distance between interviewer and respondent. The length of each interview varied greatly between respondents, due to the control given to respondents over the flow of the interview. The shortest was approximately twenty minutes and the longest approximately two hours, with many lasting approximately one hour. Although all interviews took place in Japan, only one respondent is Japanese. However, seventeen are married to (or divorced from) Japanese partners. The other two respondents, and their partners, are not Japanese, but their families were resident in Japan at the time of interview.

Instrumentation

A semi-structured questionnaire was devised, which respondents could refer to if they so desired. Seven questions were specifically devised for this study and asked verbally of the respondents (see *Questionnaire* in Appendix A). An *Information Sheet* (see Appendix B), with details about the research and contact details, was provided to respondents before any questions were asked. They were then asked to fill out a *Consent Form* (see Appendix C), asking whether they agreed to the recording of their interviews and the use of their real names and photos, among other things. If they agreed to a photo, this was taken before the interview began.

The first question, which actually was a request, asked for an introduction of the respondent and their family: *Please describe your family to me.* Important note was taken

of the cultural identities of the parents as these could influence the identities chosen for their children. Names and ages of all family members were included by those respondents who felt comfortable to do so. All provided ages for their children. The children's ages are useful background information about the experience the respondents have in parenting children in different stages of their childhood development - cultural and otherwise. The ages of parents also provided an indication of their life experiences. In summary, this question provided important background information.

The second question asked respondents what cultural identity (or identities) they are encouraging their child (or children) to have: *What cultural identity are you encouraging your child(ren) to have?* As they were not asked to choose from predetermined categories, some respondents found it difficult to put this into words. However, care was taken not to lead the respondents by providing categories in order for the answers to be authentic verbal representations of the identities they perceive their children have, or they are encouraging their children to have. The answers to this question respond to the first research question: **What cultural identities are parents encouraging their multicultural children to have?**

The third question related to possible conflicts over the identities provided above: *Are there any conflicts within yourself, your family or your community regarding this identity?* Respondents were asked if they personally had any internal conflict over their choice. They were also asked if there was disagreement within their family (including partners and extended family) or with their community. One crucial reason was to determine the validity of interviewing only one parent in each family. Another reason for this question was to provide insight into other influences on their children's identities – influences which they may not agree with.

The fourth question received the most discussion. Respondents were asked what they consider to be the most important factors in solidifying the identities provided in Question 2 above: *What do you consider to be the most important factors in solidifying this identity?* The reason for this was three-fold. Firstly, respondents provided a variety of factors involved in identity development. Secondly, they discussed the importance of these factors (often stating the most important one first). Thirdly, they described what they, personally, are doing in these areas to strengthen their children's identities. Stated broadly, these topics included: language, visits to parents' home countries, schooling and/or peer groups, religious and/or cultural activities, food, names, and physical appearance. After an initial explanation by respondents, they were probed about other factors they had not mentioned. This ensured that, not only did they speak first about those factors most relevant to them, but they also had the opportunity to comment on factors which they may not have considered. This question corresponds with the second research question: ***What strategies are being used by parents to build stable cultural identities for their children?***

The fifth question asked about labels: *Do you provide any labels for your child(ren) to tell others who they are?* Jacobs (1992) and Sebring (1985) both suggest that parents provide labels to multicultural children before society does it for them. This question was intended to discover whether or not parents are doing this, in practice. In the cases of label provision, it was also intended to reveal what those labels were.

The sixth question was philosophical, yet central to the practical task these parents have in nurturing their children's cultural identities. It asked if they thought that being truly multicultural was really possible: *Do you think that it is possible to be truly multicultural?* It also provided a definition of what being truly multicultural is, as such: *to not identify*

more with one culture over another and not feel lacking in identity. This is a question close to my own heart. It is a concern of mine, as well many parents, that our children grow up with a strong identity of their own. In my case, as well as that of other parents of multicultural children, this is complicated by the fact that my partner and I come from cultures which are contradictory in many crucial elements. Can our children adopt the cultures of both parents equally, and still have a solid identity when that identity contains contradictory elements? This question asked for insight regarding this dilemma. It successfully drew out a wealth of opinion, experience, and reassurance.

The seventh question invited further comment: *Do you have any other thoughts on this topic of your child(ren)'s identity?* This survey was intended to give parents a voice. Questions were purposefully open-ended, and this final question was to ensure that respondents not only felt that their input was valued, but that readers did not miss out on the valuable information they had to share.

At the end of the interview, respondents were thanked for their part in this research project. Most respondents requested that the results of this research be shared with them and many appeared very keen to hear as soon as possible, asking when the results would be available. Representatives of the three groups approached to obtain volunteers also requested that results be shared with their groups. A summary of the results was promised to the respondents and groups, to be available soon after the thesis has been submitted.

Data Collection Procedures

I have followed the narrative enquiry method, where "the focus is on individuals and how they live their lives" (Kanno, 2003, p.8). Rather than trying to force answers by asking limited questions, I kept my questions non-restrictive and probed respondents to expand on their answers. However, I pushed for a definite answer (even if that answer is that it is unanswerable) to the question on whether it is possible to be truly multicultural.

Interviews were recorded when the participant agreed to it (only one did not and a further one interview was not recorded as it was conducted via telephone). They were recorded for internal reliability, as suggested by LeCompte and Goetz (1982) and to avoid "an unnecessary and dangerous distraction" (McCracken, 1988, p. 41). My pilot interview made it clear to me that writing notes while interviewing was inappropriate for the following two reasons. Note-taking disrupted the flow of conversation (thereby limiting opportunities for more extensive answers). It could also appear rude, as I could not provide my full attention (or eye contact) to someone who was sharing private details of their lives and their thoughts.

The students in Kanno's (2003) study all chose to be referred to by their real names, not pseudonyms, stating that "their names are an important part of their identities" (footnote p.19). I felt that it would be doing my respondents an injustice if I did not give them the choice to use their real names. In fact, only three chose to use a pseudonym. Additionally, to allow the reader to really appreciate that these people are both real and unique individuals, I took photos of those who agreed. To my surprise, nearly all (eighteen of the 20) were agreeable to this. I suggest that this indicates that people in bicultural situations

want to be recognized as individuals. Several respondents emphasised their desire not to be forced into cultural boxes. The respondents were especially adamant about this in relation to their children.

Data Analysis

First, near-transcripts of the interviews were typed. Although care was taken to record possible quotations directly, peripheral information was summarized at times. Next, information about the respondents and their families (provided in Question 1 and Question 2) was grouped to form Table 1 (on pages 37 and 38). Responses to Question 4 about the factors which influence their children's identities were categorized and put into topical sections (namely: language, visits to parents' home countries, schooling and/or peer groups, religious and/or cultural activities, food, names, and physical appearance). Answers to Questions 3, 5, 6 and 7 were also sectioned into: labels, conflicts, multiculturalism, and other. The material from Questions 3 to 7 (which was a substantial quantity) was then summarised for each respondent and ordered into logical groupings to make it easier for the reader to digest.

Limitations of the Study

In this type of study, limitations are inevitable. As traditional scientific survey methods are not cost-effective and cultural identity is not identifiable by name or biological heritage, "information on ethnic identity of mixed-heritage individuals will almost necessarily be accumulated through small, unrepresentative samples" (Stephan, 1992, p.61). Therefore, this study is small, with twenty respondents.

Additionally, it is unrepresentative on three counts. Firstly, it is limited in the aspect of time. Owing to time and cost restraints, single interviews were conducted with each person. Therefore, it is representative of one point in time, thus represents their views at that time; views which are subject to change over time. Even so, respondents also related past experiences. Secondly, it is geographically constrained to the *Kanto* region (the area including and surrounding Tokyo). Other parts of the world, and possibly other parts of Japan, would have yielded different results. Application of results may therefore be limited, partly due to Japan's homogenous society. However, some respondents related experiences of living in other countries.

Thirdly, it is limited by the type of respondent. Only one parent (usually the mother) in each family was interviewed. In the case of many of the families interviewed, the father is rarely at home due to the Japanese work culture. This means an interview with both parents would be very difficult to obtain. However, it could be argued that, in such cases, the omitted parents are less involved in child-raising than the respondent. In all cases, it is assumed that the respondent is discussing the combined parenting of their children. Therefore, it is assumed that interviewing one parent in a multicultural family is an effective way of obtaining information about the cultural influences on the children in that family. To check this assumption, Question 3 (see Instrumentation section) acts as a check on conflicts between parental views (as well as other conflicts). In addition, although the ages of the respondents, their partners, and their children have been included as background information, there was no selection of respondents based on gender or age as this would have limited the sample size. In other words, willing volunteers were not turned away!

Chapter IV: Results

Respondent Introductions

One important reason for this research is to show people as real people by presenting an accessible and relatable narrative of multiculturalism. Literature has tended to depersonalize, particularly with multicultural people. This is also something a number of my respondents were insistent on. They want themselves, and particularly their multicultural children, to be viewed as individuals, not by a label given to them. Below are brief introductions, and in most cases, photos, of the respondents.

Damahr was raised in both the U.S.A. and Germany and is married to Makoto, from Kyushu, Japan. They have a two year old son, Rio, who they are encouraging to have a global identity.

Theodora is French with a strong West African identity. She and her half-Swedish half-Sudanese husband, Aziz, want their daughter, Aliyah, to share their French, Swedish, and African identities.
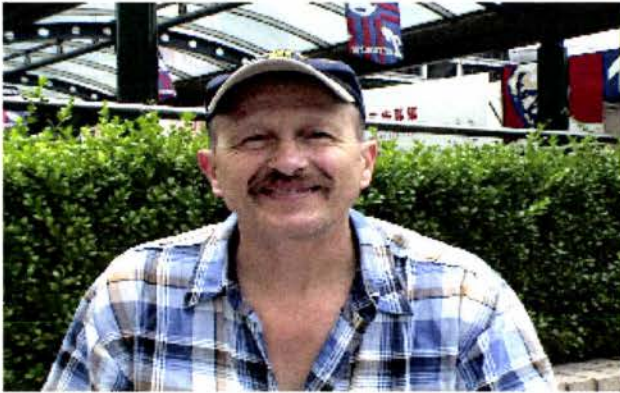
Stewart, an American, adopted his wife's two Japanese sons, Ryuto and Rui. He and Rina are encouraging their sons to have a global identity while teaching them linguistic, musical and other skills.

Louise is a New Zealander married to Yoshiharu (Japanese). They have one son, Tsuyoshi, and two daughters, Reina and Marin. Japan is their first home, followed by New Zealand, then the U.S.A.

Rachel, an American, and her Japanese husband have two sons- Tatsuyoshi and Mitsuyoshi. They are encouraging them to identify with both of their cultures.

Suzanne is a German married to Toshio, who is Japanese. Their daughters, Emi and Nina, have fluid identities, having lived in the U.S., Belgium, Germany, Japan, and Spain while growing up.

[3] Alan is a Scottish man who has lived in Japan for sixteen years. His wife is Japanese. They have a daughter and a son, who are growing up with Japanese identities.

Masayo is Japanese and married to John, an American. They have two sons, Gene and Shaun, and one daughter, Erin, who are developing Japanese identities.

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[3] * Alias. These respondents chose not to be called by their real names.

Belda is a Chinese Indonesian woman married to Yuji, a Japanese man. They have two daughters-Hinata and Nichika, who are Chinese Indonesian and Japanese.

#[4]   *Claus is a German man married to Rachel, a British woman. They have a son, who they are encouraging to identify with both of their cultures while living in Japan.*

Rebecca left the Philippines to marry Nobuyoshi, who is Japanese. They encourage their two sons, Hiroto and Masato, to have Japanese identities.

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[4] # These respondents chose not to have their photo included.

Elizabeth and her husband, Katsunori are both from small towns. She is American and he is Japanese. Their daughter, Karin, has lived in Japan, Fiji, and Nepal, and has a mixed identity.

Renee is American and her husband, Motoyasu, is Japanese. Establishing a literacy centre is one way they are encouraging their daughter, Suzanne, to identify with both of their cultures.

Sheila, who is British, and her Japanese ex-husband have one son, Kaz(u), and two daughters, Misha and Natasha. They are developing an international identity grounded in the cultures of their parents.

Marie is an American woman married to a Japanese man, Yoshiaki. They want their infant son, Nobuaki, to identify with both of their cultures.

*   Maria is Hungarian; her husband, Yasuhiro, is Japanese. They have two sons, Ryu and Joe, and a daughter, Reika. They want their children to have a base in Japanese culture.

Makayla is Bulgarian and has a Japanese husband. They have a daughter, Mina, and a son, Tomoya, who they encourage to have unique and individual identities.

Cynthia is African-American and married to Kouji, who is Japanese. Their daughter, Aira, was raised mainly in the U.S.; while their son, Seiji, is growing up in Japan. They are encouraging unique identities.

Jodie is an Australian married to Shigehiro, who is Japanese. They have five daughters: Kahori, Pipi, Satori, Hyouri, and Kiki, and one son, Riku, who have Japanese identities.

* # Natasha was raised in Australia and her husband was raised in Japan. Both have mixed heritage and are encouraging a world identity for their daughter and unborn son.

Demographical Analysis

Table 1 (on pages 37 and 38) shows the ages and cultural identities provided by each respondent of both parents and all children in each family. The main cultural influences of parents during their own formative years are given as well as the main cultural identity they are using to influence their children during their formative years. Respondents are listed in the order they were interviewed. One participant, Claus, did not provide age details for himself and his wife.

Whereas *Japanese* refers to a common Japanese cultural influence, this identity is expanded in some cases to *Kyushu Japanese*[5], *Kansai Japanese* or *Inaka* (small-town) *Japanese* when there appears to be a strong cultural influence (a dialect being one example) of that area of Japan. Similarly, *Chinese Indonesian* refers to an Indonesian with Chinese cultural influences, and *Afro Swedish* refers to a Swedish person with African influences. The word "and" signifies identification with two or more cultures, as in *American* and *German*, as opposed to one identity being dominant over the other.

Six of the twenty respondents chose an identity for their children to reflect the combined identities of their parents. A further six chose a Japanese identity, reflecting the dominance of the culture they live in. The remaining eight stated they were encouraging a global identity for their children, which does not depend on who their parents are or where they live. Many respondents did not want to draw a line to determine that this is what their child is, and this is what they are not.

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[5] A large number of parents in this study are from Kyushu, which is an area commonly believed to uphold traditional values of a dominant male and submissive female. Although, there is no indication in the results that this is a significant influence on the cultural identity choices made by parents, it should be noted as the representation is disproportionate to the Japanese population.

Table 1: Ages and Cultural Identities of the Parents and Children in this Study

Name	*Age of Father*	*Father's Identity*	*Age of Mother*	*Mother's Identity*	*Child (ren)'s Gender: Age(s)*	*Child (ren)'s Identity (ies)*
Damahr	30yrs	Kyushu Japanese	35yrs	American and German	M: 2yrs	Global
Theodora	28yrs	Afro Swedish	28yrs	Afro French	F: 1yr	French, African and Swedish
Stewart	52yrs	American	36yrs	Japanese	M: 7yrs M: 4yrs	Global
Louise	47yrs	Inaka Japanese	37yrs	New Zealand	M: 11yrs F: 8yrs F: 5yrs	Japanese
Rachel	39yrs	Japanese	37yrs	American	M: 6yrs M: 2yrs	American and Japanese
Suzanne	51yrs	Japanese	46yrs	German	F: 19yrs F: 17yrs	Fluid
Alan	41yrs	Scottish	37yrs	Kyushu Japanese	F: 5yrs M: 2yrs	Japanese
Masayo	35yrs	American	36yrs	Kansai Japanese	M: 8yrs F: 5yrs M: 4yrs	Japanese
Belda	40yrs	Japanese	34yrs	Chinese Indonesian	F: 5yrs F: 4yrs	Chinese Indonesian and Japanese
Claus		German		British	M: 4yrs	German and British

Table continued from previous page.

| Name	Age of Father	Father's Identity	Age of Mother	Mother's Identity	Child(ren)'s Gender: Age(s)	Child(ren)'s Identity(ies)
Rebecca	50yrs	Japanese	43yrs	Filipino	M: 17yrs M: 16yrs	Japanese
Elizabeth	48yrs	Inaka Japanese	46yrs	Small-town American	F: 14yrs	Mixed
Renee	46yrs	Japanese	37yrs	Californian Italian, and Irish	F: 2yrs	Japanese and American
Sheila	44yrs	Japanese	45yrs	British	M: 12yrs F: 9yrs F: 3yrs	International
Marie	33yrs	Japanese	31yrs	American	M: 8mths	Japanese and American
Maria	36yrs	Japanese	32yrs	Hungarian	M: 8yrs F: 6yrs M: 4yrs	Japanese
Makayla	47yrs	Kyushu Japanese	45yrs	Bulgarian	F: 18yrs M: 14yrs	Unique
Cynthia	45yrs	Japanese	44yrs	American	F: 21yrs M: 8yrs	Unique
Jodie	36yrs	Japanese	35yrs	Australian	F: 12yrs F: 7yrs M: 5yrs F: 3yrs F: 2yrs F: 1yr	Japanese
Natasha	34yrs	Japanese and Korean	38yrs	Australian, Eastern European, and British	F: 1yr M:unborn	World

Topical Analysis

Respondents were queried on the importance of various cultural factors on the identities of their children. Some factors were extremely important to some parents, but not to others. Therefore, some respondents discussed a particular topic in depth, while others did not comment on that topic. Chart 1 (on page 40) shows seven cultural influences which emerged from the interviews and how many respondents considered each one to be a major influence on the development of their children's cultural identities. Two of these factors were considered important by all twenty respondents, namely language and names. These factors were followed by the importance eighteen respondents placed on visits to parents' home countries and schooling and peer group choices which seventeen respondents considered to be important. Fifteen parents considered religious and other cultural activities to be important in the cultural identity development of their children. This was closely followed by physical appearance, with fourteen parents choosing this factor. None of the interviewees chose food as an important factor.

Chart 1 is followed by comments on the above seven factors provided by the twenty parents introduced on pages 29 to 35. These parents[6] provide examples of how they are implementing these factors to influence the cultural identity development of their multicultural children. Due to the exploratory nature of this qualitative study, much of the results section is descriptive in nature. The interview questions did not ask respondents to rank factors according to their relevance to cultural identity development. Indeed, the questions were open-ended to discover what such factors are and how parents are using them to influence the development of their multicultural children's identities. At the end of

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[6] Please note that photos and identifiers of the respondents are provided in Appendix D (inside the back cover) for user friendliness when viewing results.

this section, these parents share their opinions regarding labels, conflicts, multiculturalism, and other related issues.

Chart 1: Factor Importance in Identity Development of Multicultural Children
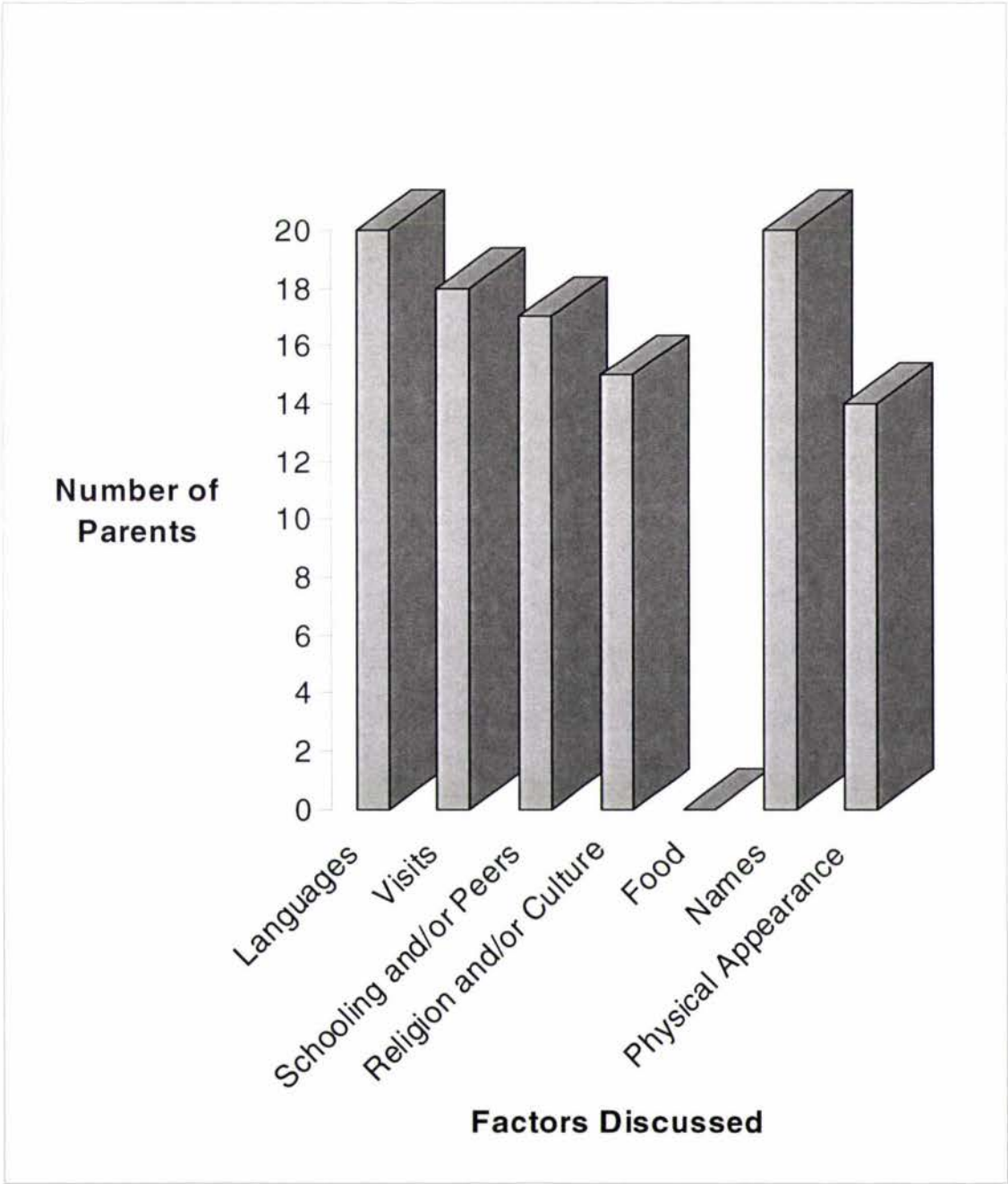
Language

Of all the influences discussed by the respondents, language was most often considered to be the most important influence on cultural identity. Hence it was also the first to be mentioned in the majority of cases. In all twenty cases, language was identified as one of the major influences on cultural identity.

Six parents are teaching (or considering teaching) their children three or more languages to enhance their cultural identities. Stewart believes that language is the most important tool to give his children the flexibility to go "where they want, when they want". Citing that a typical Swiss person can speak four languages by the time they are fifteen years old, he is considering introducing Chinese[7] to his children, who already speak both English and Japanese. Renee teaches her daughter Japanese and English as a foundation to learn other languages later. She sees the need for language to communicate with family, especially the need for English to communicate with her relatives in America. Her daughter *code switches* and Renee estimates that her daughter speaks Japanese about 70% of the time. Natasha grew up with a lot of languages spoken around her, including Polish, Ukrainian, and English. She intends to give her children language skills and is starting with English. They will learn Japanese as it is "all around them" and she hopes they will learn a third language (Chinese, a European language, or whatever they have an interest in) at school.

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[7] Email contact with Stewart at the time of writing this report reveals that he is introducing his sons to French, Gaelic, German, and Korean. Although he does not expect that they will identify with these cultures, he is deliberately exposing them to other cultures through language.

Belda's children speak four languages, to varying degrees. They are most fluent in Japanese. This is followed by Indonesian. They can also speak simple English, thanks to DVDs and internet games. Finally, they can count and say the names of animals in Chinese. Likewise, Theodora's daughter will be multilingual. This is because Theodora is adamant that her daughter must speak her three "mother tongues": French, Swedish, and Manjacko. When her children were growing up, Suzanne only spoke German in the home and her husband only spoke Japanese. As Toshio was only home on the weekends, the girls' exposure to Japanese was mostly limited to the weekends[8]. This was not a conscious decision made by the parents, but just what they found the most natural way of communicating. The girls were fluent in Japanese but not to the level of their Japanese peers. When they moved to Japan at ages four and five, they soon realized that it was easier to speak only in Japanese, even to Suzanne. They later moved back to Germany and at first found it difficult to speak German again. From living in various countries and gaining their education in different languages, Emi and Nina now speak five languages. They both speak Japanese, German, and English fluently. They also have a good grounding in Spanish and French, but may need refreshing in these languages.

The following four families provide insight into possible methods used to expose their children to more than one language. Alan speaks only English to his children, while his wife speaks only Japanese. This was not comfortable for them at first as they had spent ten years as a couple speaking in Japanese before the children were born. After just two weeks of kindergarten in Scotland, his daughter began speaking in English to both of her parents. Her teacher advised that her English speaking ability was on par with her Scottish

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[8] Suzanne and her husband did, however, pay exorbitant subscription prices to the Japanese children's magazines *Ribbon* and *Nakayoshi*, although the main reason for this was that the girls missed *Hello Kitty*.

peers. The influence day care has on linguistic development is also evident in Sheila's case. As Sheila's three children have been in day care in Japan, Japanese is their first language. The older two have moved on to an international school, and switched to speaking more English than Japanese. Sheila believes that being fluent in English "opens so many doors", even in Japan. Her children's bilingualism reflects their biculturalism.

Meanwhile, Masayo's children attend Japanese schools and she exposes them to English at home to strengthen their identification with their father's culture. She does this by showing American television programmes to her children. If there is an English option, for example as there is in *Thomas the Tank Engine*, they must watch it in English. In addition, her mother-in-law (who speaks no Japanese) visits for a month every year, and she takes her children to stay with her parents-in-law for a month every year. She tries to create situations where her children have no option but to speak in English. Even Masayo was amazed when her eldest son started speaking English fluently after just five days with his American cousins. Masayo also introduces her dialect, *Kansai-ben*, but this is usually only when she is angry at her children as she finds it more explicit. Louise also makes a great effort to encourage her children to speak English. Once a week after their Japanese schooling, her children attend Boy and Girl Scouts through an American School, which involves a lot of effort on Louise's behalf. It involves her not only finding time in her busy working-mother's schedule to provide assistance to the leaders, but also driving into central Tokyo - quite a feat for someone from rural New Zealand. She also reads English books to her children and speaks as much English at home as possible. She does not give them English homework on top of Japanese homework as she does not want to overload them.

Concerns about linguistic overload were taken too far in Rebecca's case. When Rebecca's eldest son could not speak at one and a half years of age, her mother-in-law arranged a check-up with a medical specialist. Rebecca regrets the "bad advice" from this "expert", who recommended that "only Japanese" be spoken to her son. Rebecca herself had grown up with two languages but did not want to fight as she knew that she would be living with her mother-in-law long-term. Her sons speak only Japanese. Rebecca's family is one of three families in this study where the children are fluent in only one language. Jodie's family mainly converses in Japanese but she sometimes "throws in English" as it is "fun" for the children and it enables her to share some of her culture with them. Jodie's older three children are fluent in Japanese and understand simple English. As her younger three children are all three years old or younger, they do not speak much of either language.

Communicating with peers can be a strong motivator for developing linguistic competencies, as illustrated in the case of Makayla's daughter, Mina. Before she entered kindergarten, Mina spoke only Bulgarian and led a "basically Bulgarian" lifestyle in Japan as she spent most of her time with her mother. This meant that she had a difficult experience "being different" at Japanese kindergarten. When Makayla saw her "very isolated" and not speaking to other three year olds, she stopped speaking to her in Bulgarian and encouraged her to speak in Japanese, to the point that she stopped speaking Bulgarian. At that time, it was more important for Makayla to encourage a Japanese identity for her daughter to "blend in", than to instil her own cultural identity on her. Now, Makayla's children will understand the Bulgarian she speaks to them but reply in Japanese. Makayla's story is evidence of the power that language has over cultural identity.

Although bilingualism may be too difficult to achieve in some cases, it does mean that these parents do not consider it desirable. Even though Rebecca, Jodie and Makayla's children have grown up or are growing up mostly monolingual, these parents still believe that bilingualism is desirable. In fact, every parent in this study ideally wanted their children to speak the native languages of both parents. But sometimes bilingualism takes second place to establishing an identity with the culture of residence. However, in Claus' case, his family is internationally mobile and therefore the cultures of his wife and himself take precedence over the culture of residence at this point in time. Therefore, it is very important for Claus that his son will learn to speak both German and English but learning Japanese is not a priority. Damahr agrees that language knowledge is necessary to belong in any chosen culture.

An important function of language is to pass on culture from one generation to the next. Elizabeth speaks only English to her daughter; Karin, while her husband speaks to Karin in Japanese only. This was a deliberate decision, with the result being that Karin speaks as well as her peers in both languages. Elizabeth points out that using your first language allows "richness in description" of your own family background and interests. She enjoys science fiction, adventure movies, and baseball with her daughter; while her husband shares his interests of samurai movies and *Sumo* (Japanese wrestling). Rachel also agrees with this. She stresses that language is very important for her sons to communicate with both sides of the extended family in order to know who they are. She notes that it is easier to provide English exposure to her children in Japan than it would be to provide Japanese exposure to them in America.

The fact that language is one of the most important parts of cultural identity is highlighted by Cynthia points out the difficulty to "keep up that second language" in her family's home in America. While she spoke only English to her daughter, not only did her husband speak only Japanese to their daughter, but they spoke Japanese together in front of her. Even so, after a couple of years in America, their daughter (who moved to America when she was four) stopped speaking Japanese. Cynthia's son, on the other hand, is in the opposite situation. He lived in the United States until he was five. As he was a late developer linguistically, he was only just becoming level with his peers in English when they moved. Now, his environment is very Japanese and Cynthia is trying to find children from other cultures to be his friends, partly for language exposure.

Marie is also concerned about developing her son's language, which she believes is the most important "tool", as communicating with others is necessary in identity development. Related to this is the way words are used, which requires knowledge of culture. Marie notes how differently people interact when using a different language due to the different thought patterns involved. Marie mainly speaks English to her infant son and her husband mainly speaks Japanese to him. They are still deciding which arrangement to have long-term; one option is to speak English inside the home and Japanese outside. Above, respondents have shared a variety of methods they use to encourage the linguistic development of their children in order to support their cultural identity development. Having discussed the importance that parents in this study place on developing their children's linguistic abilities, and the various aspects involved in this development, we now turn to another major influence on cultural identity development.

Visits to Parents' Home Countries

Visiting the countries of parents' cultures was another crucial element illuminated by these parents regarding their children's cultural development, identified by eighteen respondents. Of these, six currently regularly take their children outside Japan to experience life in their other culture(s). Louise places her three children in day care or school in her native New Zealand for one month every year during their Japanese summer holidays in July and August. At first, she was criticized for making them go to school during their holidays, but now the benefits are apparent to all concerned. Not only have they learnt and maintained English, but they identify with the culture of their New Zealand peers. Their friends even ask their grandmother when they are due to arrive each year. Alan's job allows for a six to eight-week family visit to Scotland most summers. This is the main source of Scottish identity for his children. His daughter went to Scottish kindergarten last year and "the only difference was the language". Belda also takes her daughters back to Indonesia once a year, but the time of the year depends on when she can get cheaper tickets. Last year they went in February for one month. She is content if they can communicate with Indonesians and wants them to "be proud that they also have the Indonesian blood".

Trips back to the United States are essential for Rachel because her children would not know about a whole side of themselves if they did not know her side of the family. She loves providing them the experiences she had as a child, such as catching crabs, or watching seagulls dive for fish. Sheila and her children visit England once every twelve to eighteen months for two to three weeks at a time. This is "the only real, solid link" to their

British identity. Sheila once tried to put them into a camp in England but abandoned the idea when the children were resistant to it. This year she plans to take them to a safari park and other places British children visit. For the past three years, Masayo has been taking her children to stay with her parents-in-law for about four weeks every summer. They can recognize that everyone is speaking English, driving instead of taking public transport (so there are not many people in the streets), and not taking their shoes off when entering houses. As they still spend most of their time - even in America - with her, Masayo regrets that her husband cannot come (due to work commitments) and expose them to more language and culture. At the end of the year 2006, she is considering taking them for Christmas so they can experience this important part of American culture. If she does make the trip at Christmas, they will also have cousins to play with, which Masayo notices makes a big difference to the amount of English language and culture they adopt.

A further two respondents could only comment on their future intentions due to their children being very young. They both intend to make regular visits. Natasha believes that visiting Australia will be important for her children to get the sense that they are not strange and it is okay to come from a mixed background. She plans on returning to Australia every year. Marie plans to take her son back to the States for three or four weeks each year so that he can sense the culture "not as, as an object, as something I teach him, but something he experiences". In an ideal world, Marie would have her son spend six months of each year in each country to develop his bicultural identity. But, this is not an ideal world. Although ideal situations may not be possible, parents in this study create situations to expose their children to their parents' cultures.

Three families live (or have lived) in a third country, and make (or made) efforts to visit both parents' home countries. Claus and his wife make a point of taking their son back to both of their native countries each year. This is to teach him about the two cultures of his parents. Suzanne's family holidays were usually spent travelling to either Germany or Japan, to visit relatives. Recently, Suzanne's family spends Christmas in Europe. Funerals are the other reason for family gatherings. Elizabeth's family travels a lot to third world and developing countries, including Bhutan and Burma (her husband is a medical professional). When they live overseas, they try to get back to both of their countries for an equal amount of time. Now they live in Japan, Elizabeth takes Karin to the United States for two weeks a year (this was one month when she was younger). This is her only opportunity to be in an entirely English speaking environment, to "expand" in the space available, to make eye contact with people, and to "have this feeling of family".

Despite work commitments stopping the following two respondents from travelling as often as they would like, their beliefs in the importance of trips to their home countries are not diluted. Cynthia believes that taking children back to a parent's home country helps them to understand why their parent does things that they do. She takes her son to the United States once every three to five years for about a month each time. Renee believes that exposure to both sets of extended families is the most important factor in determining her daughter's bicultural identity. She plans to take six months off work and enrol her daughter in a kindergarten in America when Suzanne is five years old.

Five interviewees spoke of other barriers stopping them providing these opportunities for their children. Theodora's family plan to live in both France and Sweden but it is not safe for them to even visit the area of Africa where her family comes from. Therefore, Theodora says that she must "bring Africa to her" daughter by introducing her to her African cultural heritage without taking her to Africa. When Jodie's eldest child was ten years old, she wanted to know more about her Australian heritage. So, her parents sent her to stay with her German-Czech grandmother in Australia. While she enjoyed her three months there, she missed home in Japan and no longer asks to visit. Although Jodie would love to take her children to visit Australia, it is currently both financially prohibitive and impractical for Jodie to travel to Australia with her six children.

Rebecca took her sons back to the Philippines every couple of years while they were young where they loved visiting the beaches and their aunts and uncles. However, they have only visited a couple of times since they started school as it is too hot for them in the Philippines in summer, which is when they have their holidays. Likewise, while Maria would like to take her children to visit Hungary every year for a month or two, they have not been back for three years, due to Maria's study commitments. When they do manage to visit Hungary, she takes them to cultural events, such as Hungarian theatre. Similarly, Makayla went back to Bulgaria for two months every second year until her daughter entered junior high school. However, the cost of three air tickets in peak season, coupled with the fact that the Bulgarian winter is too cold to do anything, means that the family cannot travel in the Japanese summer, which is the only school holidays long enough to make the trip worthwhile. Makayla believes that her children would probably identify as Bulgarians more if they could return more often, as visits are an important factor in identity

formation. We have seen that while visits to parents' home countries is viewed as an important factor in cultural identity development, there is a limit to how often and for how long visits can be made to parents' countries. In contrast, the choices regarding schooling and peer groups affect a child's daily life.

Schooling and/or Peer Groups

Seventeen parents highlighted the importance of schooling (or the influence of peers) as one of the most important factors influencing children's identities. Those with older children tended to emphasise this more. For Suzanne's family, "schooling was the biggest, and still is the biggest issue of all". Suzanne and her family have moved internationally throughout her daughters' childhoods, due to Toshio's work. The following is an account of the choices of schooling made by Suzanne and Toshio as their family moved from country to country. The influence of those choices on Emi and Nina's cultural identities is also discussed. The children gained U.S. passports in America, but were too young to gain any cultural influences. In Belgium, the eldest, Emi, went to kindergarten fulltime. This was the first time she had to deal with people speaking a language she did not understand but she "seemed to be doing okay". It was not until they moved to Germany, that the girls first made "little friends" in their neighbourhood. Suzanne recalls that the children were not aware of moving from one country to another. "They would know the little children's- little friends'- names and that was about it". The girls were treated as individuals and there was not a lot of talk about differences.

In Japan, international schools were too expensive, and the one near them did not have a good reputation. Suzanne and her husband decided that it was best for their children

to have friends at the local school. Suzanne was concerned that the German side of her children would be left out, when her husband was transferred to Spain. There, they enrolled their girls in a Japanese school, particularly so they could learn *kanji* (a Japanese writing script). When the girls graduated from there, they entered an international school, believing they would live in Spain for some time. Toshio was then transferred to Germany and the children had to start in a new system of schooling. The girls refused to go to international school in Germany as it was taught in English, yet another language they would have to learn to use on a daily basis. They struggled in the German system (after finally being accepted into a school as they were behind their German peers), but they managed. After two years, Emi decided to give up on the difficult German system and change to the international school. Although it would mean studying in English, the system was more similar to the one she was used to in Spain. Meanwhile her sister, Nina, remained in German schooling.

As everyone was finally settled, Toshio decided to quit his job so that the family could stay in one place. However, he could not find a suitable job in Europe and returned to Japan. It was too late for the children to return to Japanese schooling, so Suzanne, Emi, and Nina stayed in Germany. Three years living apart proved too difficult both financially and emotionally, so Suzanne and her daughters joined their breadwinner in Japan. Nina went to a *returnee-only* school, for students who have been living overseas. Initially, Emi remained in Germany to complete her final year of schooling but soon joined the rest of the family. Suzanne says that, as parents wanting to provide the best education for their children, they did what seemed the most sensible at the time, but would not have made so many changes if they had known what was going to happen next. At the time of my

interview, Emi and Nina were both planning to return to Europe. Emi (who accompanied Suzanne to our meeting) told me that she identifies more as a European as her crucial teenage years were spent in Europe (she was there from age nine to age seventeen). Emi also said that she identifies with multicultural people, whatever the cultural mix may be, and recommends international schools as a place for multicultural children to fit in. As for the cultural identities of the rest of the family, in Suzanne's words, "he's [Toshio] Japanese; the rest of the family is European".

Although Suzanne's story is rather unique, other families are also providing multicultural experiences for their children through their schooling and peer group choices. Seven respondents are encouraging their children to make friends with children from a variety of cultures. Damahr's son is around children of different cultures as Damahr herself has friends from a wide range of cultures- including Australian, New Zealand, Japanese, German and Russian (in Japan) and Singaporean, Korean, Swiss and Italian (in the U.S.A.). She believes that this is an important factor in developing his "global" identity. Another important factor is to expose him to educational television programmes, such as Sesame Street, to accept the differences between people. In her words, "Sesame Street has handicapped children and it's no big deal, just like this kid has red hair". Elizabeth states that it would be misleading to say that her daughter is "Japanese-American or American-Japanese because there's so much, so many other elements to her identity". Most of Karin's friends, both in and out of school, are "multicultural" and "doing the balancing act" between many cultures and she appears more comfortable around other people who have lived in other countries. Elizabeth believes that Karin wants to return to an international community, most likely, Nepal. Natasha's family meets regularly with a group of friends

from different cultures, including Japanese, German, and African. Her children will grow up to feel a part of this international community. Natasha can foresee problems in the "myopic" Japanese education system, especially at kindergarten and school. Although she appreciates the value in teaching children to get along with each other, she is against completely forsaking the individual for the group.

While Natasha anticipates possible problems for multicultural children in the Japanese education system, Sheila has actually faced them. Sheila's son had problems at Japanese day care when other children did not want to play with him possibly because he was different from his fully Japanese classmates, but he fits in well at his international school. He has some slight learning disabilities and thrives in his current environment where he studies with the same classmates for more than one year. Sheila's daughter has a different personality and enjoys meeting different types of people with different cultural influences (and eating curry at her Indian friend's house). Sheila believes that the international school environment is extremely important in allowing children to relate to people from different cultures. She puts her money where her mouth is by paying much higher tuition fees than government-run public schools would require. Marie would like to send her son to an international school which would provide an American cultural environment in order to ensure an equal influence of both cultures, particularly language. This is her ideal, although she agrees with her husband that it may not be possible due to the costs involved.

At first, it seemed difficult for Renee's daughter to blend in at day care. Initially, teachers were worried that her daughter Suzanne would not be able to speak Japanese or eat

Japanese food and Renee thinks that they still regard her daughter as a foreigner. However, Renee's perception of the important influence day care has on her daughter is evident in the fact that it was the first factor she mentioned. Renee also spoke of the "second home" she and her husband have created in an English Library and Literacy Centre, which provides multicultural peers for Suzanne. As discussed in the subsection above regarding visits to parents' home countries, Louise provides her children with opportunities to mingle with New Zealand peers while they attend school in New Zealand during the Japanese summer. As she says, in New Zealand, "they are *Kiwi* (a term for New Zealanders)". While they are in Japan, they attend their local Japanese elementary school. Louise says that they are lucky as there are six Asian-Caucasian mixed children at their school, so her children do not "stick out". However, this would be different if they lived in their father's hometown as people yell "Hello!" at them from across the street.

Six respondents emphasise the importance of the culture of residence on the schooling and peer group choices they make for their children. Masayo spoke of the power peers have in developing cultural identity. She believes that "kids want to be with kids". Her children have a strong Japanese identity, as they spend most of their time with Japanese children. If they went to school in America, or went to a price-prohibitive American school in Japan, they would have more of an American identity. Masayo believes that they must live in both cultures to be comfortable in both cultures. Alan and his wife want to send their children to an international school for junior high school, if they can afford it. This is due more to their dissatisfaction with the public school system, than to encourage the multicultural identities of their children. Alan believes that since they are growing up in Japan and being educated in Japanese schools, "in terms of their cultural identity, they're

Japanese". Children with two Asian parents may find it easier to fit in with their Japanese peers. Belda believes that the fact that her daughters attend a Japanese day care facilitates their Japanese identities. Although, Belda considers her daughters to be as Japanese as their peers at day care, she is glad that they are also proud to show their friends their dresses from "Grandma in Indonesia".

Maria believes that education is important for her children's identities and is currently studying herself for a degree at a Japanese university. She recognises that school culture influences cultural identity and identifies good and bad points in both educational systems; Japan being more group-oriented and Hungary being more individualistic. Likewise, there are also often sharp contrasts in the religious and cultural activities in the cultures of parents of multicultural children. Cynthia also has strong views regarding the influence of school environments on children. She believes that school will "create your child whether you like it or not". She and her husband delayed their return to Japan so that their daughter could continue schooling in the American system, which is what she knew. Their son is now in the Japanese education system. Cynthia could not comment on whether his identity would be different if he went to an international school, as she does not know enough about the international school system and educational lifestyle involved. Although Jodie used a local public (and cheap) kindergarten for a while, she has not sent her children to kindergarten since it closed down. This decision to keep her children at home until they turn six, "tends to create a wall" with other mothers but allows her children to gain more cultural influence from her. Jodie has found the local elementary school very supportive but comments that no one "can control other mothers".

Avoiding discrimination was another issue which influenced the choice of schools and peer groups by three parents in this study. Makayla's daughter was not only isolated in kindergarten, but also in elementary school. The other girls would not let her join in their play. She was having such a "tough time" that Makayla spoke to her teacher about it. She did not receive the co-operation she had hoped for. Fortunately, her daughter did not suffer so much at junior high school. Although Makayla may have considered sending her children to international schools had they not been so expensive, she feels attending a "normal school" is advantageous for a more culturally aligned life. Evidently, Makayla has made decisions regarding her children's schooling to help them assimilate into Japanese society.

Assimilation into Japanese society, without attending a "normal school" and avoiding discrimination was achieved by Rebecca for her two sons. Rebecca chose the option available in Japan of sending her sons to a private Japanese school. She said that although it was more expensive than a government-run school, it was cheaper than an international school and still provided a Japanese cultural environment. The reason for Rebecca and her husband deciding to send their sons to private schools was due to bad experiences at their public school. Some mothers refused to believe that Rebecca was not a *hostess* working in the sex industry (a stereotype for Filipino women in Japan) and said something to the Parent Teachers Association, which the teachers heard and subsequently her children suffered. Of paramount importance to Rebecca is that her sons "have confidence in themselves", regardless of their culture, and know they are loved. Having at least one friend is crucial for this, because "if a friend loves you, you feel that the world loves you too". Her sons have friends at their private schools. Rebecca believes that this is

due to a different type of parent at the private school- they are more open-minded and are too busy working to make trouble. In short, Rebecca put her sons' confidence in themselves above other considerations. The acceptance by their peers paved the way for her sons to identify themselves as being Japanese. Although Rachel's children are younger than those of the respondents discussed above, she also has experience regarding the importance of choosing the right peer environment. Rachel chose her son's kindergarten carefully. Each one she visited- except the one she chose- had children who stopped and pointed at her. No one treats her son differently at this particular kindergarten she chose for him, and she is very grateful for this.

Religious and/or Cultural Activities

In addition to dealing with different educational systems, in many cases, the respondents and the other parent of their children come from different religious backgrounds. Due to the importance placed on religion by many people, this area of religious and cultural activities provides a challenge for multicultural families. Families in this study meet this challenge in different ways, such as: choosing to observe one culture's religious and cultural activities, trying to equally balance the influence of religious and cultural activities of both parents' cultures, or encouraging an awareness of religion and culture rather than participation in it.

Eight families choose to observe one set of religious or cultural activities over the other. Often, they also attend events from other cultures for awareness purposes. Belda's family go to Japanese festivals "just the same as we go to the park". The children are also introduced to Japanese customs at day care. Belda cooks a traditional Japanese New Year's

meal from a recipe she found on the internet. They do not celebrate Chinese or Indonesian festivals. Damahr, on the other hand, celebrates Western festivals (for example, Easter) but does not teach the religious significance of them. As her husband is not traditional, the family do not observe many Japanese cultural traditions. Renee is raising her daughter as a Christian, while being aware of the rituals and beliefs of Shintoism and Buddhism (two prominent religions in Japan). The family goes to church, Sunday school, and Church camps but wear *yukata* (Japanese traditional dress) to Japanese festivals as the majority of Japanese are Buddhists and they want their daughter to get along with her friends and peers. Sheila's children go to a Christian school and sometimes join Sheila in going to Church, although they sometimes decline the offer as they want to spend more time with their father. Their parents separated one year and four months before the interview and the children spend most weekends with their father, who lives nearby. Partly due to the influence of their school, and partly due to the influence of their aunt in England, the children always say a prayer or sing a song before eating their evening meal.

Marie accepts that her son can identify with both cultures in many aspects of culture, but not regarding religion. She believes that he will have to choose his religious identity in the future. Marie is trying to find a Christian community within easy travelling distance to take a small child. She is wrestling with the difficult task of deciding how she will help him to understand Christianity, Buddhism, and *Shintoism* (native Japanese religion). While not giving him the impression that he cannot be Buddhist, Marie wants her son to understand that Christmas and Easter are more than "festivals and fun" to her. The family celebrates both Christmas and *Obon* (Japanese festival for deceased relatives). On the other hand, religion is not an issue for Maria. While there is no *butsudan* (shrine in the

home) in her home, there is in her parents-in-law's, who live nearby. When the children visit, they "do that little ritual… ring that bell". Celebrating cultural festivals is important to the family and they often go to *matsuri* (Japanese festivals). Maria no longer finds it important to decorate a Christmas tree for Christmas, even for herself.

Whether the religion an individual is brought up with remains important to them throughout their life, depends on the individual. Despite having lived in Japan for most of her adult life, Rebecca's Catholic upbringing is still important to her. She regrets not having taken her sons to church with her while they were too young to complain. At the time, it was too difficult to take two small children on the long train rides and they had willing babysitters at home. She also thought that they would come when they became older. However, peer pressure stopped them from going when none of their friends did. Although, she would have liked to have shared her Catholic upbringing with them she is content as long as they have morals and "know that somebody is there watching". Rebecca herself is the family member responsible for looking after the *butsudan* and she participates in other Buddhist rituals.

Religion has created a dilemma for Alan. Coming from a country divided by religion (Scotland is divided into Catholic and Protestant cultures), Alan made a decision not to bring his children up "in the Church". Sometimes he regrets closing the door on a source of language and cultural support, but he would not feel comfortable passing on a culture of conflict to his children. Alan may not share his religious background with his children, but he does take them to Scottish cultural events in Japan, as well as Japanese cultural activities. He commented on the irony that he has been to the Highland Games

three times in Japan but never in Scotland. Alan explained that this is because he is from the Scottish Lowlands and that in Scotland there is a Highland-Lowland divide, along with an East-West divide and a Catholic-Protestant divide. Before the World Cup, Scotland came to Japan to play soccer. Alan went to watch, wearing a *kilt* (traditional Scottish clothes), while his daughter watched the game on television with her mother. Before he left, Alan asked his daughter who she was going to support. When "Japan" was her answer, Alan pointed out that she was Scottish as well as Japanese. Her reply, that she was "not very Scottish", made Alan realise that she was aware of the cultural imbalance in her upbringing. This episode clarifies Alan's declaration that his children have mainly Japanese identities, since they are growing up in Japan.

Seven other families try to observe the religious and/or cultural events of both parents' cultures equally. Rachel's family participates in festivals from both cultures. As Rachel prepares a lot of materials for Halloween and Christmas for her job, her children receive the benefits as well. According to Masayo's children, who receive parcels each year from their paternal grandmother, "American Santa-san sends a bunch of presents". They also celebrate Halloween with an international playgroup they belong to. Masayo cannot fit a turkey in her oven so does not do anything for Thanksgiving, but does put a Christmas tree up at Christmas. The family also follow the major Japanese festivals, such as *shichi-go-san* (a celebration for 7, 5, and 3 year olds) and *Oshogatsu* (New Year). As the family is not religious, they are encouraging a basic awareness of the festivals in both cultures. Elizabeth's family celebrates Japanese and American festivals in Japan. They tried continuing Nepalese celebrations for a while but it "seemed too contrived". Elizabeth

believes that her own non-judgmental attitude towards Buddhism is crucial in not providing a barrier for her daughter's cultural development in this area.   .

Traditions play a big part of Makayla's family as they are "something to be treasured...There's love in every tradition". They have *chirashizushi* (a type of sushi) on Girl's Day and *mochi* (rice cakes) on Boy's Day and New Year's celebrations include Japanese and Western elements. They used to celebrate Christmas Bulgarian style, with no meat on Christmas Eve and round pita bread with a coin inside (whoever gets the piece with the coin, claims the luck for the coming year). Makayla now compromises by providing meat to get her children to join her to celebrate Christmas Eve. They also celebrate Halloween, as a part of world culture, as Makayla wants to broaden their horizons by providing a variety of cultural exposure. Makayla and her husband are not religious so do not try to instil religion in their children. They believe that there is a big difference between what Christ and Buddha talked about and what their followers do. They do, however, provide some religious experiences for their children, but only in the passive sense. The children have seen *zazen* (Buddhist meditation) and attended Christmas Mass.

Cynthia's family celebrate *Oshogatsu* and go to festivals in Japan, as well as celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas. They also celebrated *Oshogatsu* when they were living in the United States. Cynthia noted that a lot of the African American cultural identity comes from the Church, which is irrelevant in her situation as she is not Christian. Jodie and her husband are not religious. Although Jodie can see the role of religion in "keeping a community", she feels that international couples should not have to choose. The family does not participate in many cultural festivals, mainly due to their home-based

business. However, the importance of sharing cultural traditions of both parents with her children is evident in the fact that last year they had their own style of Christmas and New Year mixed together.

Although Natasha and her husband do not intend to actively encourage participation in religious activities of either country to develop their children's cultural identities, they will encourage awareness to encourage identification with both sets of extended families. Natasha and her husband converted to her husband's parents' religion for approval for their marriage, but they do not practice. In fact, Natasha does not believe in organized religion. She did not celebrate Christmas last year, but her children will probably experience Christmas in the future because her family in Australia celebrates it. She and her husband do not observe *Obon* (festival for the deceased), but do celebrate *Oshogatsu* (New Year). She plans to teach her children about Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. In addition to the influence of religion and other cultural activities on a child's identity, it is also important to consider the influence of food.

Food

The interviewees were more uniform in their responses concerning which culture's food they provide for their children. None of them viewed food as an important factor in cultural development. Eight respondents indicated that their food choices were based on the type of food their family is used to and they know how to cook. Masayo's family mainly has Japanese food as that is what she knows to cook and her husband does not complain. Occasionally she cooks tacos and the children love to visit McDonalds. They have cereal for breakfast more for the convenience, than for the cultural meaning. Claus

and his wife each cook what they know how to cook. He prepares German food for his son; while his wife prepares British food. Likewise, Damahr feeds her son both American and Japanese food but says he prefers Japanese style. She would like to cook German food more often but in Japan the ingredients are too hard to find, or too expensive, to cook on a regular basis. Theodora cooks French and African dishes, and sometimes Western food. Her husband cooks Swedish food when he can obtain the ingredients. Marie likes, and therefore cooks, both American and Japanese food. Natasha's family eats Australian-version European as well as Japanese cuisine as that is what she and her husband are accustomed to.

While Maria does not think that food is very important in the cultural identity of her children, she is glad they can eat fish here, which she could not in Hungary (being inland). She cooks simple meals which are common in Japan, like *curry rice* (rice and Japanese curry) and *chahan* (fried rice). She did not learn to cook before she left Hungary at the age of seventeen (she has lived in Japan since she was twenty). Therefore, she cooks what she has learnt to cook in Japan. Elizabeth's family eats a lot of Japanese food, as well as food from Fiji and Nepal, as they lived there when Karin was growing up[9]. Karin loves curries, vegetarian food she ate in Nepal, and other "unusual things". A hamburger is perhaps her least popular food, which she might eat once a year. Although Elizabeth was raised on meat and potatoes, the "American" food she introduces to her daughter originates from different countries, such as Mexico or Italy. In their household, breakfast is nearly always yogurt, cereals, and wholegrain breads. Lunch for Elizabeth's family is usually a Japanese rice lunch and the evening meal represents a variety of cultures, including food Karin became accustomed to in Fiji and Nepal.

[9] Karin lived in Fiji from infancy to four years of age; and Nepal from five years old to almost nine years old.

Another four respondents stated that they based their food choices on convenience. Makayla's family eats Japanese, Bulgarian, and Western food, but this is about nutrition and convenience, not culture. It is easy to cook Japanese food in Japan, she knows how to cook Bulgarian food, and Western food is also readily available. Sheila's children also eat both Japanese and Western food. She usually cooks a basic Japanese meal, consisting of rice, *miso* (bean paste) soup, and something else. In summer, she often cooks *soba* (buckwheat noodles), or other noodle dishes. Sometimes, they have salad, fried chicken or other English meals. The children's school lunches are Japanese some days and American other days. Alan's family eats mainly Japanese food in Japan and Scottish food in Scotland. This is for convenience as they do not wish to transport ingredients from one country to the other. They eat a variety of other cuisine as well, with their favourite restaurant being a Spanish one. Suzanne's family ate whatever was simple to cook, which was usually European food, with Japanese food being a special treat visitors would bring as gifts. Suzanne commented that her daughters are now old enough to cook for themselves.

Nutrition, responding to children's pickiness, and teaching children not to take food for granted also affect food choices made by five respondents. Rachel chooses to cook mainly Japanese food for her family due to its nutritional benefits. She makes *miso* soup with their meals about five days a week. They will have two days with a Japanese breakfast, then one with cereal or bread. She even makes her son a rice-based lunchbox. In Jodie's house, "food is anything", preferable nutritious. She often cooks three meals a day as her husband is often home for lunch. Her mother-in-law taught her to cook Japanese food and Jodie likes the rice (as an alternative to bread), *miso* soup ("nutritious"), and

pickles ("interesting"). Lately, however, she's been enjoying Western cooking as she has recently acquired an oven.

Renee's food choices for her daughter, Suzanne, are mainly based on what her two-year-old will eat. Suzanne eats more Japanese food than any other style. In particular, she likes: *miso* soup, rice and *natto* (fermented beans), *soba*, *udon* (thick noodles), grilled fish and *nori* (seaweed). She does not eat anything that Renee considers "normal", such as, waffles, pancakes, macaroni cheese, or bread. Meanwhile, Belda cooks a variety of food so that her children will learn to eat anything. When she cooks Indonesian food, she tells her daughters that it is Indonesian food and they eat it with their hands. This makes Belda the only respondent to link her children's cultural identities with food. Even so, Belda does not recognise food as one of the most important factors in identity development. Stewart and Rina are also introducing their children to food from a variety of cultures (such as Scottish *haggis* and Italian *pasta*) but they "are not purposefully trying to influence their cultural identities through food". They would rather their sons come to appreciate the value of food, whatever it may be, and are teaching them to cook both in the kitchen and in the campground.

The remaining three respondents based their food choices to accommodate other family members. Rebecca's children grew up on Japanese food, which Rebecca's mother-in-law taught her how to cook. The smell of fishy sauce from the Philippines was not welcome in the home, so Rebecca could not provide her children with food that she grew up with. Cynthia grew up on *Soul food* (African American way of cooking) and believes that it makes up part of who she is. However, her family eats mainly Japanese food in

Japan as they live and eat with her parents-in-law. Even in America, they had strong Asian customs in their home, for example, they ate with chopsticks and wore no shoes in the house. As Louise's husband is only home on the weekends, she and her children eat Western food through the week and the family has Japanese food at the weekend. Although Louise is vegetarian and her son has recently decided to join her in this choice, she also does not consider food to be a major influence on cultural identity.

Above, respondents claimed that their food choices are based on such determinants as nutrition, convenience, being able to cook a certain type of food, or accommodating other family members, rather than a conscious decision to influence their children's cultural identities. Nevertheless, respondents tend to provide food appropriate to the cultural identity they have chosen for their children. For example, those who considered their children to have a Japanese identity provided mainly Japanese food for them. Likewise, those who wanted their children to have an identity encompassing more than one culture, provided food from those cultures. This suggests that either the decision to promote cultural identity through food is made subconsciously or, the influence of food on cultural identity is a natural result of parents providing food they are accustomed to themselves. Having addressed the issues of language, visits to parents' home countries, schooling and/or peer groups, religious and/or cultural activities, and food, it is now time to consider the question of what names to give multicultural children.

Names

While none of the respondents considered the food choices they make to have a major effect on their children's cultural identities, this is in stark contrast to their opinions

regarding their choice of names for their children. In fact, all twenty respondents considered names to be an important part of their children's cultural identities. Please note that some respondents have requested that their children's names are not revealed. In those cases, I have discussed the type of names chosen and the reasons for these choices without mentioning the names. In all cases, surnames are not revealed for security purposes.

Parents can share their own cultural identities with their children through the names they choose for them. Accordingly, seventeen respondents chose names to reflect both parents' cultures. Of these, nine parents achieved this by choosing first names which suit both cultures. Claus and his wife chose a biblical name so that it would be appropriate in both German and British cultures. Elizabeth and her husband named their daughter Karin, which suits both parents' cultures. Sheila and her ex-husband chose names which were easy for people of both countries to pronounce and therefore easy to identify with: Kaz(u), Misha, and Natasha. They are all Japanese names and the children have no middle names. Damahr and her husband also chose Rio as their son's name, as it goes well in both Japanese and English. Rio also has no middle name. Renee's daughter has an English first name and Japanese second name, both of which come from flowers.

Alan's daughter has one given name, which exists in both Japanese and English. His son is named after his own father, following family tradition. His son's middle name is also an English name and was chosen because it shares the first letter of his first name. Makayla's children both have Japanese first names. Mina is also a girl's name in Bulgaria, and Tomoya was called Tommy for the first ten years of his life. They do not follow the Bulgarian custom of having a middle name which adds a suffix to their father's name, for

example, Eric's son would be Ericson. Natasha's daughter has a name which "goes both ways" and her son (still in her womb at the time of the interview) has a name decided for him. It is a Western name that his Japanese grandfather once used as a stage name[10]. Although Natasha has a middle name herself, she "didn't feel the need" to give one to her children. Maria's three children all have Japanese first names, but her daughter's name (Reika) is one which also exists in Hungarian. Her youngest son's name (Jo) is a derivative of his grandfather's name (Jozsef). Masayo's children each have four names: a given name, a middle name after someone in their father's family, their mother's surname, and their father's surname. Masayo ensured that their first names "seem English and seem Japanese". They go by their American surname in both the United States and Japan. However, as they are officially known by their Japanese surname in Japan, Masayo has to make sure that she uses that name when completing forms at hospitals and on other official documents. She uses their American surname at school in Japan so no one is surprised when their *gaijin* (foreigner) father arrives at parent-teacher interviews.

Seven others represented one culture in the first name and the other in the second. Theodora's daughter has an African Arabic first name Aliyah, meaning "first born", as her father wanted a Sudanese name for her. Her second name, Miranari, is from the Manjacko language and means to overcome obstacles in life by being strong and patient. Theodora believes that these names are a very important part of her child's identity as they both reflect her African side (which she shares with both parents). Louise and her husband have given their children Japanese first names and English second names. Their Japanese names are Tsuyoshi, Reina and Marin. Their son's second name is Louise's maiden name and

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[10] Email correspondence with Natasha at the time of writing this report confirms the birth of a healthy boy, named after his grandfather's stage name, as planned.

their daughter's names are names that Louise invented as a child (Carlin and Shanley). Louise has succeeded in having "something unique" in her children's names. Suzanne and her husband chose both Japanese and European names for their children. Emi Alexandra has the same middle name as her mother, Suzanne. Toshimi Nina is named after her father, Toshio.

Rachel's two boys both have Japanese first names and English second names (Tatsuyoshi Jackson and Mitsuyoshi Elliott). Officially in Japan, they have one long first name and Rachel is concerned about this but was determined to follow her culture by including names from her family as second names. Her elder son has her father's middle name and her younger son has her grandmother's maiden name. Renee and her husband gave her daughter a Western first name, Suzanne, to balance her Japanese surname. She also did not want people to experience shock when they met her, which they might do if they were expecting someone who looked Japanese. Her second name is Sakura, meaning Japanese cherry blossoms.

Marie's son has a Japanese first name (Nobuaki) and an English middle name (Aaron). He has a Japanese first name because his parents wanted him to "feel normal" in Japan. He has an English middle name so he can "feel comfortable" in America as people can pronounce it. Jodie's six children all have Japanese first names and English second names. Kahori was born forty nine days after her great-grandmother died and took her name, with minor alterations. Pipi was born on the tenth day of the tenth month of the tenth year of the Japanese Emperor (Japanese years are officially based on the years of rule of the current Emperor). The sound of her birth date (when read in Japanese), along with

her family name, led Jodie and her husband to choose the name Pipi. Riku is named after his grandfather, who died the year he was born. Satori was named "enlightenment" due to some spiritual understanding her father obtained that year. Hyouri was named "iced peach" as she was Jodie's first baby born in winter. Kiki, who was born on Jodie's birthday, was so named to "join Pipi's name in with the family". Jodie's five daughters have middle names which share a pattern of starting and ending with an "A". Her son's middle name also starts with an "A". Jodie likes this idea of consistency between the siblings and their middle names symbolise a bond between them.

Both parents' cultures are also reflected in Stewart's sons names, although their case is quite unusual. Before Stewart adopted his children, they already had Japanese names, Ryuto and Rui, as their parents were both Japanese. Like most Japanese, they have no middle names. They now have Stewart's western surname.

Three respondents have children with entirely Japanese names. Rebecca did not want her sons to be confused by giving them middle names. They have common Japanese first names, Hiroto and Masato. Likewise, Belda's girls also both have Japanese names, in *kanji* and with no middle names. Cynthia's children both have Japanese names. Her husband named her daughter Aira, which means "love and good" and is "pronounceable" by English speakers. Cynthia chose the name Seiji for her son, considering it culturally suitable for him. The name Seiji means sincerity and uses the "ji" from other family member's names. Cynthia's children have no middle names because she herself has no middle names. We have seen how the parents in this study have chosen names specifically to influence their children's cultural identities. However, the physical appearance of a child

also plays a part in their cultural identity formation. Although race does not equal culture, it cannot be denied that race does influence culture, even if this influence is only through how multicultural individuals are viewed by other people in society.

Physical Appearance

Although it is difficult for parents to change the body features and skin colour of their children, fourteen respondents believe that physical appearance is a factor in the development of their cultural identities. Twelve respondents highlighted the importance of their children looking Japanese in order to be accepted as members of the Japanese culture. This is an issue of concern for five parents. It bothers Marie that people say her son does not look at all Japanese when he is definitely half Japanese (his father is full blooded Japanese). She acknowledges that he will not be accepted as one hundred percent Japanese, but does not understand why Japanese people do not separate ethnicity and culture. "When you're an American, it doesn't have anything to do with your ethnicity. It's culture. And it's separate". Jodie explained how Japanese people regard her children as looking like their mother and having a foreign appearance, while Australians think they look Japanese. She sidesteps this issue by joking that her children are lucky enough to resemble neither of their parents! She notes that they look different to their Japanese peers, unlike her Malaysian friend's children who, being entirely Asian, blend in better.

Based on her own observations, Sheila does not believe that a more Western or Eastern appearance makes a difference for a Japanese-Caucasian mixed child. "Even if you look very similar, you're not going to be treated as Japanese". She describes her older two children as looking like their father, with a strong Japanese element which has increased as

they have grown older. She says her youngest child looks Western, and like herself. Natasha describes her daughter as looking "like my baby photos and I looked quite Asian when I was young". She considers her daughter's more Japanese appearance (compared to some of her friend's children) an advantage as she can avoid being "bitten and punched at the park by Japanese kids who think they're freaks". No matter how well they speak, or even act, Japanese, Makayla's children look different and that "sets them apart". Ironically, even though her son looks less Japanese than her daughter, "being different" did not affect him as much. Makayla explained how societal attitudes changed by the time her son entered elementary school. Twenty years ago, it was unusual to see foreigners in Japan; now they are everywhere, including on television. The five year age gap between her children was a crucial five years in respect to Japanese society's attitudes towards multicultural children, in particular those with one Japanese parent. Even her daughter, Mina, is now also enjoying these changes, treating her multicultural status as "an accessory". However, Makayla warns Mina that the positive attention she receives now is the other side of the same coin when she received negative attention. Both are just false images. Makayla regards her children as having Japanese identities, with a multicultural accessory.

Belonging to a cultural minority group in Japan (or in other societies) does not equate to being a visible minority (in other words, being visually identifiable as different). Four interviewees explained how their children's physical appearance was not a concern for them. As Belda (Chinese Indonesian) and her husband (Japanese) are both Asian, their children blend into Japanese society. Physical appearance is also not an issue for Claus' son, as he "looks Western", like both of his parents. However, Claus notes that it would be

more complicated if there was a mix between an Eastern culture and a Western one: "I'm not sure whether Japanese accept foreign looking people as being Japanese". Maria regards her children's appearance as being Japanese. Her husband thinks their eyes look a bit different but Maria doubts even this. While Maria believes that Japanese people do not relate to her well as she does not look Japanese, but they do to her children. As Rachel herself does not look Asian, it is interesting that Rachel says that her sons look more Asian than Western and could pass as 100% Japanese if they needed to. She believes this helps them to be accepted by their Japanese peers.

Three respondents suggested that other societies do not place the same importance on physical appearance as Japan does. When they were growing up in Europe, Suzanne's daughters looked different to their European peers and Suzanne would explain that they looked like they did because their father looked like that. She would also use their friends as examples, saying, for example, that one friend had curly hair because her parents did. However, Suzanne insists that appearance was not an issue for her children. She does reflect that it may have been an issue if her daughters had spent more time in Japan in their formative years. Alan jokes that his daughter is a clone of his wife and his son a clone of himself. He is concerned for his son, as he notes that physical appearance is important to be accepted as being Japanese. In Scotland, it is accent, rather than appearance, that matters. Cynthia describes her children as looking "not totally African-American and not totally Japanese". She comments that although physical appearance is a big issue in Japan (because they stand out), it is not so in America. In the same way that physical appearance must be considered an influence over cultural identity, the issue of labelling children also needs to be considered due to its inevitability.

Two interviewees related further issues regarding the physical appearance of their children. Louise's husband is concerned people might think his children are not his as they appear very Caucasian and do not look Japanese. However, Louise says that nobody has commented. Elizabeth describes her daughter's appearance as being able to "pass for so many things", and has colours like her father (but brown, not black hair) and more facial features like her mother as she grows up. For Karin, her issue with her physical appearance is that "she feels bigger than her friends".

A further two respondents commented on their children's appearance and indicated that since they had no control over the issue, they could not comment on its importance as a factor in the cultural identities they are encouraging for their children. Renee described her daughter as looking European, with big eyes, dimples, and fine hair. Her bone structure is Japanese. Masayo's daughter also looks Caucasian, a unanimous observation by Masayo's family and friends. Her sons appear Japanese in Masayo's opinion, but her Japanese friends think they also look Caucasian. Although parents have little control over the physical appearance of their children, it appears that the more different their children appear, the more problems they will have blending into Japanese society. Having addressed the factors interviewees indicated were the most influential in the solidification of their children's cultural identities, it is now time to consider their answers to the questions about labels, conflicts, multiculturalism, and other related issues.

Labels

Along with judgements based on appearance, come labels. Three respondents have been offended at some stage by the *haafu* label. This label originates from the English word, *half,* and is commonly used in Japan to describe someone who has parents from two different cultures (usually one of these is Japanese). Elizabeth has complained about the term *haafu* and instead used the term *daburu,* from the English word, *double* in front of her daughter. She and her husband have decided "not to have a concrete answer" on their daughter's identity label. At times, they have told her that she is "Japanese AND American", that she comes from the country she last lived in (thus Karin has told people that she is from Nepal), and told her to tell people where her parents come from and to let them decide. However, for simplicity, she is told that she is Japanese in Japan and American in America, and the nationality of the passport which she uses to enter a particular country with. Once questioned by her daughter about what happens on the plane, Elizabeth replied that the Japanese Karin evaporates and the American Karin appears!

When Marie first heard the term *haafu,* before she was even pregnant with Nobuaki, she thought it was insulting. However, she now sees it as a description of fact but does not like the implication that someone is half a person. She is undecided whether she will refer to (or allow others to refer to) her son as *haafu.* In the past, Louise used to correct people when they called her children *haafu* and would insist that they use the term *daburu.* To her, *haafu* meant that something was missing and *daburu* referred to having two cultures. But then, she read of bicultural children feeling the pressure to perform better than other children when called *daburu.* Louise now views bicultural children as individuals who happen to have a mixed cultural identity.

Three respondents stated that they were not offended by the *haafu* label. The responses of two of these interviewees expose the cultural background of the parent as a possible cause for them to take offence. When neither parent is from an English-speaking background, the term *haafu* is viewed as a Japanese word, without connotations from its English origin, *half*. As neither Suzanne nor her husband have English as a mother tongue, the term *haafu* is just a word to them. Suzanne heard her younger daughter use it to describe herself a few days before our interview. Similarly, Rebecca calls her children *daburu* and has heard them refer to themselves as both *daburu* and *haafu*. Although Alan is from an English speaking background, he believes that if he does not find the words offensive, they cannot be used in an offensive way against him or his children. If people say *daburu*, *haafu*, or *gaijin* (foreigner), Alan also uses those terms. However, he is careful not to label his children as this may limit them and he would be "digging a hole" for himself.

Eight other respondents avoid labelling altogether. These include both racially-based terms (e.g. African-American) and nationality-based terms (e.g. Australian). Damahr does not label people as *Japanese* or *African* as she believes that most people, including herself, are a "hodgepodge" of different cultures. However, she does not mind people calling her son *haafu*, as long as it is not said in a derogatory way. She is aware that people will label him and does not want him to be unnecessarily offended by that. Damahr acknowledges that Japanese people see her son as being half Japanese and half something else and that "words mean different things to different people". Stewart does not give his children labels. Stewart himself grew up in a racially mixed neighbourhood in Detroit City

and only discovered he was *White* when he was about twelve years old, when he heard

other children using the word *Nigger*. He immediately went home and asked his parents

what a *Nigger* was. His parents explained that if anyone is a *Nigger*, then he was a *Nigger*

too. In this way, Stewart was brought up not to label other people or judge people based on

the colour of their skin. Natasha does not label even herself. When asked if she could be

considered an Eastern European Australian, she replied that "other people call me

Australian". She referred to Australia as her "place of residence, of birth" and not her

"home". As she has spent most of her adult life in Japan, Japan is more her "home" now

than Australia. Although Natasha would like to avoid labels, she accepts that people will,

and already do, label her children. When somebody asks if her daughter is *haafu*, she

replies that she is not and that "she's mixed up, and so am I". Both Natasha and her

husband (who is half Korean by blood but not by cultural influence) are of mixed ancestry.

If forced to label her child, Natasha calls her "Australian and Japanese", but does not

necessarily want to raise her with either a Japanese or an Australian identity.

Cynthia illustrates how identity is connected to how other people view you. When

she is in America, it is obvious to others that she is African American. When she is in

Japan, people see her as American. Cynthia herself does not have strong African American

cultural ties: "I'm just Cynthia. I'm me". She does not provide a label for her children, but

has heard her son call himself an American. If her children need a label, Maria would like

them to find it for themselves. Maria herself is going through personal identity issues,

having lived in a foreign culture for so long. Belda and Theodora also do not provide any

labels for their children. Makayla abhors labels and tells her children that they are

different, but so is everybody else. Her son must be thinking about this as he wrote an

essay the night before our interview asking why people must be labelled *debu* (fat), *busu* (ugly) or *gaijin* (foreigner). Makayla insists that both positive and negative labels stifle children and discourages parents from doing it. She likens labelling children to putting them in a box and not allowing them to come out.

Three other parents provide their children with nationality labels, but avoid the terms *haafu* and *daburu*. Sheila tells her children that they are English and Japanese but does not provide labels, such as *haafu* or *daburu*. Although Jodie and her husband are not encouraging a particular identity, Jodie believes that her children have a strong Japanese identity as they live in Japan. Jodie does not know whether to call her children *haafu* or *daburu*, but admits that most people call them *haafu*. Lately she has been telling them that they are Japanese, but "there is a difference". She will not tell them that they are Australian as they do not know much about Australian culture. When asked if her children are in a similar situation to the one she grew up in (Jodie partly identified with German culture and could understand some German when she was growing up, but was mostly influenced by Australian culture), Jodie replied that Australia is more multicultural and it is "a little bit different again". Although John and Masayo attempt to encourage both cultural identities "it's kinda hard" and Masayo admits that "they're totally Japanese" as they are living in Japan. However, she jokes that when America is winning in the Olympics or some other event, "they will be American". While her youngest two are too young to care, sometimes her eldest son, Gene, asks her if he is American or Japanese. She replies that he is "half American, half Japanese". When Gene was in the First Grade at elementary school, a boy was mean to him so Masayo asked the boy why. When the boy replied it was because Gene is American, Masayo said that he is also Japanese. Now, Gene and this boy are

friends. Masayo anticipates similar episodes "every once in a while" and will encourage her children not to deny their American heritage but also claim their Japanese one and confront people about their prejudices. Masayo's foresight is necessary as sometimes confrontations or conflicts arise over a multicultural person's identity.

Conflicts

All respondents were asked about possible areas of conflict within individuals, between parents' cultures, with extended family members, and with society. Twelve interviewees stated that they knew of no conflicts regarding their children's cultural identities but eight provided insight into difficult areas of cultural identity development. Theodora spoke of undergoing her personal internal conflicting period during her teenage years. As a child, she had believed that she was Senegalese like her parents and that the language she had acquired at home was the Senegalese language. In fact, it was the Manjacko language from Guinea-Bissau. She was shocked to discover as a teenager that she was not Senegalese. Twenty or thirty of her teenage relatives lived nearby and they all went through the same experience. Later, she came to realize that she is more French than anything because she grew up in France. Theodora is not aware of any conflicts regarding her daughter's identity.

Claus and Stewart spoke of conflicts between parents' cultures. Claus and his wife have a conflict over Christmas presents. While Claus, a German, is used to opening presents on Christmas Eve, his British wife, Rachel, wants to open them on Boxing Day. Stewart is also concerned about differences between his and his wife's cultures. He is

worried that if they teach their children to be Japanese, the boys will lack flexibility but if they teach them to be American, they will become xenophobic.

Jodie, Makayla, and Natasha related conflicts (or perceived future conflicts) with their extended families, in particular their children's grandparents. When Jodie spoke English to her first daughter, she was criticized by her parents-in-law and accused of planning to move back to Australia. This stopped her from speaking English to her children. There was also a time when Jodie's parents criticized her for not teaching her children more English. Jodie believes that this was because they were missing the children and she replied that they could send more letters and English material. Now, her parents are more concerned with learning Japanese and her mother practices Japanese on Japanese people who enter the corner store where she works. Makayla's mother was not happy with "how things developed" regarding her grandchildren's identities because she could not communicate with them and they did not have many "touch points". Although they did speak Bulgarian when they were younger, there came a point when Makayla felt she had to choose to give up making them reply to her in Bulgarian. It was more important to her that she could engage in meaningful exchange with her children than create conflict, especially in their teenage years when they did not spend much time at home. Natasha is aware that there may be possible conflicts with her parents in law over religion. They may also "feel left out" when their grandchildren start speaking English before they learn Japanese. She also believes that "in Japan you'd be naïve not to expect problems" and that there would be fewer issues in Australia.

The final area of possible conflict asked of interviewees was conflict with society. Louise and Rachel provided examples. Louise points out that Japan is not the only country where her children feel conflict over their identities. In Japan, people focus on her children's New Zealand (or *Kiwi*) side. Likewise, in New Zealand, people focus on their Japanese side. When a friend in New Zealand commented that Louise had Japanese children, she had to remind her that they were also *Kiwis*. Rachel replied that, ideally, her children can, and should, have a multicultural identity. However, practically, it may not be possible due to conflicts with society. She stated three reasons for this. Firstly, once they enter the school system, it will be difficult to take them back to America every year. Secondly, Japanese law requires them to denounce one of their nationalities before they turn twenty two years old (they currently hold both Japanese and American passports). Finally, people usually require a single answer to the question "Who are you?" This leads us to our next subsection about multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism

Is it possible to identify with more than one culture and not feel lacking in identity? Ten parents in this study believe it is. Theodora believes that multiculturalism is possible but notes that multicultural people identify more with one culture than another in each period of their lives. Maria hopes, and trusts, that multiculturalism is possible. Most of all, she wants her children to have a base in Japanese culture and be like other Japanese children, while also having an understanding of Hungarian culture. Louise also believes that it is possible to be multicultural and yet identify more with one culture than another. This does not mean having to choose one culture over another and Louise hopes that her children never feel that they must do this. However, they are based in one culture (Japan)

and it hurts Louise to admit that it is more important for them to have a Japanese identity than a *Kiwi* one. It is more important to Louise that her children have their own friends to grow up with, than an understanding of their mother's upbringing. Even so, she aims to ensure that they have a strong base in Japan, while also identifying as New Zealanders.

Although she does not believe that her own children truly feel at home in more than one culture, Suzanne believes that people can be multicultural. However, she doubts that it is necessarily a good thing. "Being at home in one place, and being at home in maybe one or two different other places, means that you don't really have the same kind of roots that somebody has, like me, who grew up in one culture". Depending on personality, this can be a positive or a negative situation. One of Suzanne's daughters thrived in the advantages of living in different places; while the other was "like a plant being uprooted while blooming". She needed about two years to adjust after her moves from Japan to Spain, Spain to Germany, and back to Japan. Then, it was time to move again. The other children at her Japanese kindergarten were surprised she had a voice when she first spoke after six months. She did not play with the other children and refused to eat her lunch. When she left, she would skip happily home, unpack her lunch, and eat it!

Alan praised the work of Nakata (Italian speaking soccer player) and others for their positive influence on Japanese society, in this respect. He believes that multiculturalism is not about parentage but about accommodating and making people feel comfortable. Elizabeth insists that being multicultural is a mindset, related to the awareness, tolerance, and appreciation of different cultures. She admits that in her "heart of hearts" she wants her daughter to be American because, to Elizabeth, being American is being multicultural.

However, she also admits that her husband probably wants their daughter to be "his type of Japanese, which is multicultural".

Belda believes that being multicultural is a positive thing as it enables you to see things from different perspectives. In answer to the question about whether it is possible for someone to be truly multicultural, Belda replied, "I am Chinese Indonesian. Do you think I am truly multicultural?" I asked her if she identifies with both the Chinese and Indonesian cultures. She replied that she spent her time in the Chinese community in Indonesia and does not know a lot about Indonesian culture. However, when she lived in China, she felt like she did not fit there. Belda is actually mixed Indonesian and Chinese Indonesian and relates best to other people from mixed backgrounds. Renee also believes that having a multidimensional identity is in its own category and that people who have experienced different cultures can relate to each other in ways that they cannot with monocultural people. Renee wants her daughter to have Japanese friends as well as multicultural friends. In Renee's opinion, "multicultural people are always a bit confused. I'm a bit confused". She and her husband have established an English literacy centre so that her daughter can create strong relationships with other international children and be stronger in her identity.

To answer whether multiculturalism is possible, Damahr explains her own upbringing which was in both the United States and in Germany. "Oh, totally. That's how I was brought up". She never consciously chose between the two languages and naturally switched between English and German. She went on to describe how language connects you to culture because cultural thoughts and ideas are expressed in words unique to that

culture. Due to the open-mindedness of her entire extended family, Damahr never felt the need to choose one culture over the other until she met people who thought travelling to Canada was a big deal (and Canada was very close). Meeting Americans who were not open-minded made her question her identity as an American. Damahr has a mentally handicapped brother but believes that he is not as handicapped as people who limit themselves by not accepting difference. Jodie believes that "everybody has to become multicultural" and "stay fluid- but have a base". Jodie states that her personal identity was difficult to develop as she moved so much while growing up. On the other hand, she believes that Japanese people are not fluid enough. She hopes that the world can become multicultural and believes that her own, and other, multicultural families have a "big part to play in that".

Four respondents are not confident that multiculturalism is possible. Sheila's answer to this question was "probably not". Although she believes that her children currently have a balance of Japanese and British (or Western) cultural influence in their lives, there will come a time when they will have to choose one over the other. Claus believes that, as parents, he and his wife cannot teach their son to be multicultural; they can only teach him about their own cultures. Masayo notes that the place of residence affects the ability to be multicultural. Before Marie came to Japan, she would have answered in the affirmative but now she is uncertain. She explains how her husband has lived in America for thirteen years but only understands the culture of the time he spent there. She also wonders how reverse culture shock will affect her when she returns to America.

Three respondents provided philosophical insights and pointed out that the deeper issue of personal identity is more important than that of cultural identity. "That's a hard question", according to Cynthia, who sees herself as being in between two cultures. Years ago, she may have answered that she wanted her children to identify with both cultures. Now, she does not see that as a person's "true identity", believing that culture, traditions, and other outside influences do not make you "who you are". She claims that someone may be balanced in two cultures, but unstable, if they do not know "who they are inside". She believes that it is the role of parents to help children understand that who they are is not their physical appearance or where they are living. "You have to know yourself", then you can survive on the "far side of the Earth". Cynthia herself is doing just that. Likewise, Makayla believes that your nationality, or cultural upbringing, "gives you your particular flavour" but it "is not you". Makayla thinks that if you can accept that there are many different flavours in the world and are not heavily identified in one culture, you can be multicultural. Your parents teach you what is right and wrong. Then, you make your own decisions as an adult. Her children know who their father and mother are, but that does not mean that they are they same as their parents. They are individuals. In Makayla's words: "If you are yourself, you are everywhere yourself. If you do not see yourself as Japanese or Bulgarian or American or French or whatever, then you are just human, like everybody else".

Stewart, a biologist by training, states that human beings have 99.1% the same D.N.A. As he believes that "we're all the same under the skin", he's teaching his children to be *syn-cultural*, which is "the culture of man". He said that the U.S. Marines (to which he used to belong) breaks people down into the basic human being, the syn-cultural being,

so that they can understand their fears and dreams. He explained the differences between *Syn-culturalism*, which looks for similarities, and *Cross-culturalism*, which looks for differences. It is more useful to know what others are, than what they are not. Although he disagreed with my use of the word *multicultural*, Stewart did agree with my definition (see Question 6 in Appendix A). He is teaching his children "not to identify with any particular culture" and "to not feel lacking in identity". He insisted that his children have very strong identities, they know who they are, and they speak freely. When questioned on what those identities were, he replied "they're kids who love their parents and they're kids who enjoy learning. They're kids who enjoy music", and added that music "destroys all barriers". He helps his students (who are Japanese managers learning to manage staff in an international business environment) understand who they are by asking them about their knowledge, skills and abilities. He insists that someone's nationality is not who they are. "It doesn't matter where you're from. It's where you're going". The complex natures of identity, culture, and more specifically, multicultural identities are evident in the above results.

Other

At the end of each interview, respondents were asked if there was anything they wished to add. While most respondents stated that they had already said everything that they wanted to say, eight respondents contributed further insights into the healthy identity development of multicultural children. Of these, four interviewees identified factors in positive identity. Stewart provided an analogy of the guidance that he, along with his wife, are providing for their children. He said that he does not want to confuse his children by putting different *anchors* (labels or identities) on them. That would weigh them down. He also does not want them to be totally *anchorless*, floating around without any identity. He

is providing *handholds*, for them to hold on to. He tells them that their father is an American, but does not tell them that they are American as well. He tells them that their biological father is Japanese, but does not tell them that they are Japanese as well. He teaches them who the people around them are and that only they can judge who they are themselves. He also provides them with tools, such as language and music, as *handholds*. Likewise, Cynthia and her husband also provide information about themselves and their respective cultures. Sometimes, Cynthia has to explain to her son that she did not do something when she was young because she was not brought up in Japan. His identity is still developing but Cynthia thinks that "he'll be Japanese", due to the strong Japanese influence he is receiving. Her daughter is "a typical American teenager". She is proud of Aira as "she knows what she wants to do".

Similarly, Alan and his wife introduce languages and cultures other than their own to their daughter and son so that the children can realise that there are more than two cultures in the world. Alan and his wife do not want their children to have a mindset like some Japanese people have who ask him if all foreigners do things like he does (to which he replies that he cannot answer on behalf of five billion people!). Alan believes that, in Japan, the *haafu* or *daburu* identity is of more relevance than the cultural mix. His family associates with other families like their own, where one parent is not Japanese and they are bilingual, so that his children are aware that they are not the only children in Japan like this. Jodie wants her children to be strong enough to look after themselves, wherever they are in the world. This requires them to have a strong home base and an open attitude to all cultures. "Stability within the home" is the most important thing. "If that's okay, then usually everything else will follow".

The other four respondents warned of negative aspects of parenting multicultural children. Rachel is disappointed that people in America (and Japan due to America's influence on Japan) are becoming less tolerant of multicultural people due to the increase in terrorism. "After *9-11*, it's everyone for themselves, and, you know, if you happen to be of multiraces, well, heaven help you". Sheila warns against overloading children with bilingualism. She says that it is an enormous burden to be competent in two languages, both written and spoken, in all areas of life. She points out that bilingual children in India, for example, use English for school and academic areas, and another language in the home, but not both in all areas of their daily lives. She also provides an example from her own life. She finds it difficult to talk in English when talking about *kimono* (Japanese traditional dress) as she learnt how, and is licensed, to dress people in *kimono* in Japanese. Sheila also explains that life is more complicated for "our children" than for those growing up in one culture as there is more information, values, and options to choose from.

Natasha explains that it is easier to live in a monocultural society "because all the rules are laid out for you" and there is not much choice, or thought, required. In a multicultural society, "your own personal morals and ethics come into play a lot more than if the group's deciding for you". She prefers a fluid multicultural society over a structured monocultural one as she wants her children to meet people who have different ways of doing things and to "experience free thought". Natasha does not negate the role of culture for groups to function. "You'd never get anything done if you didn't function together as a group at work. Or, at school, you'd never learn anything if all the kids went nuts". However, Natasha values the culture of the family ("what you learn from your

Grandmother") much higher than that of the media or "nationality". She wants to teach her children to be "thinking, young individuals who can get along in many social or cultural situations". She believes that this cultural identity will come from "feeling confident in who they are as a person, and being loved, and being able to express themselves, and I don't know". She has never felt lacking in identity, nor felt the need to have a strong cultural identity. However, living in Japan, she has realized that some people think it is important or they will feel "lost". Natasha believes that a weak personal identity is the culprit. She is angered by the sort of nationalism which makes people proud of "something that means absolutely nothing, in the scheme of things". Natasha thinks it is "just ridiculous to think that we're that different".

Marie told me about her cousins, who are half Japanese and half American. They told her that they had felt disconnected and had no home-base as children as they moved around the world when they were growing up. As teenagers they started to explore their identity more and Marie believes that the place where they were when they did this exploring seems to have had an impact on the identities they chose for themselves as adults. One cousin was in California at the time and has now lived there longer than anywhere else and shows no signs of "cultural confusion". The other was in Georgia and has chosen an "international lifestyle" with lots of travelling. Marie believes that this cousin is more comfortable when he is "not made to fit anywhere" and "everyone is an outsider". Marie's cousins have taught her that cultural identity depends on the individual. She is concerned that her son may not be allowed to be the individual that he is, in Japan: "One of my fears here is that he's - what if he's square and they knock off the edges to make him fit?"

Summary

In brief, respondents discussed factors which influence their children's identity development. Language development, names, visits to parents' home countries, and schooling and/or peer groups were highlighted as the most influential factors in their children's identity development. In addition, physical appearance and labels were also noted as influencing their children's identities, although parents often had less control over these factors. Although some parents did not place importance on participating in religious and cultural activities, most parents did. A conclusive finding was that these twenty respondents did not consciously place much cultural value on food, although the data does suggest a relationship between food and cultural identity. This survey has shown that there is no single way for parents to approach the issue of developing healthy cultural identities in their multicultural children. In addition to the various ways parents can influence their children's cultural identities; this study has also revealed factors which are outside parents' control. One such example is when a parent speaks to their child in one language but the child refuses to reply to them in that language. Another example is Japanese society's refusal to accept a child as Japanese based on their appearance, despite the child having one Japanese parent and being fluent both in the linguistic and cultural aspects of Japanese society.

Chapter V: Discussion

Discussion

The cultural identities of multicultural children and the influences on the development of these identities are discussed below in relation to the multidisciplinary literature introduced in Chapter II: Literature Review. Further, the findings from Chapter IV: Results are discussed. Finally, suggestions for parents of multicultural children are concluded and recommendations are made for further study in this vital area.

Woodward (1997) points out that often difference is what identifies us. If someone is a man, they are not a woman. If they are *Black*, they are not *White*. We are straight or gay; healthy or unhealthy. But, where does this leave people who undergo sex changes? Likewise, if somebody has a medical condition, such as diabetes or arthritis, are they necessarily unhealthy. In the same way, if somebody belongs to one cultural group, does this mean that they cannot belong to another one? When someone does not belong to a dominant class, culture, or gender order, identity is often defined by what they are not, rather than what they are (JanMohamed, 1995). Is this an appropriate view of an individual's cultural identity? This study casts strong doubt on this, evident in the choices made by the parents in this study for their children to identify with more than one cultural group.

Stonequist's (1937) model portrays bicultural people as belonging to neither culture. If this is so, how can children know who they are by identifying with their parents? This need for children to mirror themselves in their parents is evident in Lacan's (1977) model.
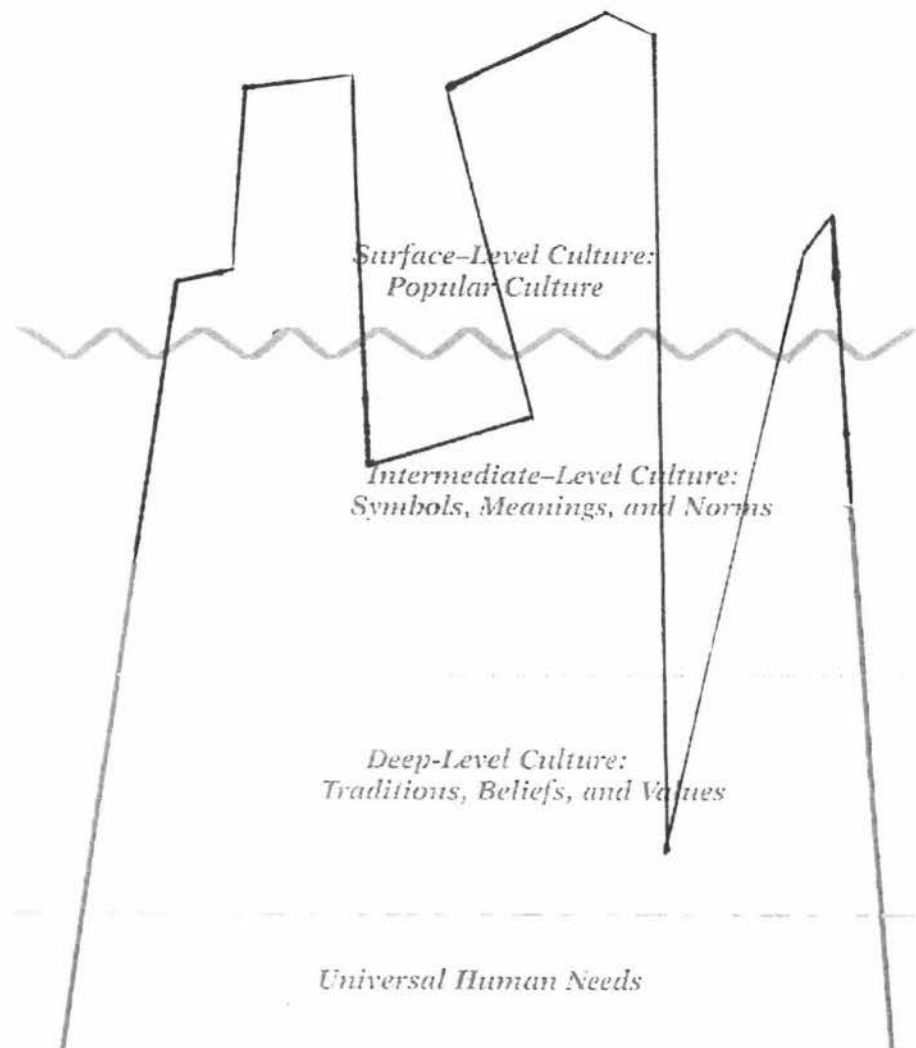
Indeed, Lacan's model is supported by my findings, as parents in this study spoke of how they are teaching their children about themselves and their own cultures. This is also evidence of the impracticability of Stonequist's model. Additionally, Du Gay et al. (1997) view membership in one cultural group as a rejection of another. This suggests that membership in two or more cultures is contradictory. However, Bowles (1993), Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995), New (1999), and many of the parents in this study claim it is complementary. Greer's (2005) yin yang model, which illustrates this complementary nature, is a welcome change. Although Greer's model is a useful representation of the wholeness of bicultural people, it does not represent multicultural identities. Likewise, although Ting-Toomey and Chung's (2005) iceberg metaphor illustrates the complexities of culture, it also does not relate to a multicultural individual. However, an adaptation of the iceberg metaphor to suit a multicultural individual is possible, as I have illustrated in Figure 3: Multicultural Identities Using Ting-Toomey and Chung's Iceberg Metaphor on page 95.

In my model, the iceberg represents a multicultural individual and the peaks represent the cultures comprising the individual's cultural identity. The shapes of these peaks change over time as a person's cultural identity changes. New peaks may also be developed as one begins to identify with new cultures. The fictional individual depicted in Figure 3 identifies with three separate cultures. The two peaks on the left appear similar on the surface and could represent an individual's identification with two similar cultures, such as two Western cultures. The surface-level cultural manifestations are similar, such as sharing a common language; yet they are identifiably different, such as having a different accent. These cultures may share common symbols, meanings, and norms in their intermediate-levels, but there may also be areas where they are different, resulting in gaps

between these two cultures. For example, there may be similar norms for eye contact but different ones for punctuality. The gully dividing these two peaks represents the amount of change an individual must undertake to identify with, or operate in, these two cultures. As an individual becomes skilled at switching from one culture to another, cultural fluidity occurs. In other words, an individual can operate in one culture at surface-level, submerge to the point of shared intermediate-level culture, and re-emerge to operate at the surface-level culture of a second culture. An example of this occurring very quickly is when an interpreter communicates in a culturally-appropriate manner to a person from one culture and then communicates in a different way to a person from a different culture in a manner that is culturally-appropriate to them.

The third peak in this iceberg appears quite different from the other two peaks and could represent the individual's identification with a culture which is very different to the first two, for example an Eastern culture. The smaller surface-level culture could represent either less of a superficial identification with that culture or that culture having less obvious surface-level aspects. The depth of the gully between this third culture and the first two cultures represents the lack of shared intermediate-level culture, such as social rules on public touching. It is only in deep-level culture that common ground can be found, for example a shared value of honesty. There are also gaps at this level representing differences, such as beliefs about reincarnation. The base of the iceberg, namely universal human needs, is shared by all cultures and illustrates the syn-cultural nature of all human beings.

Figure 3: Multicultural Identities Using Ting-Toomey and Chung's Iceberg Metaphor

Surface–Level Culture:
Popular Culture

Intermediate–Level Culture:
Symbols, Meanings, and Norms

Deep-Level Culture:
Traditions, Beliefs, and Values

Universal Human Needs

(adapted by Erina Ogawa from Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2005, p. 28)

While my adapted iceberg model can provide a visual tool regarding multicultural identities, how does a parent reply when a multicultural child asks, "What am I?" when it is not appropriate to answer with a single nationality label, which is an option other parents have? According to Crohn (1995), multicultural children can choose to identify with either

the majority culture, the minority culture, both cultures, or neither culture. The parents in this study also chose between three of the above options. Eight chose what I have termed a *Global Identity* which relates to the last option on Crohn's list – relating to neither of the parents' cultures. Six respondents chose what I have termed a *Combined Identity* (for example, Japanese and American) which involves identifying with the cultures of both parents. A further six interviewees chose the identity of the majority (namely, *Japanese*). While none of the parents chose to identify their children with the minority culture, parents in all three of the above categories referred to their children as being *multicultural, mixed,* or *haafu* (in other words, minority children) and encouraged them to make friends with other minority children.

Jacobs (1992) and Sebring (1985) encourage parents to provide biracial labels for their children. In Japan, such labels might be *haafu* or *daburu*. In this study, the term *haafu* was found offensive at some stage by three respondents who have an English speaking background; but another three claimed that they were not offended, two of whom do not have English as their first language. The parents who use the term *haafu* have also heard their children use it to describe themselves. It is logical that children will use labels their parents have used. Perhaps it is also logical that if the term *haafu* is considered a constraint, then so are nationality terms, for example, *Australian*. Almost half of the parents in this study made it clear that they want their multicultural children to be regarded as individuals and not labelled. They believe that labelling, or categorisation into cultural boxes, would force their children to limit their view of themselves based on the limitations imposed on them by society. These eight respondents included nationality terms in their dislike of the use of labels. This is an unexpected finding and is not given appropriate

consideration in the literature that it perhaps deserves. However, two of these parents reluctantly accepted the *haafu* label, nationality terms, and other labels as a necessity for other people's benefit even though they would rather avoid them.

This reluctance is understandable as these labels, including nationality terms, may signal rejection of membership in a cultural group. In Japan, rejection as a member of the mainstream culture is more likely than in other countries due to the prevalent myth that all Japanese are the same (Murphy-Shigematsu, 1993). Ironically, Murphy-Shigematsu encourages the use of nationality terms to ease acceptance of minorities into Japanese society, while the parents in this study avoid them with the same goal in mind. Whereas Murphy-Shigematsu is encouraging recognition of two cultures not having to be mutually exclusive, the parents in this study highlighted other people's emphasis on the different culture(s) in their children's multicultural identities. It is disturbing for parents when other people stress differences instead of similarities in their children and therefore do not relate to them as being of the same culture, as recounted by one respondent. This is a pitfall of cross-culturalism identified by another respondent, where differences are emphasised instead of similarities, as in syn-culturalism. A third interviewee pointed out that, aside from personal grievances, this type of thinking can also lead to large scale conflict between groups of people, and even to world wars. This interviewee also provided two examples of society's cross-cultural categorisation of multicultural individuals. There are laws which require people to choose one nationality (Japan requires this by age twenty-two) and intolerance of multiracial people due to increased terrorism (in particular, 9/11). Although labelling and categorisation may be unavoidable at times, a child should not be encouraged to believe that they must choose between the cultures of his or her parents.

Although society is sometimes harsh on these families by making it difficult for them to identify their children with the cultures of both parents, less conflict was reported than expected. Perhaps this reflects the positive attitude of these parents; an attitude necessary to raise children with complex (compared to children from monocultural backgrounds) cultural identities. It may also be an indication of sampling bias; other parents of multicultural children (possibly dealing with internal conflicts or conflicting opinions from their partners, extended family, or local community) may not have felt comfortable to respond to the invitation to partake in this research. Another possibility is that respondents were hesitant to discuss conflicts (although they were open to discuss other topics).

Conflicts within individuals, between parents' cultures, with extended family members, and with society were identified by eight interviewees. One parent spoke of her own experiences as a multicultural teenager. Two discussed conflicts with their own and their partner's cultures. Three spoke of past or possible future conflicts with extended family members. Two provided examples of conflicts with society. Although not raised directly in response to this question, another area of conflict is the problems sometimes caused by parents of children's peers. This was mentioned by two respondents, and in the case of one parent this was serious enough for her to enrol her sons in private schools. This question on conflict was also intended to expose any discrepancies between the two parents or with other people who significantly influence their children's identities (see Limitations). There do not appear to be any significant discrepancies in this respect. Therefore, the responses of just one parent may be deemed a reliable indication of the cultural influences

on their children. This is an important finding for researchers in this area, especially in studies like this one where an interview with the other parent would be difficult to obtain in many cases.

Further findings relate to the nature of multicultural identities. Ten respondents believed that multiculturalism is possible but four were uncertain that a person could relate to more than one culture equally and yet not feel lacking in identity. A further three stressed that a deeper issue, that of personal identity, was of more importance. This finding highlights the complexity of human identities; there can be equal components on one level (specifically, multiculturalism) as well as different levels of identity (specifically, personal identity and cultural identity). In addition, this study showed that cultural identity is not constant. While five respondents spoke of having a multicultural upbringing themselves, seven told of developing a multicultural identity as adults. The fluidity of multicultural identities is also evident in comments made by the following six respondents. Three interviewees indicated that multicultural identities can be confusing and difficult, two spoke of how these identities can change throughout an individual's life, and one respondent noted that being multicultural does not necessarily require an equal influence from each culture.

However, there was debate over the conditions for multiculturalism. On one hand, six parents stated that multiculturalism is a mind-set for all people, regardless of their racial constitution. On the other hand, two respondents believed that parentage, place of residence, and other factors limit the ability to be multicultural and a further two warned that, due to personality factors, multiculturalism may not be desirable for all people.

Finally, an enlightening finding regarding multiculturalism is that five parents regarded their children having a culturally mixed or *haafu* identity to be of more relevance than the parents' cultures, especially in Japan. In other words, a multicultural identity may be of more relevance to an individual than the cultural composition of that identity. As our identities are strongly influenced by our parents (Piskacek & Golub, 1973) through family activities such as language, food and holiday celebrations (Cuellar et al., 1980), it is timely to discuss the family activities and other factors parents use to facilitate the development of their multicultural children's cultural identities.

Of the factors involved in cultural identity development, physical appearance is one of the more influential ones in Japan. Fourteen parents in this study considered physical appearance to be an important factor in cultural identity development. Of these, twelve commented on the importance of looking Japanese in order to be accepted as Japanese. While being a visible minority is not an issue for children with two Asian biological parents, children with a biological parent of African or European descent are unlikely to be accepted as a Japanese person. In such cases, physical appearance may override linguistic ability and cultural upbringing. Further research into the importance of physical appearance for multicultural individuals in Japan is welcomed.

A conclusive finding was that language is an important factor influencing cultural identity; a factor identified by all twenty respondents. Two respondents described language as a "tool", as did Heller (1987). Heller claimed it is used to participate in cultural communities; one of my respondents believed it provides flexibility to travel and another described it as a communication tool to facilitate identity development. Although not using

the term "tool", two other respondents also stressed the importance of language to communicate with family and one spoke of its value in passing on cultural knowledge. Three others emphasized the link between language and cultural identity and another four detailed the effort involved in their children's linguistic development.

Another important link in cultural identity provided by many parents is visits to parents' home countries. Eighteen respondents described trips back to their (or their partner's) home countries as extremely important in the formation of their children's identities. Of these, nine currently make regular visits and two intend to make regular visits when their children are older. One respondent plans to not only visit, but also live in both parents' countries of upbringing. Barriers to regular overseas trips were identified in seven cases: work or study commitments, high financial costs, hot or cold temperatures in the country to visit, and social unrest making a country unsafe to visit.

While six parents in this study chose a Japanese identity for their children, none chose a single nationality-based identity which was not Japanese. This is an indication of the power of the culture of residence. It should be noted that in the two cases where neither parent is Japanese, these parents did not regard a Japanese identity as an option. In addition to the lack of Japanese cultural identities in their own backgrounds, these respondents also did not intend to remain in Japan for the length of their children's childhoods. Eight parents chose a global identity, not determined by the cultures of their parents or the people around them. Perhaps this is influenced by the likelihood of the family living in other countries during their children's childhoods. Five respondents mentioned the possibility of their families living in a country other than Japan in the future. Another respondent stated

that in an ideal world her son would spend six months of each year in each country to develop his bicultural identity.

Those respondents with older children were more likely to recognize the strong influence of peers on their children's cultural identities, confirming the findings of Caldas (2006). The fact that seventeen respondents considered schooling and peer groups to be important influences on their children's identities, confirms Collier (1998), Erikson (1968), and Holliday et al.'s (2004) statements that identities are moulded through the process of communicating with others and Erikson and Greer's (2005) assertions that identities are dependent on others' acceptance of them. While seven parents in this study spoke of taking care to provide multicultural peers for their children, six parents placed priority on providing a sense of belonging in Japanese society by ensuring their children have Japanese peers. Three parents made their schooling choices to avoid discrimination.

Respondents were unanimous in determining names to be a major factor in cultural identity development. While seventeen respondents chose names which suit both (or all) cultures of the parents, three respondents chose Japanese names. In five cases, names (usually middle names) were chosen to follow family traditions.

An additional way that family traditions can be followed and cultural ties can be strengthened is through religious festivals and other cultural activities. Fifteen respondents indicated that religious and cultural activities have an important influence on cultural identity development. Seven of the families in this study tried to observe both Japanese and Western religious and/or cultural activities, while eight chose the religion and cultural

activities of one parent over the other. In nine cases, families attended such activities for cultural awareness rather than religious significance. Therefore, the likelihood of religious and cultural activities being a major factor on the identity of a multicultural child depends on the beliefs of the family.

According to Piskacek and Golub (1973), food is one aspect of identity formation. However, none of the respondents in this study thought that food was a major influence in shaping their children's cultural identities. Five interviewees chose the food they provided for their children due to its nutritional value or related reasons, four for convenience, three made their choices to accommodate other family members, and eight because it is what they like or know best how to cook. Although she did not highlight food as a major influence on her children's identities, one parent made a point of describing the cultural origins of food she prepares for her children and teaching them to eat it in a culturally appropriate way. Due to the globalisation of societies in recent years, food has become more international with food from different countries being available in local supermarkets. Perhaps the influence of food on cultural identity becomes apparent when it is not available. The influence of food on cultural identity is an area deserving further research.

As discussed above, parents are providing their children with cultural awareness in a variety of ways. They aim to expand, rather than limit, their children's identities and future possibilities. Four respondents provided analogies or advice for other parents in similar situations. One parent provided an excellent analogy in providing *handholds* for children to hold on to and discover for themselves who they are, and not weighing them down with *anchors*. Similarly, another spoke of both parents teaching their children about

their own cultures. Likewise, a third respondent introduces his children to languages and cultures outside the family to further expand his children's cultural identities. A fourth interviewee warned against weighing down multicultural children with too many expectations, especially regarding linguistic performance. In addition, four parents identified other important factors in cultural identity development: a child's personality (two respondents raised this issue), family stability, and family culture.

This research has confirmed the need highlighted by Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995) for more resources and information about the role parents play in the development of multicultural children's cultural identities. This is made evident by requests from respondents and others for the findings of this study to be made available to them. At the time of interviewing, as well as at the time of writing, respondents have queried when the findings will be available. Many are keen to find out what identities other parents have chosen for their children and how they are assisting them to develop these identities and become confident adults. Respondents affirmed the need for more research in this area- particularly of anecdotal research/case studies- saying that they would be interested in these findings. In addition, representatives of the internet and local support groups through which contact was made with many of these respondents, have also requested the results be made available to them as soon as possible.

Conclusions

This report examined which cultural identities parents are encouraging their multicultural children to develop and how they are facilitating the development of these identities. It answered two research questions. The answer to the first research question,

What cultural identities are parents encouraging their multicultural children to have?, is that parents encourage cultural identities which aid integration into the culture of residence, while at the same time reflecting the cultures of both parents and enabling their children to enter a global society. Different parents emphasise different aspects of the above and I have termed the resulting identities *Japanese, Combined,* and *Global.* Regarding the second research question, ***What strategies are being used by parents to build stable cultural identities for their children?***, parents in this study identified six factors which affect the development of cultural identity: language, visits to parents' home countries, schooling and/or peer groups, religious and/or cultural activities, names, and physical appearance. In this study, parents did not identify food as an important element of cultural identity development. Using these identified factors and the range of methods parents used to develop their children's cultural identities, the following four suggestions are made for parents of multicultural children.

Firstly, to fully participate in a culture, some linguistic ability is a necessity. Therefore, children should be exposed to all the languages on which their identity is based and encouraged to learn to use them well, without placing too much expectation on excellence in many languages in all four linguistic skills (namely, speaking, listening, reading and writing). If parents consider a global or international identity is appropriate for their child, the important points to remember are to develop awareness within the child that different languages exist and to teach a language which is spoken internationally.

Secondly, immersion in each culture is essential. This can be achieved by regular contact with members of the child's cultural groups through visits to parents' home

countries as well as schooling and peer group choices. If parents wish to include contact with various cultures in everyday life, they can choose different cultural groups for each activity, for example they could send their child to a Japanese school, an American Boy Scouts group and a Muslim mosque.

Thirdly, awareness of the cultural activities specific to each cultural group is also valuable. Certain religious and cultural activities are known by all members of a culture, even if they do not participate in them directly. If these values are important to a family, their children should attend relevant religious or cultural events. If not, parents should develop awareness in their child(ren) of the values and cultural activities of the cultures they are encouraging their child(ren) to identify with.

Finally, culturally-appropriate names are important. Although it is difficult for parents to change the physical appearance of their children, they can choose names for them to provide a source of identification with the desired cultural groups. This can be achieved by using one name which will suit all cultural groups, or a combination of names to reflect the multicultural identity of the child.

It should be noted that despite the insistence of respondents that food was not an issue in the cultural identity development of their children, the relationship between food choice and culture choice suggests that food does in fact play a part. One conclusion of this study is that it may not be necessary for parents to take any special measures regarding food, as their food choices, determined by other considerations (such as convenience and their ability to cook certain foods), may naturally achieve the desired result.

In addition to the suggestions provided above, there is another important lesson to be learnt from this study. It is not necessary for parents to develop every aspect of their children's cultural identities in every area of their lives at one time. For example, you could send your children to a school which is dominated by one cultural group and take them to cultural or activity groups with children from other cultures. Another example would be to celebrate the various cultural festivals important to the different cultures within your family. Above all, teach your child about you and your culture and encourage your partner to do the same so that your child can incorporate the cultural identities of both parents into their own identity.

Parents of multicultural children are encouraged to apply the wealth of knowledge provided by the respondents in this study. However, as is evident in the data, there is no single solution to suit every family as the range of factors, or cultural influences, are unique to each family. When we account for different personalities, we discover that not only every family, but every child, is unique. This fact, which is often obvious to parents, must not be overlooked, either by parents or by researchers. In response to my cousin-in-law (quoted in the Introduction), it is not as simple as saying that boys will be like their fathers and girls will be like their mothers. Additionally, business managers, educators, and members of society in general are encouraged to take note of the growing numbers of people with multicultural identities and allow for cultural diversity – not only by recognising people from different cultures working, studying, and communicating together, but also in recognising the cultural diversity within individuals.

Recommendations

In this study, twenty people kindly shared details of their families' activities for the benefit of others in similar situations. Many respondents expressed their keen desire to hear about other respondents. This in itself is evidence that more research is required in this area. Hopefully, a future study of the same families will be possible to see if the children have grown up with the cultural identities their parents intended them to have.

This qualitative study has identified several factors which influence identity development. Quantitative studies into the significance of these factors on the cultural identities of multicultural children would be useful. Additional factors could include the significance of maternal and paternal influences (including the significance of which parent is more involved in child-raising, and the linguistic and other abilities of the parents); the most appropriate ages for certain strategies (including visits to parents' home countries and parental influence over choice of peers through the adolescent years); the gender of the child (perhaps there is something in my cousin-in-law's comment!); the culture of residence (including the effect of mobility of families); the notion of dominant cultures (specifically the effect of cultures being perceived as superior or inferior on the identities of multicultural children); economic factors (and the related constraints on parents); and personality types (specifically of the children). Further research, both qualitative and quantitative in nature, in different geographical locations is also recommended. More narrative enquiry accounts, including longitudinal studies showing changes in cultural identity over time, are also required. Research from the viewpoint of multicultural people and their families, as opposed to monocultural views of them, is desirable. Related to this, a syn-cultural mindset, rather than a cross-cultural one, is a necessity.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

Questions

1. Please describe your family to me.

2. What cultural identity are you encouraging your child(ren) to have?

3. Are there any conflicts within yourself, your family or your community regarding this identity?

4. What do you consider to be the most important factors in solidifying this identity?

5. Do you provide any labels for your child(ren) to tell others who they are?

6. Do you think that it is possible to be truly multicultural? ie. To not identify more with one culture over another and not feel lacking in identity.

7. Do you have any other thoughts on this topic of your child(ren)'s identity?

Appendix B: Information Sheet

Information Sheet

This interview is about your opinion regarding your child(ren)'s identity and strategies you use to develop this identity. You don't need to give your name or any information that will identify you, if you don't want to. You also have the right to decline answering any questions that you don't want to answer. The research has been judged low risk by the Massey University Human Ethics committee. I will provide a summary of my research results at the end, if you want. Thank you for your participation.

Erina Ogawa

> If you have any questions about the research please contact me at
>
> █████████████
>
> or my supervisor, Dr. Heather Kavan from the Department of Communication and Journalism, Massey University, New Zealand at H.Kavan@massey.ac.nz

Appendix C: Consent Form

Consent Form

I agree to participate in research undertaken by Erina Ogawa for her Masters thesis through Massey University in New Zealand on the identity of children in cross-cultural families. I do this voluntarily. Yes/No

I agree to the information I provide being used in the thesis, as a direct quote or otherwise. Yes/No

I agree for my real name to be used. Yes/No

I agree for the city I live in to be mentioned. Yes/No

I agree for my photo to be included. Yes/No

I agree for our conversation to be recorded. Yes/No

Name:
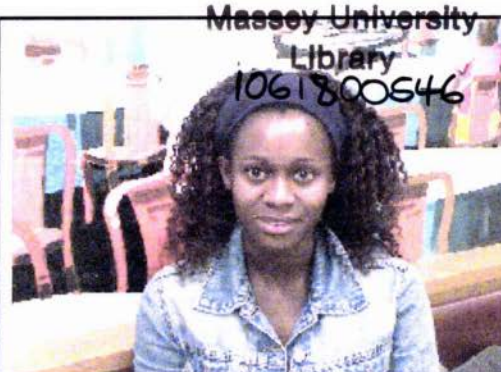
Address:

Phone:

Email:

Date:

Signature:

Appendix D: Participants' Photos and Identifiers for Easy Reference When Viewing the Results. Names (ages in years), and cultural identities of the respondents and their family members are provided under the photo of each respondent. Please note that some respondents chose not to reveal the names of some or all of their family members.		
This guide uses information from the **Respondent Introductions** (p. 29) and **Table 1** (p. 37) of this report.	*Damahr (35), American/German; Makoto (30), Kyushu Japanese; Rio (2) Global*	*Theodora (28), French/African; Aziz (28), Swedish/African; Aliyah (1), French/Swedish/African*
Stewart (52), American; Rina (36), Japanese; Ryuto (7) & Rui (4), Global	*Louise (37), Kiwi; Yoshiharu (47), Japanese; Tsuyoshi (11), Reina (8), & Marin (5), Japanese*	*Rachel (37), American; husband (39), Japanese; Tatsuyoshi (6) & Mitsuyoshi (2), American/Japanese*

Elizabeth (46), American; Katsunori (48), Inaka Japanese; Karin (14), Mixed

Renee (37), American/Italian/Irish; Motoyasu (46), Japanese; Suzanne (2), Japanese/American

Sheila (45), British; ex-husband (44), Japanese; Kaz(u) (12), Misha (9), & Natasha (3), International

Marie (31), American; Yoshiaki (33), Japanese; Nobuaki (8mths), Japanese/American

* **Maria** (32), Hungarian; Yasuhiro (36), Japanese; Ryu (8), Reika (6), & Joe (4), Japanese

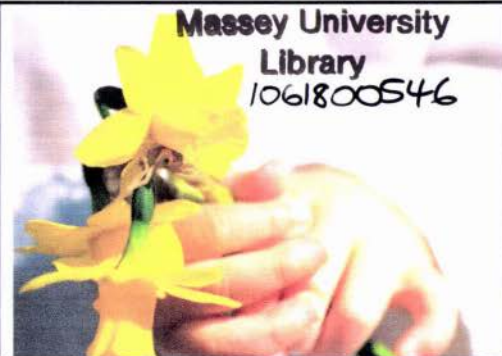**Makayla** (45), Bulgarian; husband (47), Kyushu Japanese; Mina (18) & Tomoya (14), Unique

Cynthia (44), American; Kouji (45), Japanese; Aira (21) & Seiji (8), Unique

Jodie (35), Australian; Shigehiro (36), Japanese; Kahori (12), Pipi (7), Riku (5), Satori (3), Hyouri (2), & Kiki (1), Japanese

* # **Natasha** (38), Australian/Eastern European/ British; husband (34), Japanese/Korean; daughter (1) & son (unborn), World

Key:

* Alias. These respondents chose not to be called by their real names.

These respondents chose not to have their photo included.

Suzanne (46), German;
Toshio (51), Japanese;
Emi (19) & Nina (17), Fluid

* Alan (41), Scottish;
wife (37), Kyushu Japanese;
daughter (5) & son (2), Japanese

Masayo (36), Kansai Japanese;
John (35), American; Gene (8),
Erin (5), & Shaun (4), Japanese

Belda (34), Chinese Indonesian; Yuji
(40), Japanese; Hinata (5) & Nichika
(4), Chinese Indonesian/Japanese

 # Claus (?), German;
Rachel (?), British;
Son (4), German/British

Rebecca (43), Filipino;
Nobuyoshi (50), Japanese;
Hiroto (17) & Masato (16), Japanese