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TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Introduction

Between 1990 and 2013, the number of international migrants increased globally by 50% to 232 million (United Nations, 2013). By 2017 this figure had risen to 258 million (United Nations, 2017). The significant flow of migrants between national borders has resulted in an increasing number of bicultural individuals. Many workforces subsequently have a rising number of bicultural employees and managers (Brannen and Thomas, 2010). Bicultural individuals are those who identify with, have been exposed to, and have internalised two cultures (Benet-Martinez et al., 2002). Biculturalism refers to “the ability to comfortably understand and use the norms, ways of thinking and attitudes common within two cultural systems” (Friedman and Liu, 2009: 333). Monocultural individuals on the other hand are those who identify with and have internalised only one culture.

The study of biculturalism and bicultural individuals is moving beyond its origins in the psychology literature. Business and management scholars are increasingly recognizing the significance of bicultural experiences and skills within organisations (e.g. Dau, 2016; Fitzsimmons, 2013; Brannen and Thomas, 2010; Hong, 2010). Bicultural individuals, who are poised between two cultures, multiple languages, and several cultural traditions (Hong et al., 2016), are increasingly seen to represent a significant source of value for multinational organisations that operate across multiple geographic borders (Fitzsimmons, 2013). Organisations with large scale global operations are heavily dependent on the willingness of their employees to work outside of their home country (Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, 2016). Despite the consistent increase in the need for internationally mobile employees (Brookfield GRS, 2016; 2014), many multinational companies have been faced with unwillingness amongst their employees to relocate internationally (Kim and Froese, 2012; Society for Human Resource Management, 2010; Hippler, 2009; Collings et al., 2007; Konopaske and Werner, 2005). This has made it difficult for such companies to fill international assignment positions.

Of equal importance to the need to fill international assignment positions with individuals that are willing to go on an international assignment, is the need to deploy individuals who are suitable for assignments. As multinational organisations become increasingly global in their scope, and indeed deploy more international assignees, there is rising need for employees who possess the competencies to operate globally (Caligiuri et al., 2009). Bicultural individuals may possess such competencies. Indeed, from an organisational perspective, a value of bicultural employees is that they can apply their cultural knowledge across different cultural contexts (Kane and Levina, 2016).

This paper aims to examine how biculturalism might impact a person’s receptiveness to working internationally. The paper set out to achieve this aim by considering how, cultural identification, which refers to an individual’s sense of identification with, and internalisation of, a national culture, influences an individual’s willingness to undertake an international assignment. While the term “cultural identification” may cover a broad spectrum of identity types, for the purpose of this paper, cultural identification refers to whether an individual identifies as monocultural or bicultural. Specifically, the paper aims to answer the research question, ‘What is the impact of biculturalism, compared to monoculturalism on willingness to undertake an international assignment?’. This paper responds to a call in the international

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

human resource management literature for research that considers culture specific differences when examining willingness to undertake an international assignment (Froese et al., 2013).

Literature Review

International Assignments

International assignments play a key role in the implementation of an organisation's international strategy. They involve the temporary relocation of an employee by their organisation to another country to complete specific tasks and accomplish organisational goals (Shaffer et al., 2012). The traditional international assignment is typically one to three years long, but can last up to five years (Dowling et al., 2008). The emergence of several alternatives to the traditional (long-term) assignment has given organisations greater flexibility in the deployment of international assignees (Collings and Isichei, 2017). The 2015 Brookfield Global Mobility Trends Survey found that 88% of respondents stated that their assignment population will either increase or remain the same (Brookfield GRS, 2015).

Selecting the best candidates for international assignments is of key importance to MNCs as it influences their future success (Scullion and Collings, 2006). Selection systems for international assignments differ from those for local positions as greater emphasis should be placed on predicting a candidate's success in the job context (i.e. foreign location) rather than their success in a given role (Caligiuri and Bucker, 2015). Although greater emphasis should be placed on predicting a candidate's success in the international job context, in practice this rarely seems to be the case. Almost 80% of companies do not assess the adaptability of international assignment candidates prior to assignments and less than 30% use self-assessment tools to help prepare assignees for assignments (Brookfield GRS, 2016).

Traditionally, technical competence has been a key criterion in the selection of international assignees (Collings et al., 2011; Harris and Brewster, 1999). Although technical competence may be used as a general marker to identify suitable international assignees, organisations often over emphasise technical competence during the selection process (Anderson, 2005; Mendenhall and Oddou, 1988; Tung, 1981). While technical competence is important for international assignment selection, of equal importance is an assignee's ability to comfortably operate in foreign environments and work with people of different cultural backgrounds (Caligiuri et al., 2009). The importance of the latter abilities is seen in the positive relationship between assignee success and the competencies of cultural intelligence, cultural agility, and global mindset (Caligiuri and Bucker, 2015). Cultural intelligence refers to one's ability to adapt to varying cultural contexts (Earley and Ang, 2003), while cultural agility relates to one's ability not only to work in different cultures, but also to comfortably and effectively work with people from different cultures (Caligiuri and Bucker, 2015:280). Like cultural intelligence and cultural agility, global mindset is based on cultural adaptability, but refers specifically to an orientation that allows one to scan the world from a broad perspective and identify unexpected trends and opportunities (Rhinesmith, 1993).

Multi-National Companies (MNC) are finding it increasingly difficult to find suitable and willing individuals to undertake international assignment (Society for Human Resource Management, 2010; Collings, Morley and Scullion, 2007; Konopaske and Werner, 2005;

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Schuler et al., 2004). Willingness to undertake an international assignment may be defined as “the likelihood of accepting a job offer that requires living and working in a foreign country for a temporary period” (Mol et al., 2009:2). There is evidence that corporate leaders with international work experience lead more effectively than those who haven’t worked internationally (Dragoni et al., 2014; Carpenter, Sanders, and Gregersen, 2001). Thus willingness to undertake an international assignment is a key selection criterion for multinational organisations (Caligiuri and Bonache, 2016). Up to 77% of organisations consider an individual’s willingness to undertake an international assignment during the selection process (Brookfield GRS, 2015).

The shortage in willing international assignment candidates, has led some companies to resort to sending any employee that is willing, on an international assignment, with little regard for their suitability (Selmer, 2001a). Understanding why employees may or may not be willing to relocate to undertake an international assignment is particularly important for MNCs as willingness to relocate can strongly predict an employee’s decision to accept or reject a job transfer (Brett and Reilly, 1988). MNCs can therefore determine the likelihood of employees accepting or rejecting an international job transfer based on information about their willingness to relocate.

Biculturalism

Bicultural individuals are those who identify with, have been exposed to, and have internalised two national cultures (Benet-Martinez et al., 2002). Through their in-depth experiences of two different cultural systems, bicultural individuals develop an understanding of the norms, attitudes, and beliefs which exist in these systems. Bicultural individuals internalise their two cultures when the norms, attitudes and beliefs associated with both cultures begin to shape their way of being and understanding. Internalisation, therefore takes place as two different cultural systems, consciously or subconsciously, impact the nature of an individual. ‘Biculturalism’, may be defined as “the ability to comfortably understand and use the norms, ways of thinking and attitudes common within two cultural systems” (Friedman and Liu, 2009: 333).

Since the early 1990s there has been a dramatic increase in the number of international migrants (United Nations, 2015). The extensive relocation of people across national borders has resulted in an increasing number of bicultural individuals. Individuals who are likely to have internalised more than one cultural profile that may be classified as bicultural include immigrants, refugees, indigenous people, sojourners, ethnic minorities, individuals in interethnic relationships, individuals of mixed ethnicity (Berry, 2003; Padilla, 1994), children and grandchildren of foreign born migrants (Nguyen and Benet-Martinez, 2013).

At some point in their lives bicultural individuals are likely to experience what Du Boise (1961) referred to as “double-consciousness”, which is the awareness of coexisting feelings of membership or non-membership of two different cultures. For bicultural individuals this double-consciousness affects their sense of identity (“what group do I belong to?”), which in turn effects how they define themselves (“who am I?”). Several researchers have proposed typologies that attempt to explain how bicultural individuals negotiate their bicultural identity (LaFromboise et al., 1993; Birman, 1994; Phinney and Devich-Navaro, 1997). These

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

typologies have made a considerable contribution to our understanding of how bicultural individuals manage their cultural identities and the variation that exists in bicultural identities. However, there has been little consensus among researchers about how bicultural identity is negotiated. Following an extensive review of the literature, Benet-Martinez and colleagues (2002) developed the theoretical concept of bicultural identity integration (BII), which examines individual differences in managing dual cultural identities based on subjective perceptions of the extent to which one's cultural identities converge and overlap. They define (2002: 9) bicultural identity integration as the extent to which "biculturals perceive their mainstream and ethnic cultural identities as compatible and integrated vs. incompatible and difficult to integrate". Bicultural individuals often differ in the degree to which they perceive their cultural identities to be integrated. A study of the identity integration of Chinese Americans, found that of 179 young adults that participated, 58% endorsed an integrated sense of self while 42% felt that their multiple selves felt more fragmented than integrated (Kiang and Harter, 2008).

Individuals with a high degree of bicultural identity integration consider both of their cultural identities to be compatible and are easily able to integrate them. In contrast, individuals with a low degree of bicultural identity integration consider both of their cultural identities to be distinct from one another. They believe that their cultural identities are incompatible and even oppositional, often feeling that they have to choose one or the other (Haritatos and Benet-Martinez, 2002). Although bicultural individuals that perceive their two cultural identities to be compatible and integrated (i.e. those with a high BII), and those that perceive their two cultural identities to be incompatible and difficult to integrate (i.e. those with a low BII) both identify with the dominant culture and their ethnic culture, they differ in the degree to which they are able to intersect their two cultures.

Although BII was initially conceived as a unitary construct that explained identity integration among bicultural individuals, it has been shown that BII is not a unitary construct and in fact consists of two components; cultural blendedness (formerly known as cultural distance) and cultural harmony (formerly known as cultural conflict) (Haritatos and Benet-Martinez, 2002). Cultural blendedness relates to the degree to which a bicultural individual perceives their two cultural identities as overlapping or as distant and compartmentalized. Cultural harmony on the other hand relates to the degree to which the bicultural feels torn between their two cultures or perceives their cultures to be compatible (Haritatos and Benet-Martinez, 2002).

Cultural blendedness is said to capture the arrangement of a bicultural's cultural profiles (Huynh et al., 2011) while cultural harmony provides an indicator of their emotional perception of these cultural profiles (Haritatos and Benet-Martinez, 2002).

To date, very few studies have examined the impact of culturally related individual level factors on willingness to accept an international assignment. Similarly, there has been a paucity of research on bicultural identity integration (Huynh et al., 2011). there has not yet been any attempt to empirically investigate how biculturalism and bicultural identity integration influences an individual's willingness to work internationally. In an increasingly globalized world MNCs require individuals that can traverse cultural boundaries and implement organisational strategy in far reaching and disparate locations. The integrated study of biculturalism and international assignments will provide novel insights on the

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

potential international impact of culturally diverse individuals within multinational companies.

Hypothesis Development

All bicultural individuals have at least two different sets of cultural knowledge structures and meaning systems and can therefore access two different cultural frames of reference (Hong et al., 2000). In contrast monocultural individuals only have a single cultural knowledge structure and meaning system and therefore can access only one cultural frame of reference. Given their possession of two different sets of cultural knowledge structures, bicultural individuals may be more culturally flexible than monocultural individuals and subsequently more receptive to working internationally.

Recent studies have shown that there are several migration and culture related factors which may influence an individual's decision to accept an international assignment (Doherty et al., 2011; Dickman et al., 2008). Such factors include perceived intercultural adaptability to the host culture, successful previous experience in a foreign environment, and confidence in personal ability to work/live abroad. Many bicultural individuals have at some stage in their lives left a country of residence or birth, and immigrated to another country (Berry, 2003; Padilla, 1994). These individuals therefore have experience in having to adapt to a different culture. Indeed, the term "bicultural" refers to the integration of an ethnic culture and the dominant culture, in contrast to assimilation or separation which refer to either identifying with the dominant culture or an ethnic culture only (Berry, 1997). Bicultural individuals that perceive their integration experience to have been positive may have the self-efficacy to live and work abroad. Cognizant of their previous cultural adaptation experiences, and the fact that they possess comprehensive knowledge of more than one culture, bicultural individuals may feel more comfortable operating internationally than monocultural individuals.

Hypothesis 1: Bicultural individuals will be more willing to accept an international assignment than monocultural individuals.

Bicultural individuals that experience cultural conflict feel torn between their two cultural identities. These bicultural individuals have been found to have high levels of neuroticism (Benet-Martinez and Haritatos, 2005). Such individuals may experience feelings such as anxiety, anger or depression which may be the result of on-going cultural conflicts that exist within them. Furthermore, it has been found that these bicultural individuals have at some stage experienced discrimination and strained intercultural relationships and generally have linguistic concerns (Benet-Martinez and Haritatos, 2005). The negative cultural experiences of these bicultural individuals are likely to substantially decrease their motivation to relocate internationally and undergo another cultural transition. In contrast bicultural individuals that experience cultural harmony feel that their two cultural identities are compatible. These bicultural individuals may have low levels of neuroticism, experience less discrimination, have stronger intercultural relationships and have less linguistic concerns. The harmony that exists between their two cultural identities suggests that they perceive their cultural experiences as having been positive. Their positive perception of their cultural experiences may increase their receptivity to relocating internationally.

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Hypothesis 2: Bicultural individuals who experience cultural conflict will have a lower level of willingness to accept an international assignment than those who experience cultural harmony.

Bicultural individuals that experience cultural compartmentalisation perceive their cultural identities to be distant and separate. These bicultural individuals have been found to be less open minded, have linguistic concerns and have concerns regarding the environment that they live in and the weak presence of their own ethnic group in that environment (Benet-Martinez and Haritatos, 2005). The close mindedness of these bicultural individuals and their need to be around other people that are like them suggests that they may feel uncomfortable when operating in culturally distant environments and therefore less receptive to relocating internationally. In contrast to culturally compartmentalized biculturals, culturally blended biculturals perceive their cultural identities to be overlapping. These bicultural individuals may be more open minded, have less linguistic concerns and less concerns about the presence of their ethnic group in the environment in which they live.

Hypothesis 3: Bicultural individuals who compartmentalize their cultural identities will have a lower level of willingness to accept an international assignment than those who blend their cultural identities.

Hypothesis 4: Bicultural individuals who have a high level of bicultural identity integration (BII) (i.e. that experience cultural harmony and cultural blendedness) will be more willing to accept an international assignment than bicultural individuals who have a lower level of bicultural identity integration (i.e. that do not experience both cultural harmony and cultural blendedness).

Research suggests that bicultural individuals that integrate their two cultural identities are integratively complex in that they are able to acknowledge competing perspectives on a particular issue and establish conceptual links between those perspectives (Tadmor et al., 2009; Suedfeld, Tetlock and Streufert, 1992). Within a cross-cultural context integrative complexity specifically relates to how individuals accept clashing cultural perspectives on how to live and the degree to which they try to develop cognitive schemas that integrate opposing world views (Tadmor et al., 2009). Cultural intelligence relates to one's ability to interact effectively across diverse cultural settings (Ang and Van Dyne, 2008). Given that bicultural individuals who integrate their two cultural identities are integratively complex, they may be more comfortable when working and dealing with foreign employees and colleagues in cultural environments that differ from their own because they are able to accept and understand different cultural perspectives. It has been argued without empirical support that groups of people, such as bicultural individuals, from culturally diverse countries are likely to possess a high level of cultural intelligence (Moore, 2005).

While not all bicultural individuals will automatically exhibit a high level of cultural intelligence by virtue of their identification as being bicultural, research tells us that as multicultural experiences and international exposure increases, there should be a concurrent increase in a person's level of cultural intelligence (Takeushi et al., 2005). Although individuals that identify with a single cultural identity can indeed exhibit high levels of cultural intelligence, the integrative complexity of biculturals and the empirical link between international exposure, multicultural experiences, and higher levels of cultural intelligence

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

suggest that bicultural individuals who identify with, and have been extensively exposed to, two different cultures will exhibit higher levels of cultural intelligence than monocultural individuals.

Hypothesis 5: Bicultural individuals have higher levels of cultural intelligence than monocultural individuals.

Cultural intelligence has been defined as a system consisting of cultural knowledge, cross cultural skills and cultural metacognition, which enables individuals to interact effectively across cultures (Thomas et al., 2015: 1102). The ability to interact effectively across cultures is important for positions within MNCs that require employees to spend time abroad. Of equal importance however, is an employee's willingness to spend time working abroad as part of their role within their organisation. Willingness to accept an assignment which requires an employee to relocate internationally may be defined as "the likelihood of accepting a job offer that requires living and working in a foreign country for a temporary period" (Mol et al., 2009:2). Individuals that perceive themselves to be culturally intelligent may be confident in their ability to interact and function effectively while on an international assignment and therefore may be more receptive to accepting an assignment. Indeed previous research has identified that cultural flexibility is positively related to willingness to accept an international assignment (Mol et al., 2009).

Hypothesis 6: Cultural intelligence will be positively related to an individual's willingness to undertake an international assignment.

While it is proposed that cultural identification, which refers to a person's sense of identification with, and internalisation of, a national culture (and for the purpose of this study, relates specifically to whether an individual identifies as monocultural or bicultural), will influence the level of willingness to undertake an international assignment, it is also proposed that cultural intelligence will influence willingness to accept an assignment. The second proposition suggests that regardless of whether an individual is monocultural or bicultural, their level of cultural intelligence will influence their willingness to undertake an international assignment. Although it has been suggested that bicultural individuals will be more willing to accept an international assignment, it's important not to equate their greater level of willingness with the unwillingness of monocultural individuals. Like bicultural individuals, there may be certain factors which influence the receptivity of monocultural individuals to working internationally. Given the suggested impact of cultural intelligence on the willingness to undertake an international assignment it is proposed that cultural intelligence will mediate the relationship between whether an individual is monocultural or bicultural (i.e. cultural identification) and their willingness to accept an international assignment.

Hypothesis 7: Cultural intelligence mediates the relationship between cultural identification (i.e. whether an individual identifies as monocultural or bicultural) and willingness to undertake an international assignment.

Methodology

Sample

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Data was collected from students across eighteen third level institutions in the Republic of Ireland. In total 285 students participated in the study. 42% of the participants (119) were male while 58% (166) were female. Of the 285 participants, 93% were between the ages of 17 and 23, while the remaining 7% were 24 years of age or older. The majority of the sample was made up of undergraduate students (94%). However, a small number of postgraduate students also participated in the study (6%). A strong majority of participants stated that they identify with Ireland and Irish culture (92%). 46% of participants also stated that they identify with a second country and the culture of that country. However, a greater number of participants stated that they did not identify with more than one country and national culture (54%). Therefore 46% of respondents were bicultural while 54% were monocultural.

Procedures

Data was collected via a pen and paper questionnaire and an online version of the same questionnaire in order to increase response rates and mitigate the drawbacks of either approach (Dillman, 2007). The introduction to the questionnaire included a cover letter which outlined the aims and objectives of the study, and emphasized that participation was voluntary. Participants were also assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of the questionnaire. University cultural societies (e.g. 'Chinese society', 'Africa society' etc.) were also invited to participate in the research because of the cultural diversity of many of their members, several of which identified as bicultural. Societies that agreed to participate in the study sent a link to the online version of the questionnaire, to their registered members. The overall response rate for study was 11%.

Measures

The variables explored in this study included cultural identification, bicultural identity integration, cultural intelligence and willingness to accept an international assignment.

Cultural Identification was determined using a single item. Participants were asked if they identify with more than one country and national culture. In this study, cultural identification is a categorical variable which refers to a person's sense of identification with a national culture. The question was used to differentiate between bicultural participants and monocultural participants. Participants who stated that they identify with more than one country and national culture were categorised as bicultural, while those that stated that they don't identify with more than one country and national culture were categorised as monocultural. For the purpose of this study, cultural identification refers to whether an individual identified as monocultural or bicultural.

Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) was measured using the 20-item BIIS-2 scale developed by Huynh (2009). The twenty items in the scale are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). The measure consists of two subscales which measure cultural harmony and cultural blendedness respectively. The measure was modified slightly to allow participants to respond to the items based on the two cultures that they identify with (i.e. the use of blank spaces, in which the participants wrote their cultures e.g. "Irish" and "Nigerian", or were automatically populated, in the case of online questionnaires). This is in contrast to other studies on bicultural identity integration (e.g. Benet-Martinez and Haritatos, 2005 and Nguyen and Ahmadpanah 2014) which focus solely on single combinations of cultures (e.g. Chinese-American and Mexican-American). In prior

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

research (e.g. Huynh, 2009) the scale has demonstrated good internal reliability scores (Cronbach's alpha scores: cultural harmony = .81, cultural blendedness = .86). In the present study the Cronbach's alpha was .78 for cultural harmony and .76 for cultural blendedness.

Cultural Intelligence was measured using the 10-item Short Form Measure of Cultural Intelligence (SFCQ) scale developed by Thomas et al. (2015). The ten items in the scale are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (where 1= not at all and 5= extremely well). In prior research (e.g. Thomas et al., 2015) the scale has demonstrated good internal reliability scores (across 14 samples the average Cronbach's alpha score was .85). In the present study the Cronbach's alpha was .87.

Willingness to Undertake an International Assignment was measured using 5 items adapted from Mol et al. (2009). The five items in the scale are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). The full 7-item measure (Mol et al., 2009) has demonstrated good internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha score: .87). Items from the measure have since been used in other studies on willingness to undertake an international assignment (Froese et al., 2013; Kim and Froese, 2012). In these studies the scales used to measure willingness to accept an international assignment also showed good reliability with Cronbach's alpha scores between .83 and .87. In the present study the Cronbach's alpha was .84.

Results

Hypothesis 1 to 5 were tested using independent sample t-tests. The results supported hypotheses 1 and 5 but did not support hypotheses 2, 3 and 4. For hypotheses 1 the test showed that there is a significant difference in the willingness of monocultural ($M = 3.8144$, $SD = .79$) and bicultural ($M = 4.3099$, $SD = .65$; $t(282) = -5.71$, $p = 0.00$, two-tailed) individuals to undertake an international assignment. Specifically, bicultural individuals are more willing to undertake an international assignment than monocultural individuals. The magnitude of the difference between the two groups (mean difference = $-.50$, 95% CI : $-.67$ to $-.32$) was moderate (Eta Squared = $.104$) according to the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988: 284-7) for interpreting effect size values. Expressed as a percentage, 10.4% of the variance in willingness to undertake an international assignment is explained by whether an individual is monocultural or bicultural.

For hypotheses 2 bicultural individuals that experience cultural conflict or cultural harmony were identified using a mid-point split, and categorised based on their score on the cultural harmony (vs conflict) bicultural identity integration subscale. The test showed that there was not a significant difference in the willingness of bicultural individuals that experience cultural conflict ($M = 4.2581$, $SD = .77$) and those that experience cultural harmony ($M = 4.3333$, $SD = .61$; $t(128) = .562$, $p = .575$, two-tailed) to undertake an international assignment.

For hypotheses 3 bicultural individuals that experience cultural compartmentalisation or cultural blendedness were identified using a mid-point split, and categorised based on their score on the cultural blendedness (vs compartmentalisation) bicultural identity integration subscale. The test showed that there was not a significant difference in the willingness of bicultural individuals that experience cultural compartmentalisation ($M = 4.3000$, $SD = .60$)

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

and those that experience cultural blendedness ($M = 4.3055$, $SD = .66$; $t(128) = .034$, $p = .973$, two-tailed) to undertake an international assignment.

For hypotheses 4, using a mid-point split, bicultural participants were categorized based on their scores on both of the bicultural identity integration subscales (i.e. cultural harmony (vs conflict) and cultural blendedness (vs compartmentalization)). Bicultural individuals that experience cultural harmony and cultural blendedness were categorized as having a high level of bicultural identity integration. Bicultural individuals that do not experience a combination of cultural harmony and cultural blendedness were categorized as having a lower level of bicultural identity integration.

The test showed that there was not a significant difference in the willingness of bicultural individuals with a high level of bicultural identity integration ($M = 4.3106$, $SD = .62$) and bicultural individuals with a lower level of bicultural identity integration ($M = 4.3091$, $SD = .70$; $t(127) = .012$, $p = .990$, two-tailed) to undertake an international assignment.

For hypotheses 5 the test showed that there was a significant difference in the cultural intelligence of monocultural ($M = 3.4124$, $SD = .55$) and bicultural ($M = 4.0412$, $SD = .59$; $t(282) = -9.51$, $p = 0.00$, two-tailed) individuals. The magnitude of the difference between the two groups (mean difference = $-.63$, 95% CI : $-.76$ to $-.50$) was large (Eta Squared = $.243$) (Cohen, 1988: 284-7). Expressed as a percentage, 24.3% of the variance in cultural intelligence is explained by whether an individual is monocultural or bicultural. The statistically significant difference in the mean scores on cultural intelligence for bicultural ($M = 4.0412$) and monocultural ($M = 3.4124$) individuals and the large effect size (Eta Squared = $.243$) of this difference between the two groups suggests that bicultural individuals are more culturally intelligent than monocultural individuals. Table 1 provides a summary of results for all of the independent sample t-tests that were conducted.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to test hypothesis 6. There was a moderate (medium) positive correlation between cultural intelligence and willingness to undertake an international assignment, $r = .46$, $n = 283$, $p < .01$. High levels of cultural intelligence were found to be associated with high levels of willingness to undertake an international assignment. The coefficient of determination for the relationship is 0.2116 . Expressed as a percentage, cultural intelligence helps to explain 21% of the variance in respondents' willingness to undertake an international assignment. The results support hypothesis 6.

To test hypothesis 7 a multiple regression analysis using SPSS version 21 was performed. Baron and Kenny (1986) suggest that when testing mediational hypothesis, four conditions should be met. The first of the four conditions suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) requires a significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable ($\beta = .32$, $p < .001$).

The second condition requires a significant relationship between the independent variable and the proposed mediator ($\beta = .49$, $p < .001$). The third condition requires a significant relationship between the proposed mediator and dependent variable ($\beta = .40$, $p < .001$). The fourth condition requires a reduced effect between the independent variable and dependent variable after adding the mediator variable (i.e. from $\beta = .32$, $p < .001$ to $\beta = .13$, $p < .05$). All of the conditions were met. The analysis found that cultural intelligence partially mediates the

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

relationship between cultural identification and willingness to undertake an international assignment.

Although widely supported, the four step approach recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986) has certain limitations. Therefore, three additional statistical techniques were used to further test the hypotheses 7. These statistical techniques included a Sobel test; Bootstrapping; and standardized effect size (kappa-squared (k^2)). These statistics were computed using SPSS version 21 in conjunction with the PROCESS macro code for SPSS (Hayes, 2013). A significant limitation of Baron and Kenny's four step approach is that the indirect effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is not tested. Sobel (1982) proposed a method which circumvents this problem by testing the difference between the total effect and the direct effect (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). The Sobel test has been commonly used in mediation.

A Sobel analysis shows that the mediation effect of cultural intelligence was significant ($Z_{Sobel} = 5.424$, $p < .001$). Although the Sobel test is often used for testing mediation, it also has limitations, in that it has been argued that it erroneously assumes normality in the distribution of the indirect effects (Hayes, 2009). Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008) recommend using bootstrap confidence intervals, which do not make assumptions about the shape of the sampling distribution. Bootstrapping is argued to be a more powerful test of the indirect effect (Preacher and Hayes, 2004; Shrout and Bolger, 2002). The results showed that a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval from 1000 bootstrap samples did not contain zero, meaning that the indirect effect was significant. The bias-corrected confidence intervals for the Bootstrapping analysis were between .200 and .451. Preacher and Kelley (2011) suggest using a standardized effect size to represent the strength of the indirect effect of the independent variable, on the dependent variable, through a mediator variable. Their effect size, kappa-squared (k^2), represents the proportion of the total possible effect that is shown by the sample. They suggest that 0.01, 0.09 and 0.25 represent small, medium and large effects respectively.

In this instance k^2 was equal to 0.18 which represents a medium effect size and its 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals were between .130 and .261.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that cultural intelligence mediates the relationship between cultural identification and willingness to undertake an international assignment. The results support hypothesis 7. The mediation model and results are shown in Figure 1. Table 2 lists the mediation analysis results.

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Table 1: Summary of Results for Independent Sample T-tests

Hypothesis	Outcome Variable	Group Statistics					Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
														Lower	Upper
1	Willingness to undertake international assignment	Monocultural	153	3.8144	.79077	.06393	2.143	.144	-5.711	282	.000	-.49554	.08678	-.66636	-.32473
		Bicultural	131	4.3099	.64936	.05673									
2	Willingness to undertake international assignment	Experiences Cultural Harmony	99	4.3333	.60811	.06112	3.191	.076	.562	128	.575	.07527	.13390	-.18967	.34021
		Experiences Cultural Conflict	31	4.2581	.77321	.13887									
3	Willingness to undertake international assignment	Experiences Cultural Blendedness	110	4.3055	.65956	.06289	.210	.647	.034	128	.973	.00545	.15838	-.30793	.31884
		Experiences Cultural Compartmentalization	20	4.3000	.60350	.13495									
4	Willingness to undertake international assignment	Highly Integrated Bicultural Identity	85	4.3106	.62374	.06765	.838	.362	.012	127	.990	.00150	.12092	-.23778	.24078
		Less Highly Integrated Bicultural Identity	44	4.3091	.70143	.10575									
5	Cultural Intelligence	Monocultural	153	3.4124	.55278	.04469	.029	.866	-9.514	282	.000	-.62880	.06610	-.75891	-.49870
		Bicultural	131	4.0412	.55814	.04876									

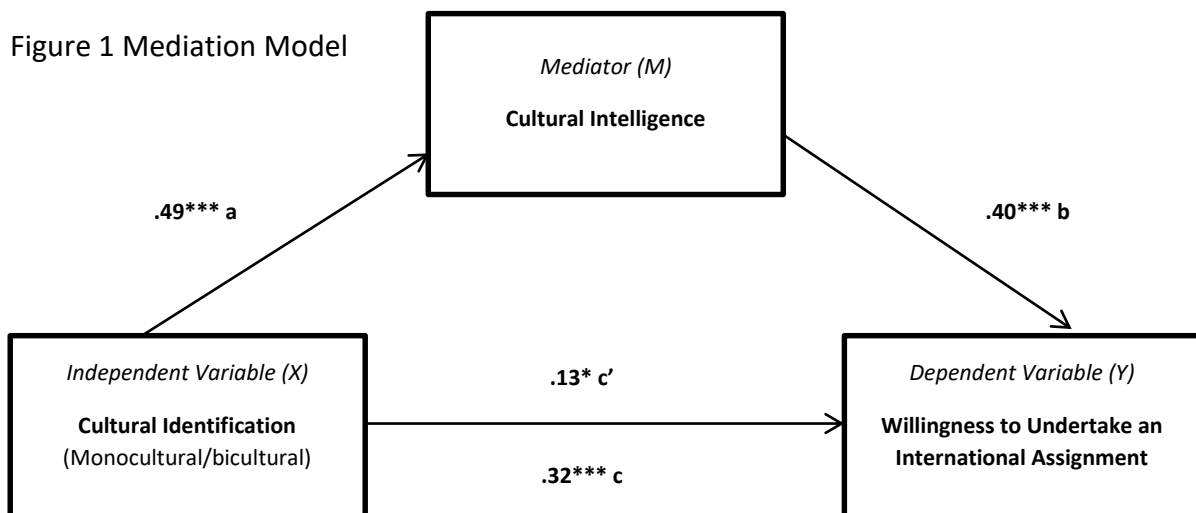
TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Table 2 Mediation Analysis Results

Predictors	Outcomes			
	Y (Step 1: X->Y)	Mediator (Step 2: X->Mediator)	Y (Step 3: Mediator ->Y)	Y (Step 4: X+Mediator->Y)
X	C (.32***)	A (.49***)		C' (.13*)
Mediator			B (.40***)	
Adjusted R2	.10	.24	.21	.22
ΔR2	.10	.24	.21	.12
ΔF	32.495***	90.507***	75.954***	43.674***
VIF	1	1	1	1.32
DW	1.96	1.81	1.95	1.96

Note: N = 285. Standardized coefficients were reported. *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. All tests were two-tailed.

Figure 1 Mediation Model



A	X -> M: $\beta = .49, p < .001$
B	M -> Y: $\beta = .40, p < .001$
C	X -> Y: $\beta = .32, p < .001$
C'	X ->M -> Y: $\beta = .13, p < .05$

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Discussion

The present study is the first in the academic literature to consider the impact of biculturalism on willingness to undertake an international assignment. Although a review and synthesis of both the international assignment, and biculturalism literature provides a theoretical basis for proposing that bicultural individuals will be willing to undertake international assignments, the present study provides empirical evidence of this willingness.

Bicultural individuals were found to be more willing to undertake an international assignment than monocultural individuals. This finding contributes to an emerging body of literature which indicates the benefits of bicultural individuals for multinational companies (e.g. Fitzsimmons 2013; Fitzsimmons et al., 2011; Brannen and Thomas, 2010; Friedman and Liu, 2009). This finding extends our understanding of the characteristics of bicultural individuals in that it indicates their openness to working internationally. Although the sample used in this study weren't full-time professionals, investigating the willingness of college students to undertake international assignments in the future provided a means of exploring international assignee career intentions (Presbitero and Quita, 2017). Exploring career intentions can be a particularly fruitful undertaking as theory suggests that intentions influence behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Indeed, within the context of international assignments, willingness to relocate has been seen to predict actual decisions to accept or reject job transfers (Brett and Reilly, 1988). The first finding in this study indicates that when employed, bicultural students will be more likely to accept international assignments than their monocultural counterparts.

In the past it has been argued without empirical support that bicultural individuals are likely to possess a high level of cultural intelligence (Moore, 2005). The present study indicated that bicultural individuals do possess high levels of cultural intelligence (with a mean score of 4.0412 on a 5-point scale) and are more culturally intelligent than monocultural individuals. This study is the first to empirically consider the impact of monoculturalism and biculturalism on cultural intelligence. The high levels of cultural intelligence amongst bicultural individuals point to their suitability to work internationally.

The present study is the first to consider the direct relationship between cultural intelligence and willingness to undertake an international assignment. It was proposed that cultural intelligence, which enables individuals to interact effectively across cultures, is an important consideration for positions within multinational companies that require employees to work abroad. As predicted, cultural intelligence was positively correlated to willingness to undertake an international assignment. Furthermore, the strength of the correlation between the two variables was moderate. This indicates that as an individual becomes more culturally intelligent their willingness to undertake an international assignment increases.

The study tested the mediating effect of cultural intelligence on the relationship between cultural identification (whether an individual identifies as monocultural or bicultural) and willingness to undertake an international assignment. While the study found that bicultural individuals were more willing to undertake an international assignment than monocultural individuals, this greater level of willingness should not be equated with the unwillingness of monocultural individuals. Moreover, the positive relationship between cultural intelligence and willingness to undertake an international assignment suggests that an individual can

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

exhibit a high level of willingness to undertake an assignment regardless of whether they are bicultural or monocultural. It was therefore proposed that cultural intelligence would mediate the relationship between cultural identification and willingness to undertake an international assignment.

Cultural intelligence partially mediated the relationship between cultural identification and willingness to undertake an international assignment. The direct effect of cultural identification on willingness to undertake an international assignment decreased when cultural intelligence was taken into consideration.

The result indicates that cultural intelligence plays a role in the willingness of both bicultural and monocultural individuals to accept international assignments. This finding indicates that although the present study has found bicultural individuals to be more willing to undertake international assignments, their willingness shouldn't be assumed by virtue of the fact that they are bicultural. Instead, cultural intelligence should also be considered when attempting to identify candidates that may be willing to accept international assignments. This is to say that an individual that has internalized and identifies with only one culture yet has a high level of cultural intelligence may be more willing to accept an international assignment than an individual that has internalized and identifies with two cultures and has a lower level of cultural intelligence. While monocultural individuals can be just as culturally intelligent and willing to accept international assignments as bicultural individuals, this study indicates that on balance, bicultural individuals are more culturally intelligent and also more willing to undertake international assignments.

The study also sought out to examine the impact of bicultural identity integration on the willingness of bicultural individuals to undertake international assignments. Specifically, the study assessed the influence of cultural harmony and cultural blendedness on willingness to accept assignments. It was proposed that bicultural individuals that experience cultural harmony and cultural blendedness would be more willing to undertake an international assignment than those that experience cultural conflict and cultural compartmentalization. Contrary to expectations the findings indicated that the components of bicultural identity integration did not influence willingness to accept an international assignment. One might have thought that bicultural individuals who perceive their experience of integrating their two cultures as negative rather than positive (e.g. that experience cultural conflict and cultural compartmentalization) may be less open to relocating and having to understand, and manage the influence of another national cultural. This however, didn't appear to be the case in the present study.

The findings from this study suggest that individuals that have internalized and identify with two cultures are more willing, and possibly be more suitable to undertake international assignments than individuals that have internalized and identify with only one culture. This study has identified a category of individuals soon to enter the jobs market who are receptive to working internationally and may be particularly well suited for global roles. The high levels of cultural intelligence possessed by bicultural students, and the relevance of cultural intelligence for international assignments (Kim et al., 2008; Shaffer and Miller, 2008), points to the suitability of bicultural student for international assignments.

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

Practical Implications

This study also has implications for the practice of global mobility and global talent management. As well as identifying a potential pool of globally mobile talent, the study uncovers unique characteristics of culturally diverse individuals which can be leveraged by organisations operating across multiple cultural boundaries.

In discussing the future of global mobility practices, global mobility scholars have encouraged organisations to assess the early-career potential of employees for global roles in order to develop a deeper and more effective pool of talent for future international assignments. They advise that organisations should ‘begin far earlier in the pipeline, to select employees who have the predisposition and motivation for global work’ (Caliguri and Bonache, 2016: 137). Results from the first study suggest that bicultural students, who will soon enter the workforce, have both the predisposition, and the motivation for global work. More broadly the results may provide an empirical basis for using biculturalism as a selection criterion for roles that are likely to involve international relocation.

These findings from this study are particularly relevant for organisations who select initial job candidates based on their suitability and willingness to work internationally (e.g. McKinsey & Company and Royal Dutch Shell). The findings not only provide a basis upon which organisations can identify globally mobile staff, they also provide a basis for identifying potential international managers and global leaders at an early stage in their career, and developing these individuals to function in global positions.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the contributions of this study to both research and practice there are some limitations in the study which need to be taken into consideration. These limitations include the use of cross-sectional self-report data. While cross-sectional self-report data can be quite useful in assessing perceptions (Spector, 1994), there is a potential for common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Although the use of cross-sectional self-report data is often criticized because it can contribute to common method bias, a number of different methods can be used to assess the actual extent of common method bias within a self-report data set. The most widely used method is Harman’s single factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results of Harman’s single factor test for this study confirmed that common method bias was not an issue in either study. Future research should build on this research by applying more rigorous methods, such as the use of longitudinal data.

Conclusion

The study of bicultural individuals within multinational organisations has not only become more relevant, but as migration between national borders has continued to increase, it has become necessary. Many countries are more diverse than they have ever been. As countries have become more multicultural (Van Oudenhoven and Ward, 2013), the landscape of their workforces have become increasingly more diverse. Bicultural individuals are a distinctive source of talent for global mobility which multinational companies can leverage, as organisations continue in a “war for talent” (Chambers et al., 1998).

TITLE: CULTURAL IDENTIFICATION AND GLOBAL MOBILITY: EXPLORING THE WILLINGNESS OF BICULTURAL INDIVIDUALS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY.

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