Identity and Indecisiveness: Identity Integration Impacts Experiences of Decisional Conflict

by

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A thought that never changes remains a stupid lie.

—New Order, *Your Silent Face*

Dedication

To my mom and dad, my first teachers and mentors, who opened up the possibilities of all my identities.

Acknowledgements

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Abstract

We all belong to and identify with many social groups, and recent research has identified important individual differences in the psychological management of the relationship between these multiple identities. This dissertation examines the relationship between Identity Integration (II)—perceptions of one's multiple social identities as compatible versus in conflict—and experiences of decisional conflict—or, indecisiveness. Studies 1 and 2 showed that low IIs—or, individuals who generally perceive their multiple social identities to be in conflict—experienced more decisional conflict. Study 1 found that individuals with lower levels of II reported higher levels of regret after a decision, even while controlling for trait-level neuroticism. Study 2 found the same relationship across self-reported trait-like, but not behavioral or affective, measures of indecisiveness, and across different decision-making tasks. Studies 3, 4, and 5 provided evidence for the context-dependence of the link between low II and experiences of decisional conflict, suggesting that identity management processes underlie this effect. Study 3 found that among employees of a multinational organization, lower II between work-related identities is associated with higher levels of self-reported indecisiveness at work. Studies 4 and 5 demonstrated that lower II between different cultural identities among biculturals and between work and family identities among working professionals with families, respectively, is associated with post-decisional negative affect and regret, but only in tasks relevant to those identities. Study 6 used an experimental manipulation of II, demonstrating that II directly affects post-choice regret, again only in decision-making tasks related to those identities. Extending previous research on identity

and decision-making, these results show that psychological management of multiple social

identities is also an important driver of decision-making experiences.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 DECISION CONFLICT AND IDENTITY CONFLICT

We live in an increasingly complex world of ample choice options and decisions. Though offering decision-makers endless possibilities may increase their sense of autonomy and ability to select solutions that best fit their needs and preferences, they can also feel burdened by the decision task and experience conflict during the decision-making process, post-decision regret, and even indecision, or inability to make any decision at all (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Schwartz, 2004). Indeed, many decisions can be experienced as conflictual when "different reasons pull or push [the decision-maker] in different directions" (Baron & Weber, 2001, p.2), leading to "hesitation, vacillation, feelings of uncertainty, and signs of acute emotional stress" (Janis & Mann, 1977, p. 46). In this dissertation, I suggest that the conflict experienced by making decisions can be a byproduct of increasingly multifaceted, and potentially conflicting self identities, or how we think of ourselves (Arnett, 2002). In short, identity conflict can lead to decision conflict and indecisiveness.

Take an example from *Cutthroat Kitchen*, a reality show, in which four chefs compete against each other for a large monetary reward in a series of cooking challenges. Each round, chefs can sabotage their competitors by deciding whether to spend money bidding on perks for themselves (such as being the only chef allowed to use an oven) or impediments for their competitors (such as being forced to cook without knives). One episode of the show featured a chef called Sandra, who is originally from The Netherlands but grew up in Spain.

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She summed up how her conflicting cultural identities of being both Dutch and Spanish

pulled her in different directions during bidding decisions:

> "It's like balancing my half-Dutch and my half-Spanish part. Because the Spanish
> part would be like: 'Go, go, go! Spend it!' But then, I have a Dutch part of me that
> goes: 'Let them spend their money!'"

Compared to Spanish values, Dutch cultural values encourage pragmatism, including

saving behavior (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). For Sandra, being unable to

integrate these two disparate cultural identities, left her feeling torn between Spanish and

Dutch values. Ultimately, this identity conflict slowed her decision-making.

1.1.1 Conflict in Decision-Making

Conflict theory places conflict or "opposing tendencies within the individual" as a

central process underlying decision-making (Janis & Mann, 1977, p.46). According to this

theory, the level of conflict created in the decision problem directly affects the type of

decision-making strategy decision-makers use. As Janis and Mann (1977) put it:

> "…[W]e see man not as a cold fish but as a warm-blooded mammal, not as a rational
> calculator always ready to work out the best solution but as a reluctant decision
> maker—beset by conflict, doubts, and worry, struggling with incongruous longings,
> antipathies, and loyalties…" (p.15)

Many factors influence whether decisions are more or less conflictual, but the

individual attributes of the decision-maker have been shown to play an important role (e.g.,

Luce, Bettman, & Payne, 1997). One kind of attributes the individual decision-maker brings

to the situation that can affect experiences of decision conflict are their unique preferences,

utilities, and perceived importance ascribed to different choice options. Classic economic

theorists generally assume that these preference structures, while unique to each individual,

are fixed and knowable, and decision-makers select options that maximize their own

expected utility. For example, when someone has to make a decision about buying a car, he

or she can weigh the utility they ascribe to different attributes (e.g., price, safety), sum across attributes to compute total expected utilities for each choice option, and determine the choice that will maximize their own overall utility. In the end, comparisons of expected utilities allow decision-makers to easily trade off between options (Keeney & Raiffa, 1976). From this point of view, decisions are conflictual when expected utilities are undifferentiated across multiple options, and the decision-maker is indifferent between the options. In these cases, people sometimes defer responsibility of making a decision to a random process (e.g., flipping a coin), though these types of decisions have been shown to create a sense of psychological conflict (Beattie & Barlas, 2001).

In contrast to economists, who focus on conflict that arises from individual preferences and utilities, psychologists have focused on conflict that arises from self and identity. In this stream of work, individuals do not only seek to maximize utility, but also to maintain a coherent sense of self. This is evidenced by research showing that people tend to change their preferences after a decision to create a consistent sense of self. Perhaps the most famous demonstration of this is Festinger's (1964) theory of cognitive dissonance, which shows that, when forced to choose a course of action that is inconsistent with one's preferences, people alter their preferences to maintain consistency between different aspects of the self. In a similar set of studies, decision-makers rank objects such as posters or CDs in order of preference and then choose between two objects ranked in the middle of the list. Presumably, decision-makers are relatively indifferent between these options. Results show that, post decision, decision-makers increased their preference for the chosen option and decreased their preference for an unchosen option, again to create consistency within the self (Kitayama, Snibbe, Markus, & Suzuki, 2004; Steele, Spencer, & Lynch, 1993). Along the same vein, studies found that ownership of a object led to a stronger association between the

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object and the self, which in turn led to higher valuation of the object (Morewedge, Shu, Gilbert, & Wilson, 2009). For example, after being given a mug to own, individuals asked for a higher selling price than they were willing to pay to acquire the mug in the first place (Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1990). These studies suggest that, rather than preferences or utilities driving choices, choices also drive one's preferences. More importantly, it seems that people are motivated to change their preference structures in order to reduce conflict and maintain a coherent sense of self. In short, a person's sense of who they are—with all their potentially conflicting values, beliefs, goals, experiences, and aspirations—is a crucial component of decision conflict.

1.1.2 Conflict in Identity

As mentioned, many individual attributes have been shown to be important predictors in decision-making. For example, personality traits predict a variety of decision-making processes and outcomes, ranging from purchasing decisions, processing of choice options, perceptions of time during decision-making, and choice satisfaction, just to name a few (Iyengar, Wells, & Schwartz, 2006; Lai, 2011; Misuraca & Teuscher, 2013; Polman, 2010; Sandy, Gosling, & Durant, 2011; Schwartz, 2004; Schwartz, Ward, Monterosso, Lyubomirsky, White, & Lehman, 2002). These approaches often portray the person as monolithic with stable preferences shaped by their individual attributes.

However, the self is often dynamic, multifaceted, and even conflicting (Brown, 1998). Early psychoanalytic theories split the person into various internal psychological components including the id, ego, and superego (Freud, 1933/1990). Whereas the id urges the person to act on basic impulses, the superego serves as a voice of morality and reason. At the heart of the distinction between these components is that they are in conflict or have differing urges and aspirations, which the ego must regulate and manage. Social

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psychological theories have also supported the notion that we all have multiple aspects of identity or the self that can pull us in different directions. Markus and Nurius (1986), for instance, distinguished between different possible selves—such as the self one hopes to become, one fears to become, and the current self (or what one is currently like). Others have made the distinction between a private self and a public self, each of which has different standards of behavior (Baumeister, 1986; Buss, 1980; Greenwald & Breckler, 1985; James, 1890/1983). Along a similar vein, people are often motivated by conflicting impulses in crafting their selves and identities—for example, individuals are simultaneously motivated to be unique/distinct from others *and* interconnected/assimilated with others (Brewer, 1991; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989).

Overall, different selves, which can carry various values, goals, and interests, have the potential to pull us in different directions during decision-making. This dissertation seeks to demonstrate a relationship between a person's perceived conflict between different selves and decisional conflict. In particular, this work provides the first empirical examination of how individual differences in the management of multiple identities influence indecisiveness.

1.2 FROM DECISION CONFLICT TO INDECISIVENESS

Indecisiveness and the experience of conflict during decision-making is an understudied but important part of the decision-making process (Beattie & Barlas, 2001; Goldstein, Barlas, & Beattie, 2001). In the earlier example about the bicultural chef, Sandra took longer than other contestants to make a bid, in large part because she felt conflicted about what she perceived to be two discrepant culturally-prescribed values. Empirically, decision conflict and decision latency (or the time it takes to make a choice) seem to be closely related. Beattie and Barlas (2001), for instance, asked participants to rate the difficulty they experienced when making various hypothetical tradeoffs between everyday items like

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mall coupons and grocery coupons, and found that decisions in which the decision-maker felt more conflicted indeed took longer to make. This extends to other, more affective, measures of indecisiveness such as regret, or post-choice negative emotion. Krosch, Figner, and Weber (2012), for example, found that hypothetical moral decisions that were experienced as more conflictual for the decision-maker resulted in greater post-choice negative emotion. In short, the experience of decisional conflict can often be understood as indecisiveness.

1.2.1 Components of Indecisiveness

Definitions of indecisiveness are broad and span different phases of the decision-making process. These include failing to make a decision or *in*decision, taking a long time to make a decision (decision latency), experiencing negative affect, and post-choice regret, just to name a few (Elyadi, 2006; Frost & Shows, 1993; Germeijs & De Boeck, 2002; Goodstein, 1972; Jones, 1989; Yates, Ji, Oka, Lee, Shinotsuka, & Sieck, 2010). One way to measure indecisiveness is through self-report scales. Subsuming several of the components of indecisiveness mentioned above, Frost and Shows' (1993) 15-item Indecisiveness Scale is one of the most commonly used self-report measures of indecisiveness (Patalano & Wengrovitz, 2006). The scale includes items such as "I try to put off making decisions" (indecision), "I usually make decisions quickly" [R] (decision latency), "I become anxious when making a decision" (negative affect), and "Once I make a decision, I stop worrying about it" [R] (post-choice regret), and has been validated and used across different cultures (Swami, Sinniah, Subramaniam, Pillai, Kannan, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2008; Yates et al., 2010).

To assess the behavioral components of indecisiveness, research has commonly focused on decision latency. Frost and Shows (1993), for instance, asked participants to

make a series of hypothetical choices across domains (e.g., selecting one of two college courses or choosing one of two free-time activities to pursue) and found that more indecisive participants (measured via the Indecisiveness Scale) took significantly longer to make their choices in all domains. Similarly, Yates et al. (2010) assessed behavioral indecisiveness by the time participants spent selecting between two alternatives in a series of common knowledge questions.

Indecisiveness, or experienced decisional conflict, as the name suggests, is predominantly affective and includes subjective perceptions of difficulty, anxiety, less happiness, lower confidence, and more regret, even before an outcome of the choice is known (e.g., Bui, Krishen, & Bates, 2011; Inbar, Botti, & Hanko, 2011; Inman & Zeelenberg, 2002; Kirkebøen & Teigen, 2011; Luce et al., 2001). Regret is defined as "the emotion that we experience when realizing or imagining that our current situation would have been better, if only we had decided differently" (Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2007, p.3). Note that in the context of the decision-making process, then, regret can occur after the decision is made but before the decision-maker knows objectively whether this was the "right" decision. Indeed, decision scholars have recently called attention to the need to study these subjective decision experiences that result post-choice but before outcomes of the decision are known not only because many real-world decisions, such as choosing a job, for example, do not have immediate known outcomes, but also because these negative affective experiences can impact the extent to which people pursue or revise their chosen course of action (Kirkebøen & Teigen, 2011; Yates & Angott, 2012). As such, much of the current research focuses on affective indecisiveness to address an important theoretical and practical gap in the decision-making literature and capture the experience of decision conflict.

Using self-reports to assess post-choice affect, Carmon, Wertenbroch, and

Zeelenberg (2003) presented participants with hypothetical scenarios—such as traveling to one of two equally desirable vacation spots—and asked them to rate how someone who chose between these two options would feel about forgoing the unchosen option along a continuum from very positive to very negative. More negative responses are presumably indicative of higher post-decision regret and indecisiveness. Although regret is typically assessed directly by asking participants to report to what extent they regret their choice (e.g., Biu, Krishen, & Bates, 2011; Inbar, Botti, & Hanko, 2011; Inman & Zeelenberg, 2002; Kirkebøen & Teigen, 2011), other measures include the extent to which the participant believes they should have chosen differently (e.g., Biu et al., 2011; Cai & Cude, 2011; Inman & Zeelenberg, 2002; Kirkebøen & Teigen, 2011; Patrick, Lancellotti, & Demello, 2009), or whether they would be happier with a different choice (e.g., Cai & Cude, 2011; Inman & Zeelenberg, 2002). These various ways of defining post-choice regret tend to be highly correlated[1]. Note that given these definitions, the current conceptualization of experienced decisional conflict is predominantly negative, yet indecisiveness need not always be a liability (see Chapter 8).

1.2.2 Correlates of Indecisiveness

Indecisiveness permeates many important real-world decisions people make and, though it may have positive outcomes, it is predominantly an undesirable outcome that creates experiences of conflict (Yates et al., 2010). For example, people report feeling indecisive deciding on a career (e.g., Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996) or a college major

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[1] Inman and Zeelenberg (2002) found that alphas for items related to regret, intending to change one's choice, and believing one would have been happier with the other choice, were greater than .73 across various hypothetical decision scenarios. Using factor analysis, Cai and Cude (2011) found that items measuring regret, intending to change one's choice, believing one should have chosen differently, and believing one would have been happier with the other choice about a hypothetical bidding choice loaded onto a single factor that explained 61 percent of the variance in their sample.

(Gayton, Clavin, Clavin, & Broida, 1994), as well as more trivial, everyday decisions such as

what to order from a restaurant menu or which activity to do in one's free time (Germeijs &

De Boeck, 2002). Importantly, indecisiveness predicts multiple psychological outcomes. For

instance, empirical research in counseling and clinical psychology has linked indecisiveness

to pathologies such as depression, perfectionism, obsessive-compulsive behaviors, and

hoarding behavior (Frost & Gross, 1993; Frost & Shows, 1993; Gayton et al., 1994; Rassin &

Muris, 2005). Indecisiveness has also consistently been shown to correlate positively with the

personality trait of neuroticism or low emotional stability (Di Fabio, 2006; Jackson,

Furnham, & Lawty-Jones, 1999; Milgram & Tenne, 2000). Jackson et al. (1999), for instance,

demonstrated this association across a diverse sample of students and adults from various

occupations.

Indecisiveness has been linked to various psychological processes such as more

complex and thorough processing of choice options, including consideration of multiple

perspectives and alternatives (Carmon et al., 2003; Yates et al., 2010), and more experienced

threat from forgoing choice options (Luce, et al., 1997; Luce, Payne, & Bettman, 2001).

Extending this literature, I argue below that indecisiveness is also related to identity conflict.

1.3 FROM IDENTITY CONFLICT TO INDECISIVENSS

1.3.1 Identity-Based Decision-Making

Identity and choice are almost synonymous in our understanding of the self. For

Baumeister (1999), identity is a self-definition comprised of a "mixture of choices" (p.4) we

use to decide how we represent ourselves to others. Many scholars have expressed similar

notions that identity and choice are intertwined (Levy, 1959; Oyserman, 2009; Reed, 2002;

Shavitt & Nelson, 1999; Snibbe & Markus, 2005). People are particularly motivated to

express themselves through choices that are consistent with their social identities—senses of who we are derived from memberships in groups such as ethnic, national, gender, religious, and occupational groups, among others (Kim & Chu, 2011; Oyserman, 2009; Sirgy, 1982; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). For example, Latino consumers, when they were ethnic minorities in their community, were more likely to prefer a laundry detergent endorsed by a spokesperson of the same ethnicity, suggesting that their heightened awareness of their ethnic identity prompted a choice consistent with that social group (Deshpande & Stayman, 1994; Forehand & Deshpande, 2001).

To the extent that people have multiple social identities—or belong to more than one social group—making one identity salient has been shown to affect choice. For example, Reed (2004) increased or decreased the importance of people's family identity by asking participants to recall ways in which they are connected to or independent from their families, respectively. Participants then rated their intentions to purchase an identity-relevant product (i.e., a palm pilot advertised with utilitarian features and the capability of staying in touch with family) or an identity-irrelevant product (i.e., a palm pilot with only utilitarian features). The results showed that participants whose family identity was made more important reported greater intent to purchase the identity-relevant product.

Similarly, when choosing items from a restaurant menu, Chinese American biculturals primed with American culture preferred items that are unique or novel, affirming stereotypical American cultural values related to uniqueness. When primed with Chinese culture instead, biculturals preferred more traditional dishes, affirming stereotypical Chinese values related to conformity (LeBoeuf, Shafir, & Bayuk, 2010). Social identities have also been shown to predict measures of indecisiveness such as post-choice satisfaction and regret. Undergraduate business students who decided to subscribe to *Business Week* instead of

People Magazine, for example, were less satisfied with their choice when their college rather than business student identity was made salient (LeBoeuf et al., 2010).

Importantly, social identities affect choices only in decision domains relevant to those identities. For example, Reed (2004) found that people whose scholarly identity was made more versus less important only differed in their evaluations of a Smithsonian Association membership when the membership was advertised as identity-relevant (i.e., in terms of the types of people who are members) but not as identity-irrelevant (i.e., in terms of utilitarian features of the membership).

1.3.2 Identity Integration

Although many identities have the potential to be conflicting—should Sandra bid more to sabotage her opponents (i.e., act consistent with her Spanish identity) or save to increase her prize money (i.e., be congruent with her Dutch identity)?—individuals differ in the extent to which they perceive them as such. Indeed, different social identities (e.g., Spanish vs. Dutch cultural identities) are not inherently conflictual, but subject to individual differences in how multiple identities are negotiated, managed, and perceived.

There are several individual difference constructs that tap into how people perceive and manage multiple social identities. For instance, research on immigrants has identified different types of cultural identification patterns based on how strongly a person feels connected to their home and host cultures, highlighting the possibility that people exposed to two cultures can vary in how they manage their multiple cultural identities (Berry, 1990; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2006). Social identity complexity assesses the structure of a person's social identities and the extent to which they perceive overlap between social categories (Roccas & Brewer, 2002). High social complexity refers to beliefs that multiple social groups share overlapping membership,

whereas low social complexity refers to beliefs that multiple social groups are distinct with clear differentiating boundaries. Higher social identity complexity has been linked to greater tolerance for diversity and acceptance of people from different social categories (Brewer & Pierce, 2005; Miller, Brewer, & Arbuckle, 2009).

A similar concept, Identity Integration (II) refers to the perceived compatibility between one's multiple social identities. Low identity integrators (low IIs) perceive their social identities as conflictual and disparate, whereas high identity integrators (high IIs) perceive their identities as compatible and integrated. While both low and high IIs identify with their multiple social identities and see group membership as an integral part of who they are, they differ in their perceptions of the *relationship* between the different identity groups (Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, & Morris, 2002). II has been used to understand how specific populations manage potentially conflicting social identities. For example, Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005) have used II to examine biculturals' perceived conflict between their cultural identities. And Cheng, Sanchez-Burks, and Lee (2008), for instance, examined II between gender and professional identities among female engineers (see also Darling, Molina, Sanders, Lee, & Zhao, 2008).

II can also apply to the general population to refer to how people *in general* manage their multiple social identities. Rather than focusing on specific identities (e.g., two cultural identities), *generalized* II taps into the perceived relationships among a person's multiple social identities. The reasoning behind this construct lies in the idea that all individuals, regardless of their membership in or identification with any specific combination of social identities, can experience conflict between their identities to varying degrees. Initial tests of this measure in college student and adult populations have found evidence for its internal reliability and validity. Scores on the Generalized II scale correlate positively with scores on

II scales tailored to specific identities, particularly bicultural II (which measures perceived compatibility between two cultural identities) among biculturals and work-family II (which measures perceived compatibility between work and family identities) among working professionals with families.

Studies examining the antecedents of II among biculturals have linked perceived conflict between two cultural identities to trait-level neuroticism and suggest that emotional instability can predispose individuals to negative cross-cultural experiences (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). Furthermore, negative cultural experiences may facilitate the perception that two cultural identities are discrepant (Cheng & Lee, 2013). These studies suggest that neuroticism could contribute to low II.

Empirical work demonstrates that II is an important moderator between social identities and psychological processes related to decision-making (for a review of II among biculturals, see Cheng & Lee, in press). For one, research among biculturals shows that those with low bicultural II, or those who perceived their cultural identities as in conflict, generated more detailed descriptions of cultural stimuli that incorporated multiple perspectives (Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu, 2006). However, low IIs did *not* offer more complex descriptions when describing culturally-irrelevant stimuli, such as generic landscapes. This study suggests that low IIs do not generally process information in more complex ways, but only in domains related to the social identities in question.

Furthermore, low IIs were more likely to resist a group consensus decision, but only if the group was wrong (Mok & Morris, 2010). In a series of figure rotation tasks, in which participants needed to correctly identify whether the rotated image matched the original, Asian American biculturals with higher levels of identity conflict were more likely to choose a response option not selected by the majority of their team members when this majority

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choice was incorrect. In terms of decision-making, this suggests that low IIs may be better able to resist a group decision that is wrong because they process information more thoroughly and are more open to alternatives during the decision-making process.

Similar cognitive processes have also been linked to indecisiveness. For instance, more complex processing during decision-making has been shown to lead to more negative affect post choice, greater decision latency, and indecision (Carmon et al., 2003; Luce et al., 2001; Yates et al., 2001). Yates et al. (2010) found that when participants narrated their thought process during decision-making on general knowledge questions, those who were more indecisive were also more thorough. That is, they produced more extensive and detailed narrations and provided more arguments for the decision problems. They also included multiple perspectives in their thought process, generating more arguments that opposed the available choice options as well as their choice. These pathways provide reason to speculate that low II would be associated with indecisiveness.

Recent work on II has also shown that perceptions of identity incompatibilities (or low II) are associated with contrastive rather than congruent responses to identity cues (Cheng et al., 2006; Mok & Morris, 2009, 2013). For example, Mok and Morris (2013) found that Asian American biculturals with low II were more likely to choose items related to their Asian identity when primed with American cultural cues and vice versa. These contrast effects suggest that the way people experience identity-relevant contexts may be more complex than suggested under traditional social identity perspectives. Rather than driving behavior consistent with a single salient identity, identity-relevant contexts may also cue people's feelings about the relationships between their identities. As such, having to make identity-relevant decisions may be experienced as more conflictual for people with lower levels of II.

In line with this notion, research suggests that self-defensive processes underlie the association between low II and contrastive responses to identity cues (Mok & Morris, 2013). In other words, people who perceive their identities as conflicting and disparate perceive situations that emphasize one of their identities as more threatening to their self-concept and make choices consistent with the unaffirmed identity in order to restore it (e.g., Baumeister, Dale, & Sommer, 1998; Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 1985; Rucker & Galinsky, 2008). Instead of feeling like the context elicits a corresponding part of their identity, people with low II may feel like they lose a part of themselves and feel threatened. As Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005) note, in comparison to biculturals with high II who have integrated their cultural identities, those with low II may feel like they "[have] to choose one culture or the other" (p. 1040). By extension, identity-relevant contexts—such as making a decision in an identity-relevant domain—should make people with lower levels of II feel more self-threat as they stand to lose more (of the self) in these contexts, leading to more experienced decisional conflict. Indeed, according to choice tradeoff models of decision-making, more threatening decisions—or those in which the decision-maker has more to lose—are also associated with more negative emotions (Luce et al., 1997, 2001; see also Carmon et al., 2003). Applying an identity perspective to these models, making identity-relevant choices, in which people give up one self-relevant option for another, should pose a greater threat to the self for those whose selves are more disparate and conflicted as they psychologically stand to lose more (of themselves). In short, based on these affective links, there is further reason to believe low IIs would be more indecisive.

1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENT STUDIES

The current studies aim to bridge research on individual differences in identity integration (or II) and indecisiveness. Below I outline the specific hypotheses and designs of

a series of six studies to examine this relationship.

1.4.1 Hypothesis 1: Establishing a Link between Low II and Indecisiveness

As mentioned, psychological processes that have been associated with low II—such as complex and thorough processing, including consideration of multiple perspectives and alternatives, and self-threat in the face of choice (Benet-Martínez et al., 2006; Mok & Morris, 2010, 2013)—have also been linked to greater decision conflict (Carmon et al., 2003; Luce et al., 1997, 2001; Yates et al.; 2010). Based on this literature, I propose that low IIs may experience higher levels of indecisiveness. I predict that people with low II—or people who generally perceive greater conflict between their various social identities—will be more indecisive than people with high II—or people who generally perceive less conflict between their various social identities (Hypothesis 1). Study 1 provides a first step in testing this association. Study 2 replicates Study 1 using multiple decision-making tasks and various operationalizations of indecisiveness.

1.4.2 Hypothesis 2: Context-Dependence of the Effect

I further predict that the relationship between II and indecisiveness will be moderated by the domain of the decision-making task. Specifically, if decision conflict is driven by identity conflict, I would expect low IIs to demonstrate higher levels of indecisiveness *only* when the decision-making tasks are related to the social identities. This idea is consistent with several past studies showing that II's effects on psychological processes are specific to tasks relevant to the social identities at hand (e.g., Benet-Martínez et al., 2006) and that social identities affect decision-making only in identity-relevant domains, perhaps because they become most salient in these types of contexts (e.g., Reed, 2004).

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Thus, in addition to examining people's general level of II across their many social identities, I also examine II between specific identities, or perceptions of two specific social identities as being in conflict or not. I hypothesize that, compared to tasks that are not relevant to the specific identities, the relationship between II and indecisiveness will be stronger in tasks that are identity-relevant (Hypothesis 2). Study 3 provides the first examination of this hypothesis in a real-world organizational setting. Studies 4 and 5 test this hypothesis using experimental designs.

1.4.3 Hypothesis 3: Direct Effect of Low II on Indecisiveness

Lastly, despite the theoretical links between identity conflict and decision conflict, it remains to be seen whether identity management strategies can have a direct effect on the decision-making process. Building on Studies 1-5, I predict that identity integration has a direct effect on indecisiveness (Hypothesis 3). I test this proposition in Study 6 by experimentally manipulating II and examining indecisiveness in both an identity-relevant and identity-irrelevant task. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, the direct effect should only hold in the identity-relevant domain, further supporting the notion that these effects are due to identity processes.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY 1—GENERALIZED IDENTITY INTEGRATION AND POST-CHOICE

REGRET

Study 1 examines the relationship between "*generalized*" II—or the extent to which people perceive their various social identities to be generally compatible versus in conflict—and an affective component of indecisiveness: post-choice regret. Although generalized II is a relatively new measure in the II literature, it appears to tap into similar individual differences in the management of multiple identities as previously established measures of specific II (e.g., among two cultural identities in biculturals; Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). As such, preliminary tests of the Generalized II scale have shown significant positive correlations with other measures of II such as Bicultural II among biculturals and Work-Family II among working professionals with families.

As mentioned in the Introduction, previous research has consistently shown a positive relationship between indecisiveness and neuroticism (e.g., Jackson et al., 1999). Neuroticism is also related to identity conflict (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). Trait neuroticism is therefore included as a control variable.

Overall, Study 1 tests Hypothesis 1: Individuals with lower II will exhibit higher levels of post-choice regret after a decision-making task, and that this effect will be apparent when controlling for trait-level neuroticism.

2.1 METHOD

2.1.1 Participants

Two hundred forty-six undergraduates (59% women; M_{age} = 19.7 years, SD_{age} = 2.2 years) at a large Midwestern university participated in the study for partial course credit. The majority of participants (72.0%) identified as White/Caucasian; 16.3% Asian/Asian American; 4.9% Black/African American; 3.3% Hispanic/Latino/a; and 3.9% identified as Other.

2.1.2 Materials and Procedure

The study consisted of two parts. Participants completed each part one week apart. The first part was an online survey that included measures of II and Neuroticism. To assess generalized II (or people's general perceptions of compatibility between their identities), participants rated their agreement on 10 items using a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Examples of items include "I am often conflicted between my different selves" [R] and "My different selves blend together seamlessly" (see Appendix A). These items were modified based on existing measures of II (e.g., Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Cheng & Lee, 2009; Darling, et al., 2008; Sacharin, Lee, & Gonzalez, 2009). For example, the item "I keep my different selves separate" [R] is adapted from the item used to measure cultural II among biculturals "I keep Chinese and American cultures separate" (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). This method of adapting the II scale for different samples has been used in previous research to create multiple, reliable measures of II (Cheng & Lee, 2009; Cheng et al., 2008; Darling et al., 2008; Sacharin et al., 2009). Ratings across the 10 items were averaged to give each participant a single score of II (α = .75), with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived integration among multiple identities (1.90

– 6.60, $M = 4.69$, $SD = .81$). Then participants were asked to rate two items used to assess neuroticism on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*)—"I see myself as anxious, easily upset" and "I see myself as calm, emotionally stable" [R] (see Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003 for more details about this scale). Scores across the two items were averaged to give each participant a single score on neuroticism ($\alpha = .68$; $M = 3.41$, $SD = 1.34$).

One week later, participants completed a decision-making task. The procedure was adapted from choice justification paradigms where participants have to choose between two alternatives that are similarly preferred (e.g., Kitayama et al., 2004). Typically, participants are asked to list alternatives according to their preferences and then have to choose between two options relatively in the middle of the list. This creates the potential for the choice to be difficult and for greater variability in indecisiveness. Furthermore, many real world decisions are made in this way. For instance, although a job candidate may prefer to work for one company over another (and likely has a list of several top employers they would like to work for), constraints and chance (such as not being offered the job) can ultimately drive the choice down to options neither at the top nor bottom of the list.

For the decision-making task in the current study, participants were first asked to list features of their ideal job (such as industry, location, hours, and job responsibilities, for example), and then rank order these features in order of importance. Then, participants were asked to imagine that they had received two job offers—the first offer had their third- but not fourth-ranked feature, and the second offer had their fourth- but not third-ranked feature. Participants indicated which of the two job offers they would take.

After completing this decision-making task, participants completed a 5-item measure of post-choice regret drawn from previous research (e.g., Bui et al., 2011). This measure

includes (a) self-reported regret, (b) perceptions that they should and wished they had chosen differently, (c) reports of whether they would choose differently, and (d) whether they would be happier with the other choice option. All items of the scale are listed in Appendix B. Using a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), participants indicated their agreement to items such as "To what extent do you wish you had chosen the other organization?" and "If I could do it over again, I would change my choice to the other organization" ($\alpha = .82$). Higher scores indicated higher levels of post-choice regret ($1.00 - 6.00$, $M = 2.66$, $SD = .90$).

2.2 RESULTS

The correlation between II and neuroticism was significant ($r = -.33$, $p < .001$). Neuroticism was not related to post-choice regret ($r = .06$; $p = .34$). To examine the prediction that II would be negatively related to regret, controlling for neuroticism, post-choice regret was regressed on generalized II and neuroticism in a simultaneous linear regression, ($R^2 = .02$; $F(2, 243) = 2.53$, $p = .082$). II was a significant predictor of regret ($b_{unstandardized} = -.152$, $p = .043$, 95% CI [$-.30$, $-.01$]), such that lower levels of II were associated with greater self-reported post-choice regret, even when controlling for neuroticism, which did not significantly predict regret ($b_{unstandardized} = .010$, $p = .822$, 95% CI [$-.08$, $.10$]).

2.3 DISCUSSION

Study 1 supported the predicted association between low II and indecisiveness (Hypothesis 1) and further ruled out trait neuroticism as a potential alternative explanation for this link. Thus, this study suggests that perceiving one's multiple social identities to be in conflict is related to experiencing conflict in making decisions, regardless of one's overall

negative affective disposition. Still, it remains to be seen if low II is also associated with

other aspects of indecisiveness and in different decision contexts as well as whether identity

management strategies drive indecisiveness. Study 2 addressed the former by including a

broader set of measures in addition to affect to capture indecisiveness and using different

decision-making tasks. As such, Study 2 aimed to replicate Study 1's findings and provide

further support for Hypothesis 1.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY 2—GENERALIZED IDENTITY INTEGRATION AND

INDECISIVENESS

Organizations often require individuals to not only generate new or creative ideas but also make decisions around which of these to present, implement, or pursue (Sanchez-Burks, Karlesky, & Lee, 2014). I use this common organizational problem as inspiration for the decision-making tasks in Study 2, to test the generalizability of the association between low II and indecisiveness across other decision domains from the one used in Study 1. Study 2 also added additional measures of indecisiveness, including self-report, behavioral, and affective measures to test whether low II relates to indecisiveness broadly. As in Study 1, I expected participants with low II to exhibit higher levels of self-report, behavioral, and affective measures of indecisiveness (Hypothesis 1). I expected to find these relationships in both decision-making domains.

3.1 METHOD

3.1.1 Participants

One hundred fourteen undergraduates (65% women; M_{age} = 18.5 years; SD_{age} = .77 years) at a large Midwestern university participated in the study for partial course credit. The majority of participants (67.2%) identified as White/Caucasian followed by 15.5% Asian/Asian American, 4.3% Black/African American, 3.4% Hispanic/Latino/a, 3.4% Biracial/Multiracial, and 6.0% unknown.

3.1.2 Materials and Procedure

Participants completed all measures in an online survey. To assess generalized II, participants first completed the same 10-item measure used in Study 1 (α = .81; see Appendix A). For the current sample, II scores ranged from 2.25 to 6.92 (*M* = 4.67, *SD* = .85).

After completing the II scale, participants were randomly assigned to one of two decision-making domains. In one condition, participants were asked to list as many modes of transportation as possible (Hirt, Devers, & McCrae, 2008). In the second condition, participants were instructed to list as many uses for a brick as possible (Chermahini, Hickendorff, & Hommel, 2012; Guilford, 1967). Similar to Study 1, participants were asked to rank order their top five ideas.

To measure indecisiveness, participants first completed the 15-item self-report Indecisiveness Scale (Frost & Shows, 1993; see Appendix B). Using a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), participants rated their agreement on items such as "I try to put off making decisions" and "It seems that deciding on the most trivial thing takes me a long time" (α = .89). Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-reported indecisiveness (1.47 – 4.47, *M* = 3.00, *SD* = .67).

Second, participants were presented with their third- and fourth-ranked ideas and asked to make a hypothetical choice about which one of their ideas they would like to enter in a creativity contest. Decision latency, as another indicator of indecisiveness, was measured by the time it took participants to make a decision (4.6 − 90.74 seconds, *M* = 15.86, *SD* = 13.14). Third, participants indicated their post-choice regret using the same five items used in Study 1 (α = .87; see Appendix B). Averages across the five items ranged from 1.00 to

4.60 in the current sample ($M = 1.96$, $SD = .89$). This constitutes an affective measure of indecisiveness.

3.2 RESULTS

Intercorrelations between the three measures of indecisiveness—self-report indecisiveness, behavioral decision latency, and affective post-choice regret—were not significant: $r = .05$ ($p = .66$) between decision latency and regret; $r = -.17$ ($p = .10$) between self-report indecisiveness and decision latency; and $r = .19$ ($p = .07$) between self-report indecisiveness and regret.

All subsequent analyses were conducted using the PROCESS Macro (Version 2.13) in SPSS (Hayes, 2013). Fourteen participants who did not complete all relevant measures were dropped from these analyses. To test the hypothesis that low II would be associated with indecisiveness across decision tasks, three separate moderation models (Model 1) were specified—one per dependent variable: self-reported indecisiveness, decision latency, and post-choice regret—in which each respective measure of indecisiveness was entered as the dependent variable with II, task condition (transportation vs. brick), and their interaction entered as predictors.

For self-reported indecisiveness, the overall model was significant ($R^2 = .12$; $F(3, 96) = 4.22$, $p = .008$). II was a significant predictor of scores on the Indecisiveness Scale ($b_{unstandardized} = -.47$, $p = .044$, 95% CI [$-.92$, $-.01$]), indicating that lower levels of II are associated with greater indecisiveness, regardless of decision task ($b_{unstandardized} = -.73$, $p = .364$, 95% CI [-2.31, .86]). The interaction between II and task was also non-significant ($b_{unstandardized} = .16$, $p = .330$, 95% CI [$-.17$, .50]). This pattern of results supported Hypothesis 1.

For behavioral decision latency, the overall model was not significant ($R^2 = .03$; $F(3, 96) = 1.13$, $p = .342$). Contrary to prediction, II was not a significant predictor of the time it

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took participants to make a decision ($b_{unstandardized} = -1.27$, $p = .784$, 95% CI [−10.47, 7.92]). Neither task ($b_{unstandardized} = 6.36$, $p = .696$, 95% CI [−25.83, 38.56]) nor the interaction between II and task significantly predicted decision latency ($b_{unstandardized} = -.85$, $p = .805$, 95% CI [−7.63, 5.94]). These findings did not support Hypothesis 1.

Lastly, for post-decisional regret, the overall model was significant ($R^2 = .14$; $F(3, 93) = 5.19$, $p = .002$). However, as with decision latency, none of the predictors was significant: II ($b_{unstandardized} = -.23$, $p = .451$, 95% CI [−.82, .37]); task ($b_{unstandardized} = .64$, $p = .549$, 95% CI [−1.47, 2.75]); and the interaction ($b_{unstandardized} = -.12$, $p = .582$, 95% CI [−.56, .32]). These findings also did not support Hypothesis 1, showing no relationship between II and post-choice regret across the two task conditions.

3.3 DISCUSSION

Study 2's findings were decidedly mixed. Although lower levels of II were associated with greater self-reported indecisiveness on the Indecisiveness Scale regardless of decision task, as predicted (Hypotheses 1), the same effect was not found for behavioral and affective measures of indecisiveness. Perhaps generalized II is a better predictor of similarly general notions of indecisiveness—such as those captured by the Indecisiveness Scale, which is often also conceived as a stable personality trait (Frost & Shows, 1993). Surprisingly, Study 2 did not replicate the link between low generalized II and post-choice regret (affective indecisiveness) found in Study 1. This may be because the job scenario task used in Study 1 was more likely to elicit negative affective responses as it may have proved a particularly tangible or salient activity for undergraduate participants. As such, the tasks used in Study 2 may have presented a particularly rigorous test of Hypothesis 1. Nonetheless, creative idea generation tasks have been used widely in previous research as they have real-world

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applicability (e.g., Hirt et al., 2008) and for the present set of studies provide useful ways of probing various aspects of the decision context (see Studies 4, 5, and 6).

Lastly, it is interesting to note that decision latency also showed no relationship to II. Although this is a common conception of what it means to be indecisive (and even appears in several items on the Indecisiveness Scale), participants with lower II did not take longer to make choices in these particular tasks. Though this may again point to the nature of the tasks used, it can also suggest that deliberation may not be an underlying mechanism for the relationship between II and indecisiveness. Rather, and more consistent with Study 1, low IIs may be particularly prone to the *experience* of indecisiveness—i.e., feeling conflicted, which they recognize as difficulty in making decisions (self-reported indecisiveness; Study 2) and feeling worse after making a choice (post-choice regret; Study 1). Overall, Studies 1 and 2 suggest that there is some evidence for Hypothesis 1—that people who feel conflicted about their multiple selves also feel conflicted when making decisions. However, it is unclear what the role of identity management strategies is in this relationship. To test the role of II more precisely, Studies 3-6 focus on perceptions of identity conflict between *specific* identities to predict indecisiveness in particular, identity-relevant contexts.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 3—IDENTITY INTEGRATION AND INDECISIVENESS AT WORK

Using a working/adult sample, Study 3 extends the previous findings to a real-world organizational context. Specifically, I collected data from Mexican employees working for a Mexican branch of a German company. I assessed II by measuring integration of two identities that are relevant to these employees at work—their "foreign" organizational identity (German) and "local" cultural identity (Mexican). Study 3 examines Hypothesis 2 by testing the proposition that individuals with lower II among work-related identities will be more indecisive at work.

4.1 METHOD

4.1.1 Participants

Employees of a local subsidiary of a German automotive company in Mexico were asked to participate in a 5-minute online survey. Participation was solicited by the employee's supervisor, but it was voluntary and participants were ensured anonymity. A total of 37 employees (90% response rate; 49% women; M_{age} = 36.2 years; SD_{age} = 7.3 years) took part in the survey. All participants were Mexican nationals and had worked at the organization or the subsidiary for at least 1 year (12 – 332 months, M_{tenure} = 120 months, SD_{tenure} = 70 months). Participants from all departments (such as marketing, sales, and aftersales) and across various positions were contacted, but this information was not collected to preserve participants' anonymity. The organization is German and the subsidiary uses standardized

rules and policies from the German headquarters, but the official language of the subsidiary is Spanish.

4.1.2 Materials and Procedure

Because participants' first language is Spanish, I developed an online survey in Spanish. All measures and survey instructions were translated into Spanish and back-translated into English. First, participants completed a 4-item measure of Foreign-Local II to assess perceived compatibility between their foreign (German) organizational identity and their local (Mexican) cultural identity (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002; see Appendix A for all items). As mentioned, tailoring II scales to examine integration between different types of identity is a common practice in past research (e.g., Cheng & Lee, 2009; Cheng et al., 2008; Darling et al., 2008; Sacharin et al., 2009). Following this precedent, existing measures of II were adapted and modified to address these specific identities. For example, an item on a previously established gender-professional II scale (Darling et al., 2008) "I feel conflicted between my identity as a woman and my identity as a math/science major" was modified to say "At work, I feel conflicted between my identity as a Mexican and my identity as an employee of a German company" [R]. Participants rated II between their foreign organizational identity and their local cultural identity on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The four items were averaged to form a single Foreign-Local II score ($\alpha = .70$). Higher scores indicated greater perceived identity compatibility, with scores in the sample ranging from 2.50 to 7.00 ($M = 5.85$, $SD = 1.13$).

Participants also completed a shortened and modified version of the Indecisiveness Scale (Frost & Shows, 1993; see Appendix B for all items). The scale was reduced from 15 to 5 items to make the survey shorter and improve response rates. The five items were selected

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to include a range of definitions of indecisiveness (e.g., "At work, it seems that deciding on the most trivial thing takes me a long time" taps into decision latency and "At work, after I have chosen or decided something, I often believe I've made the wrong choice or decision" captures regret) as well as enable items to apply to the work domain. These five items were qualified by the phrase "at work" to tap into indecisiveness within the work domain specifically. Participants rated their agreement to each item from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The items were averaged to form a single indecisiveness measure ($\alpha = .66$). Higher scores indicate higher levels of indecisiveness (1.00 – 3.40, $M = 1.71$, $SD = .62$).

4.2 RESULTS

To test the prediction that lower levels of II would be associated with greater indecisiveness, I conducted a multiple linear regression in which scores on the Indecisiveness Scale were regressed simultaneously on II and organizational tenure. The overall model was significant ($R^2 = .16$; $F(2, 34) = 4.36$, $p = .021$). Only II ($b_{unstandardized} = -.182$, $p = .040$, 95% CI [-.36, -.01]) but not tenure ($b_{unstandardized} = .00$, $p = .079$, 95% CI [-.01, .00]) was a significant predictor of indecisiveness scores. That is, independent of the time an employee had worked for the organization, the perception that one's local cultural identity is incompatible with one's foreign organizational identity was related to higher levels of experienced indecisiveness at work.

4.3 DISCUSSION

Unlike Studies 1 and 2, Study 3 used an organizational sample to examine the association between II and indecisiveness in a real-world workplace context. Although many factors other than the psychological management of identities may shape the experiences associated with decision-making at work, these findings provided some initial support for the

hypothesis that lower II is associated with greater experienced decisional conflict. To the extent that local national and foreign organizational cultural identities were relevant to decision-making at work in this sample, these findings also suggest that identity management matters particularly for identity-relevant decisions. To examine the relationship between II and indecisiveness in a more controlled setting and to provide a more rigorous test of Hypothesis 2—or the proposition that the relationship between II and indecisiveness will be apparent only in tasks that are identity-relevant—Studies 4 and 5 used an experimental design to randomly assign biculturals or working professionals with families, respectively, to complete an identity-relevant or identity-irrelevant decision-making task.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY 4—THE ROLE OF IDENTITY-RELEVANT DECISIONS IN THE

CULTURAL DOMAIN

Studies 4 and 5 test the proposition that individual differences in II will predict indecisiveness more strongly when the integrated versus conflicting identities are relevant to the decision-making task (Hypothesis 2). Thus, these studies examine how II of specific identities relates to indecisiveness in specific contexts. Based on previous research focusing on bicultural identities (e.g., Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005), Study 4 focuses on people's psychological management of two cultural identities. In particular, I predicted that participants who perceive their identities as incompatible and in conflict will experience higher levels of indecisiveness; but this effect will only be apparent in decision tasks relevant to the cultural domain.

5.1 METHOD

5.1.1 Participants

Participants were 106 self-identified biculturals (34% women; M_{age} = 23.4 years; SD_{age} = 6.5 years) recruited through subject pools on the campus of a large Midwestern university and from Amazon's Mechanical Turk site in the U.S. and compensated for their participation. The majority of participants (71.7%) identified as Asian/Asian American, followed by 13.2% White/Caucasian; 5.7% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; 4.7% Hispanic/Latino/a; 3.4% Biracial/Multiracial; and 1.9% Black/African American.

Participants completed all measures in an online survey. First, consistent with theoretical conceptions that identity is at least in part self-ascribed (e.g., Stryker & Burke, 2000), participants self-identified their cultural identities, or the cultural groups to which they belong and with which they identify. Then, they completed a 3-item Bicultural II scale that measures perceived integration versus conflict between their two cultural groups (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu, 2006; Cheng et al., 2008). Using a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), participants rated their agreement to items such as "I feel conflicted between my identity as a(n) [Culture 1] and my identity as a(n) [Culture 2]" [R], where "Culture 1" and "Culture 2" were replaced with the self-identified cultural groups they indicated in the previous section (see Appendix A for all scale items). Each participant's ratings were averaged to form a single score of II where higher scores indicated greater integration of the two cultural identities ($\alpha = .72$; *range* = 1.33−7.00, $M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.29$).

In a between-subjects design, participants were then randomly assigned to either an identity-relevant or an identity-irrelevant decision-making task identical to the ones used in Study 2. In the identity-relevant condition, participants engaged in a decision-making task within the cultural domain. Specifically, they were asked to list as many creative modes of transportation as possible (Hirt et al., 2008). Modes of transportation are often associated with visible or explicit aspects of culture and can vary remarkably from one culture to the next (e.g., Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998); as such, this task has cultural relevance. In the identity-irrelevant condition, participants were asked to list as many uses for a brick as possible (Chermahini et al., 2012; Guilford, 1967); this task is not relevant to people's cultural identities.

Participants then ranked their top five ideas, were presented with their third- and fourth-ranked idea in counterbalanced order, and were asked to choose their best idea from these two. They then reported their post-choice negative affect on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*very good*) to 5 (*very bad*) (*range* = 1.00−5.00, M = 2.70, SD = .91) (e.g., Carmon et al., 2003).

To expand upon Study 2's design and assess aspects of the particular choice tradeoffs that may affect the difficulty of the decision and hence indecisiveness (e.g., Chatterjee & Heath, 1996), two independent coders blind to the hypothesis rated each participant's third- and fourth-ranked ideas for quality and dissimilarity. In accordance with definitions of creativity (e.g., Guilford, 1967) and as a way to gauge overall quality of the choice options, coders rated each idea for how novel/original and feasible/useful it was on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*not at all novel/feasible*) to 5 (*extremely novel/feasible*). To obtain an overall rating of option quality per participant, each coder's ratings were averaged across the two ideas. To gauge how similar or dissimilar the two choice options were, coders also assigned a score on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*very similar*) to 5 (*very dissimilar*) to each choice option pair. Inter-rater reliabilities were acceptable for both the quality score (α = .65) and the dissimilarity score (α = .67) and thus the coders' ratings were averaged to create a single quality (*range* = 1.00−5.00, M = 2.42, SD = .87) and a single dissimilarity (*range* = 1.00−4.50, M = 2.38, SD = .90) score for each participant.

5.2 RESULTS

All analyses were conducted using the PROCESS Macro (Version 2.13) in SPSS (Hayes, 2013). Thirty-one participants who did not complete all relevant measures were dropped from the analyses. To test the proposition that II would be associated with indecisiveness, specifically negative affect, only for an identity-relevant decision but not an

identity-irrelevant decision, a moderation model (Model 1) was specified in which post-choice negative affect was entered as the dependent variable with II, task condition (transportation vs. brick), and their interaction entered as predictors. To account for various features of particular tradeoffs that may affect decision-making, the scores of choice option quality and dissimilarity were entered as control variables. The number of ideas generated was also entered as a control, to account for any possible effects of choice set size on decision-making (e.g., Su, Chen, & Zhao, 2009).

The overall model was marginally significant (R^2 = .16; $F(6, 68)$ = 2.24, p = .050). II was a significant predictor of negative affect ($b_{unstandardized}$ = -.65, p = .004, 95% CI [-1.08, -.22]), indicating that lower levels of II are associated with greater post-choice negative affect. Task condition was also a significant predictor of affect ($b_{unstandardized}$ = -1.83, p = .009, 95% CI [-3.18, -.48]) such that participants tended to report greater post-choice negative affect after the transportation task. These main effects, however, were qualified by a significant interaction between II and task ($b_{unstandardized}$ = .36, p = .013, 95% CI [.08, .64]). As expected, simple slopes analyses showed that II was a significant predictor of post-choice negative affect for the identity-relevant (cultural/transportation) task ($b_{unstandardized}$ = -.29, p = .003, 95% CI [-.48, -.10]), but not the identity-irrelevant (non-cultural/brick) task ($b_{unstandardized}$ = .07, p = .524, 95% CI [-.14, .27]). Figure 1 displays this interaction effect.

Figure 1. Interaction of II and task on post-choice negative affect among biculturals (Study 4). Means are plotted at one standard deviation below and above the mean. ** p < .01

Post-Choice
Negative Affect
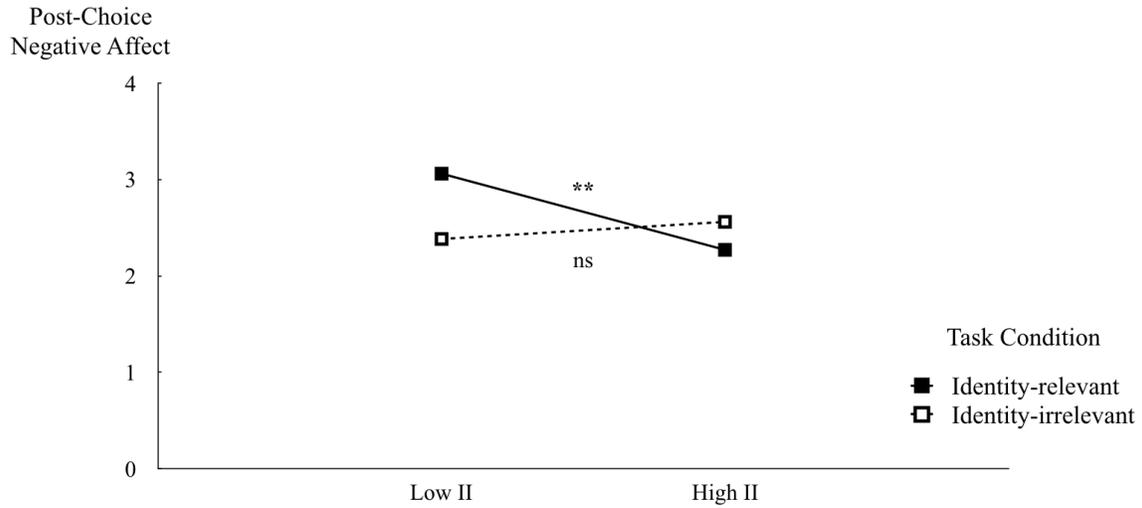
5.3 DISCUSSION

Study 4 found support for Hypothesis 2—the prediction that low II would be associated with indecisiveness only in decisions that are relevant to the identities. This suggests that at least for affective components of indecisiveness, identity conflict may be transferred to relevant (but not irrelevant) decision contexts. Similarly to Study 1, which ruled out generalized negative affect as an explanation of the II-indecisiveness link, Study 4 also suggests that specific aspects of the choice set that are typically associated with more conflictual decision-making such as quality or number of the choice options (e.g., Chatterjee & Heath, 1996), do not appear to account for greater experienced negative affect. That is, II appears to be a particularly strong predictor of negative affect in decision-making. To test whether this relationship holds in a different sample and a more expansive measure of negative affect more closely related to indecisiveness—regret—Study 5 tests Hypothesis 2 in a sample of working professionals with families.

CHAPTER 6

STUDY 5— THE ROLE OF IDENTITY-RELEVANT DECISIONS IN THE WORK/FAMILY DOMAIN

Study 5 provides additional support for Hypothesis 2 by examining different identities within a different sample. Given the increasing difficulties of having both a career and a family and the relevance of these identities to organizational life (Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015), Study 5 replicates the findings from Study 4 in a sample of working professionals with families. I predict that participants who perceive their work and family identities as incompatible and in conflict will exhibit higher levels of indecisiveness, but only in decision tasks related to work/family balance.

6.1 METHOD

6.1.1 Participants

One hundred eleven self-identified full-time working professionals with families (59% women; M_{age} = 36.7 years; SD_{age} = 11.1 years) participated in an online study. Following common ways of sampling representative populations with work experience (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011), participants were recruited on Amazon's Mechanical Turk site in the U.S. and received monetary compensation for their participation. The majority of participants (74%) identified as White/Caucasian; 10.8% as Black/African American; 9.9% as Asian/Asian American; 1.8% as Hispanic/Latino/a; 1.8% as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; 0.9% as Biracial/Multiracial; and 0.9% did not identify with any of the categories provided.

Study 5 followed a similar design to Study 4. Participants completed the same 3-item measure of perceived identity conflict, but tailored to their work and family identities (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez et al., 2002; Darling et al., 2008). Participants rated their agreement on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) to items such as "I feel conflicted between my identity as a working professional and my identity as a family person" [R] (see Appendix A). Scores were averaged across the items, giving each participant a single score of Work-Family II (α = .77; *range* = 1.00−7.00, *M* = 4.57, *SD* = 1.43). Higher Work-Family II scores indicated greater integration and lower conflict between work and family identities.

As in Study 4, Study 5 used a between-subjects experimental design in which participants were randomly assigned to either an identity-relevant or an identity-irrelevant decision-making task. In the identity-relevant condition, participants engaged in a decision-making task within the work/family domain. Specifically, they were asked to list as many creative things to do on vacation as possible. Given the increasing sociocultural dialog around work/family balance (e.g., Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015) and the common perception that vacation is often a time for employed adults to spend with family yet stay connected to the office (PR Newswire, 2013), this task falls within the work/family domain and is therefore identity-relevant. The identity-irrelevant condition was identical to Study 4. As with cultural identities, uses for a brick are not relevant to people's work or family identities.

Participants then ranked their top five ideas and were asked to pick either their third- or fourth-ranked ideas, which were presented in counterbalanced order, as their best idea. Two different independent coders blind to the hypothesis rated the participants' third- and

fourth-ranked ideas for quality and dissimilarity using the same criteria as in Study 4. Inter-

rater reliabilities were high for both the quality score (α = .73) and the dissimilarity score (α

= .77) and raters' scores were averaged to create a single quality (*range* = 1.00−4.75, *M* =

2.32, *SD* = .88) and a single dissimilarity (*range* = 1.00−5.00, *M* = 2.97, *SD* = 1.23) score for

each participant.

To expand upon the single-item measure of post-choice negative affect used in Study

4, participants completed a 5-item measure of post-choice regret drawn from previous

research and similar to that used in Studies 1 and 2 (e.g., Bui et al., 2011; see Appendix B for

all scale itemsUsing a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*),

participants indicated their agreement to items such as "To what extent do you wish you had

chosen your other idea?" and "I would be happier if I had chosen my other idea" (α = .92).

Higher scores indicated higher levels of experienced post-choice regret (*range* = 1.00−5.60,

M = 2.31, *SD* = 1.15).

6.2 RESULTS

To test the prediction that lower II would be associated with higher levels of

indecisiveness, specifically post-choice regret here, in identity-relevant decision tasks only

(Hypothesis 2), identical analyses to Study 4 were conducted using the PROCESS Macro

(Version 2.13) in SPSS (Hayes, 2013). Fourteen participants who did not complete all

relevant measures were dropped from these analyses. A moderation model (Model 1) with

regret as the dependent variable and II, task condition (vacation vs. brick), and their

interaction entered as predictors. To control for various choice set features, the scores of

choice option quality, dissimilarity, and choice set size were entered as control variables.

The overall model was significant (R^2 = .18; $F(6, 90)$ = 3.33, p = .005). II was a

significant predictor of post-choice regret ($b_{unstandardized}$ = -.55, p = .015, 95% CI [-.99, -.11]),

indicating that lower levels of II were associated with greater post-choice regret. This main effect, however, was qualified by a significant interaction between II and task ($b_{unstandardized}$ = .33, p = .041, 95% CI [.01, .65]), which is shown in Figure 2. Supporting Hypothesis 2, simple slopes analyses showed that II was a significant predictor of regret for the identity-relevant (work-family/vacation) task ($b_{unstandardized}$ = -.22, p = .017, 95% CI [-.40, -.04]), but not the identity-irrelevant (non-work-family/brick) task ($b_{unstandardized}$ = .11, p = .399, 95% CI [-.15, .38]).

Figure 2. Interaction of II and task on post-choice regret among working professionals with families (Study 5). Means are plotted at one standard deviation below and above the mean. * p < .05
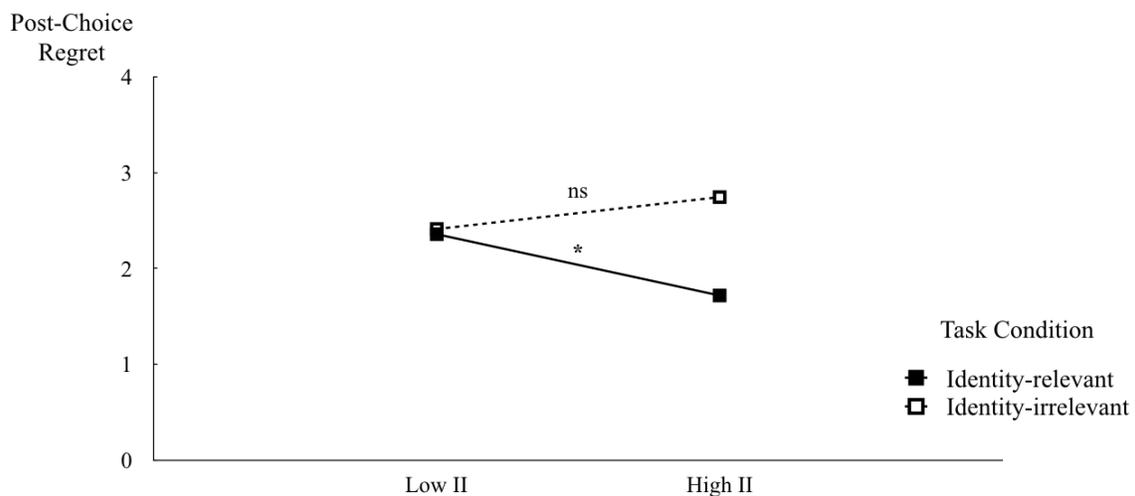
6.3 DISCUSSION

Study 5 provided further evidence that the association between low II and indecisiveness, particularly affective components here, is specific to decisions relevant to those identities (Hypothesis 2). Taken together, Studies 4 and 5 thus suggest that how people feel about the decisions they make may be a result of the way they psychologically manage identities applicable to that choice domain. Given that this effect was observed across two

different identity domains—cultural and work/family identities—suggested that it is unlikely that factors unique to particular identities are driving experiences of decisional conflict. Similarly, it did not appear that features specific to the choice set such as option quality, dissimilarity, and size affected participants' responses. This suggests that at least affective components of indecisiveness are subjective and may be a result of an identity-relevant decision domain cuing senses of conflict for people who dispositionally associate these identities with conflict (i.e., have lower II).

Because II is traditionally conceptualized as a stable individual difference (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005), Studies 1-5 measured II using self-reports and ascertained associations between II and indecisiveness. However, the question of whether these perceptions of identity incompatibility (low II) may cause negative post-decisional experiences remains unanswered. Indeed, given that levels of II can also be shifted at least temporarily (Cheng & Lee, 2013), indecisiveness should be malleable based on how people think about the relationship between their identities. Study 6 therefore experimentally manipulated II to examine the proposition that low II would lead to indecisiveness, again measured affectively, in an identity-relevant domain (Hypothesis 3).

CHAPTER 7

STUDY 6—DIRECT EFFECT OF IDENTITY INTEGRATION ON EXPERIENCED DECISIONAL CONFLICT

Study 6 examined a causal link between II and indecisiveness (Hypothesis 3). Recent studies in management of multiple social identities suggest that II can be successfully manipulated. For example, drawing from findings that biculturals with low bicultural II tend to have more negative acculturation experiences, Cheng and Lee (2013) asked biculturals to recall either positive or negative experiences related to their biculturalism, and measured Bicultural II before and after the recall task. They found that, compared to a control group, Bicultural II increased when biculturals recalled positive experiences, but decreased when negative experiences were recalled. Drawing from this methodological paradigm, Study 6 manipulated II by asking participants to recall positive or negative experiences about managing their identities. Focusing on work-family identities as in Study 5, I predicted that those who recalled negative experiences about the relationship between their work and family identities would exhibit higher levels of post-choice regret in identity-relevant decision-making tasks than those who recalled positive experiences about their work-family identities. To rule out spillover effects of negative recall as an alternative explanation, I further predicted that recalling negative experiences about managing the relationship between work and family identities would not lead to more regret for identity-irrelevant decision-making tasks outside the work/family domain. Again, establishing the decision domain as a moderator of this relationship would support the notion that specific contexts may trigger relevant responses.

7.1 METHOD

7.1.1 Participants

Participants included 147 self-identified full-time working professionals with families (49% women; M_{age} = 35.6 years; SD_{age} = 9.6 years) recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk in the U.S. and compensated for their participation. The majority of participants (83%) identified as White/Caucasian; 7.4% as Asian/Asian American; 6.8% as Black/African American; and 2.7% as Hispanic/Latino/a.

7.1.2 Materials and Procedure

Study 6 used a 3 (Recall: negative vs. positive vs. control) X 2 (Task: work-family/vacation vs. non-work-family/brick) between-subjects experimental design. The procedure was similar to Study 5 except that II was manipulated (through recall) before the decision-making task. First, all participants completed the same Work-Family II scale used in Study 5 (see Appendix A) to assess their baseline level of perceived compatibility between their work and family identities (a = .74; *range* = 1.33−7.00, M = 4.14, SD = 1.38).

To manipulate work-family II, participants were randomly assigned to one of three identity recall conditions modeled after Cheng and Lee (2013). In the negative and positive recall conditions, participants were asked to "recall 10 negative [positive] experiences you've had managing being both a working professional and family person". In the control condition, participants were not asked to recall any personal experiences. Next, participants were randomly assigned to complete the vacation (work-family/identity-relevant) or the brick (non-work-family/identity-irrelevant) decision-making task. Following the decision, all participants rated their post-choice regret using the same scale as in Study 5, with higher scores indicating greater regret (a = .91; *range* = 1.00−6.00, M = 2.49, SD = 1.22) (see

Appendix B). Lastly, participants filled out the Work-Family II scale again ($a = .80$; *range* = 1.00−7.00, $M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.43$).

7.2 RESULTS

I first conducted a manipulation check to examine whether the recall manipulation had an effect on Work-Family II. A 3 (Recall: negative vs. positive vs. control) X 2 (II: pre vs. post) repeated measures ANOVA showed a significant interaction effect, indicating that II changed significantly from pre to post manipulation depending on the recall condition, Wilks' lambda = .93, $F(2, 144) = 5.24$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2 = .068$. On average, II scores decreased in the negative recall condition ($n = 44$; $M_{pre} = 4.17$, $SD_{pre} = 1.43$; $M_{post} = 3.81$, $SD_{post} = 1.41$), increased in the positive recall condition ($n = 49$; $M_{pre} = 4.14$, $SD_{pre} = 1.33$; $M_{post} = 4.39$, $SD_{post} = 1.40$), and remained unchanged in the control condition ($n = 54$; $M_{pre} = 4.14$, $SD_{pre} = 1.41$; $M_{post} = 4.12$, $SD_{post} = 1.45$).

To test Hypothesis 3, I conducted a 3 (Recall: positive vs. negative vs. control) X 2 (Task: vacation vs. brick) ANOVA. Thirteen participants were dropped from this analysis, because they did not complete the decision-making task. The main effect of task was significant ($F(1, 128) = 11.67$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .08$) such that participants in the vacation task condition experienced more regret than those in the brick task condition ($M_{vacation} = 2.69$, $SD_{vacation} = 1.30$; $M_{brick} = 2.09$, $SD_{brick} = 1.00$). Furthermore, there was a significant main effect of recall condition ($F(2, 128) = 3.31$, $p = .040$, $\eta^2 = .05$) with participants in the negative recall condition reporting higher levels of regret than those in the positive recall and control condition ($M_{negative} = 2.86$, $SD_{negative} = 1.37$; $M_{positive} = 2.24$, $SD_{positive} = 1.20$; $M_{control} = 2.23$, $SD_{control} = .99$). These effects, however, were qualified by a significant 2-way interaction between recall and task ($F(2, 128) = 7.91$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .11$). The means are shown in Figure 3. As predicted, post-choice regret was highest in the negative recall condition ($M = 3.62$, $SD =$

1.20), suggesting that lowering Work-Family II led to higher levels of post-choice regret in

work-family decision-making tasks. The same effect was not evident in the non-work-family

decision-making task.

Figure 3. Interaction of recall condition and task on post-choice regret among working
professionals with families (Study 6). Error bars represent the standard error of the means.
*** $p < .001$
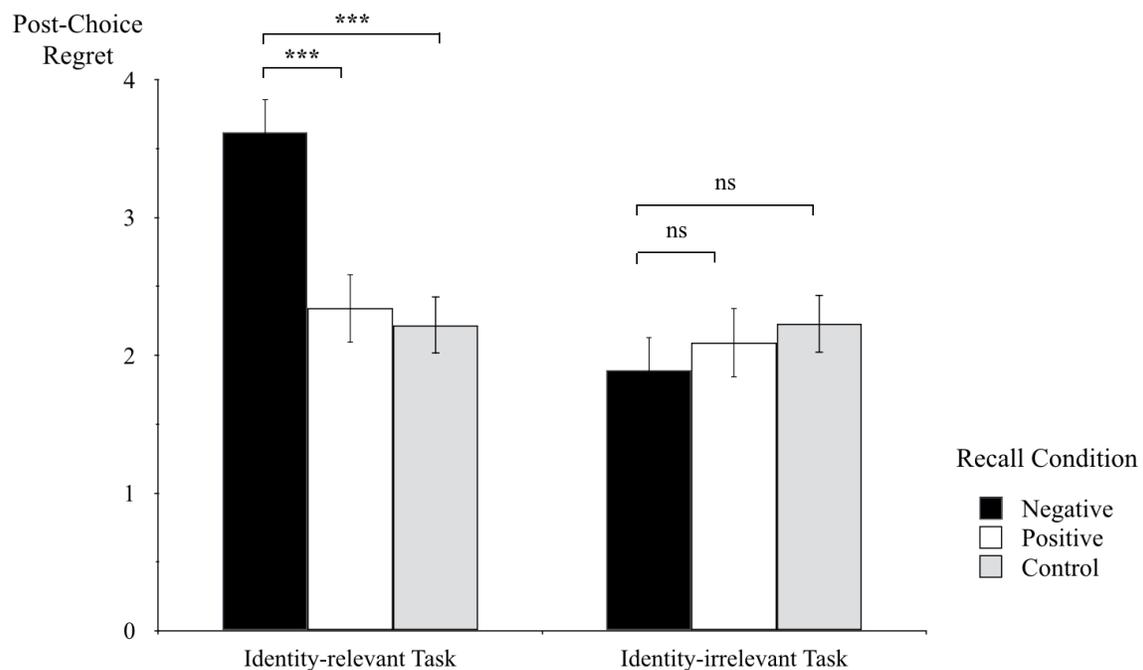
To probe this interaction further, I conducted two multiple regression analyses, one

per task condition, in which post-choice regret was regressed on recall (the three conditions

were coded as two dummy codes). In the work-family task condition, participants in the

negative recall condition were more likely to experience regret compared to those in the

positive recall ($b_{unstandardized} = -1.28$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-1.95, -.62]) and control conditions

($b_{unstandardized} = -1.39$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-2.05, -.74]). In the non-work-family task condition,

levels of regret reported by participants in the negative recall condition did not significantly

differ from the positive recall ($b_{unstandardized}$ = .21, p = .551, 95% CI [-.48, .89]) or control

conditions ($b_{unstandardized}$ = .34, p = .277, 95% CI [-.28, .97]).

7.3 DISCUSSION

This pattern of results supported Hypothesis 3. That is, lowering Work-Family II

using a negative recall manipulation led to higher post-choice regret, but only in identity-

relevant decision tasks. Given that this effect was not observed for the identity-irrelevant

task, it is unlikely that negative affect in general underlies the low II-indecisiveness link.

Indeed, these findings provide some evidence for the causal link between perceptions of

identity incompatibility (low II) and experienced decisional conflict (indecisiveness). At the

same time, this is not to preclude an underlying mechanism via which low II may cause

indecisiveness.

CHAPTER 8

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Using organizational, student, and working adult samples, and correlational and experimental designs, six studies showed that individual differences in the psychological management of multiple identities predict indecisiveness in identity-relevant decision-making tasks. To summarize, the present studies found that individuals with lower identity integration (II)—or those who perceive their identities as disparate and in conflict—tended to be more indecisive. This relationship was not driven by trait neuroticism, and held across different decision-making tasks and different operationalizations of indecisiveness. Decision domain moderated the link between II and indecisiveness such that lower II was associated with greater indecisiveness for identity-relevant decisions only, suggesting that decision contexts may act as cues for relevant responses. These patterns held across different types of identities—organizational, cultural, and work-family—and when controlling for various aspects of the choice set that may make decisions more or less difficult (e.g., option dissimilarity; Chatterjee & Heath, 1996). Interestingly, this suggests that perceptions of identity conflict (low II) may affect negative decisional experiences independent of the degree of conflict that may be inherent between different types of identities or between different choice options. In other words, supporting an identity account of decisional conflict, the psychological management of one's identities may be a particularly important predictor of experiences of conflict in decision-making.

Furthermore, the present analysis found that perceptions of one's identities as incompatible appeared to cause experienced post-decisional regret for identity-relevant

decisions. Again, this causal link between low II and affective indecisiveness did not spill

over into identity-irrelevant decisions, supporting the notion that the negative affect

associated with low II does not make people generally conflictual. Instead, it seems more

likely that this affective response is cued by relevant contexts or situations. This suggests that

identity-relevant contexts may not just make single identities salient but also cue people's

perceptions about the relationships between identities within that domain (Ramarajan, 2014).

These findings bridge and extend literatures on multiple social identities and identity-

based decision-making to advance an identity account of experienced decisional conflict (or

indecisiveness) in identity-relevant decision domains. As such, the present analysis follows

recent calls from identity scholars to shift focus from single salient identities toward studying

the *interplays* between multiple identities in organizations (Ramarajan, 2014). This dissertation

therefore contributes not only to the understanding of the importance of individual

differences in the psychological management of multiple identities—or the notion that not

all people perceive potentially conflicting identities such as work and family identities as

incompatible (Sanchez-Burks, 2002, 2005)—but also to the decision-making literature by

providing consistent evidence that these individual differences matter for experiences of

decision-making. Given that the decision-making process is expansive and includes more

than just making choices (Yates & Angott, 2012), which to date has been the primary focus

of identity-based decision-making work (e.g., Reed et al., 2012), the present analysis also

extends knowledge about the role of identity for decision-making more broadly. As many

real-world decisions occur without immediate knowledge of the outcomes of the choice

(such as pursuing a particular career path), understanding the factors that contribute to

negative decision experiences that occur post choice but pre outcome can shed light on why

some people may persist in their chosen courses of action while others abandon them

(Kirkebøen & Teigen, 2011). These types of outcomes might be particularly relevant in organizations, as workplaces may represent strong contextual cues of the boundaries between multiple identities (Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015).

8.1 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although this dissertation provides an important step towards studying *interplays* between multiple identities in decision-making (Ramarajan, 2014), I focus exclusively on identity integration—or perceptions of incompatibility and conflict between identities. Given that conflict is primarily affective, experiences of negative affect about one's identities appear the most relevant identity experience for experienced decisional conflict. Indeed, findings indicated that II was associated with negative affect or regret most consistently. To the extent that indecisiveness is largely affective (e.g., Elyadi, 2006) and even more general conceptions of indecisiveness include negative or conflictual components (e.g. Indecisiveness Scale; Frost & Shows, 1993), the present studies also support the notion that low IIs are indecisive. But that is not to say that other types of identity dynamics could not also affect decisional conflict or other aspects of decision-making more broadly. For instance, social identity complexity, which has been shown to be an important predictor of intergroup tolerance (Roccas & Brewer, 2002), may also increase experiences of decisional conflict as people may be more likely to source information from various groups and consider more diverse perspectives when making decisions. This, in turn, may be more likely to relate to cognitive aspects of the decision-making process (such as deliberation), which although also part of indecisiveness, may in fact lead to better decisions. Considering individual differences in how people think about the interplays between their multiple identities may thus provide a fruitful avenue for future research on decision-making, and in

teasing apart how indecisiveness (and its various components) may be harnessed for better decision-making.

How II may relate to the dual nature of indecisiveness—or, the notion that careful consideration of choice options may lead to better decisions whereas anxiously poring over a decision may debilitate the decision-maker and lead to regret—may be best understood by pinpointing a mechanism through future studies. Given that the present analysis did not find a relationship between II and the time it took participants to make a choice, it seems unlikely that cognitive mechanisms related to deliberation (Yates et al., 2010) can explain why low IIs are more indecisive. Instead, the current findings, which consistently showed relationships between II and affective components of indecisiveness, point to an affective mechanism. That is, because low II seems to be most closely linked to the experience of decisional conflict—or what it *feels* like to be indecisive—here, a mechanism that is also affective (i.e., self-threat; see Mok & Morris, 2013) appears most likely to underlie this relationship. For those with lower levels of II, because one aspect of the self feels like it necessarily excludes another, making decisions around even one of those identities is fraught with more conflict as these decision contexts cue self-threat or a sense of identity loss, a particularly negative affective experience. In contrast, those individuals with higher levels of II do not experience the same level of decisional conflict as they can be both selves at the same time (i.e., have integrated identities) and therefore do not perceive identity-relevant choices as threats to the self.

This type of mechanism mirrors choice tradeoff models in the decision-making literature. People are notoriously loss averse and choice tradeoffs in which people stand to lose more or experience greater threat from forgoing choice options tend to be experienced as more conflictual or emotionally negative (Carmon et al., 2003; Krosch et al., 2012; Luce et

al., 1997, 2001; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). Specifically, decision models of choice tradeoff difficulties suggest that when people trade off attributes of choice options that are particularly threatening (associated with greater loss)—that is, in which more of one attribute needs to be given up in order to maximize another—they experience greater decisional conflict in the form of negative emotions (Luce et al., 2001). From an identity perspective, rather than being a function of particular choice tradeoffs, experienced decisional conflict can arise from perceptions of identity incompatibility, which create an internal sense of self-threat or inherent tradeoff between multiple *selves*.

Although using self-generated ideas for the decision-making tasks in the current studies added to the ecological validity of the findings (as many real-world decisions involve the generation of options and the narrowing down to viable ones), there were also some drawbacks. Specifically, to test a self-threat mechanism, future studies should present one choice option representative of a specific identity—e.g., work identity (e.g., attending a skill-building workshop)—and another of a potentially conflicting identity—e.g., family identity (e.g., attending a family camp)—to create an explicit tradeoff between identities and measure the extent to which people feel one identity threatens the other. By assessing self-threat concerns for both identities, an explicit tradeoff would also allow researchers to examine whether concerns about self-threat need to be "real" (i.e., about the identity excluded by the choice). This can help shed further light on the boundaries of perceptions of identity conflict for experiences of decisional conflict.

To include more realistic measures and behavioral intentions, future studies could also elicit participants' willingness to pay for particular choice options. Providing even greater ecological validity and moving beyond the lab, which is a limitation of most of the current studies, future studies could also assess these particular identity tradeoffs in real-

world contexts such as when employees make choices between staying in the office or going to their child's tennis match or even among expatriates, who have to make the choice to advance their career through moving overseas while uprooting and potentially disadvantaging their family. II between work and family identities might be a predictor of whether someone takes on an international work assignment and how successful they are; or work-family II might be higher among those who successfully complete these assignments. A longitudinal study that tracks the relationship between II and satisfaction with one's decisions (such as throughout the course of an international work assignment) might also inform the directionality of the relationship between II and indecisiveness beyond what the current analysis could reveal.

While I found that experimentally manipulating II predicted indecisiveness, it is possible that this relationship is bidirectional. Specifically, experiencing difficulties around decision-making may lead individuals to infer that their related identities are in conflict. This may be particularly problematic for those already in precarious positions—such as women in leadership, who are often promoted to top positions when an organization is struggling, putting them in situations where they have to make difficult decisions (Ryan, Haslam, Hersby, Kulich, & Wilson-Kovacs, 2009). In these contexts, they may experience discord between being a leader and a woman, exacerbating gender inequalities in the workplace. And some factors may affect both II and decision-making. For example, work environments in which situational factors may exclude identities—such as demanding work schedules that make it difficult for working professionals to attend to family matters—could lead to experiences of decisional conflict when making choices in the work/family domain, as well as perceptions of incompatibility between work and family identities. Indeed, exploring the potential mutual reinforcement of identity and decisional conflict at work through future

research could help shed light on the role organizations may be able to play in facilitating identity integration among employees.

8.2 IMPLICATIONS

People psychologically manage a large array of possible identity dynamics in everyday life (e.g., Johnson, Morgeson, Ilgen, Meyer, Lloyd, 2006). The present studies highlight how II can be consistently conceptualized beyond one sample, and can be validly measured and operationalized across populations with different identities, including various combinations of work-related identities such as organizational/cultural identities among local employees of multinational corporations (Caprar, 2011). As such, the present analysis may provide a model for introducing individual difference measures that capture people's perceptions about the relationships between their multiple identities into future research on multiple social identities (Ramarajan, 2014).

By demonstrating the importance of individual differences in shaping negative decision experiences, the current findings may also help shed light on why potentially conflicting social identities—such as work and family roles—can sometimes lead to interference and poorer outcomes and sometimes be a source of enhancement and better performance at work (e.g., Frone, Russel, & Cooper, 1992; Graves, Ohlott, & Ruderman, 2007; see also Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015). The present findings may also provide avenues through which organizations can leverage employee's multiple identities. By reminding employees of ways in which their identities are compatible or providing opportunities that create these experiences—such as integrative work-family policies or encouraging employees to pursue personal projects—organizations may alleviate perceptions that other aspects of the self are threatened at work and thus reduce negative decisional experiences in the work domain.

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Consistent with shifting expectations toward integrating across multiple identities and the benefits of integration (e.g., Cheng et al., 2008; Dumas & Sanchez-Burks, 2015; Ramarajan & Reid, 2013), the present set of studies shows that integration may also carry affective benefits for decision-making. Nonetheless, I caution against conceptualizing identity conflict as unequivocally negative, particularly for decision-making more broadly. Indeed, low II has been associated with resistance to groupthink in group decision-making tasks (Mok & Morris, 2010) and under-confidence and caution may be assets in situations or cultures that demand or value deliberation and revision of decisions (Yates et al., 2010).

Although the immediate experience of decisional conflict may be personal—indeed, the current dissertation contributes to our understanding of the role of the self in the experience of making decisions—decision-making models highlight that decisions are not made in isolation. From a cardinal issue perspective (Yates, 2003; Yates & Tschirhart, 2006), the decisions made as well as how they were made by the decision-maker need to be accepted by others. And, according to the logic of appropriateness framework (Kopelman, 2009; Weber, Kopelman, & Messick, 2004), the decision-maker places the self in the context of social and cultural norms during the decision-making process by asking *what does a person like me (identity) do (rules) in a situation like this (recognition) given the culture (group)?* (Kopelman, Hardin, Myers, & Tost, 2016). From these perspectives, experiencing negative post-decisional affect may be a sign of the recognition that a decision or action was unacceptable or inappropriate in a given social or cultural context, which can ultimately benefit the decision-maker through learning and personal development as well as others, for instance through better interpersonal interactions or shared gains in a negotiation (Kopelman et al., 2016).

Additionally, to the extent that experienced decisional conflict may motivate the continued consideration of forgone choice options (e.g., Carmon et al., 2003), these immediate negative effects might further dissipate or even reverse in the long term. Consideration of next best alternatives, in fact, may increase long-term commitment to and satisfaction with one's decisions, including organizational commitment (e.g., Ersner-Hershfield, Galinsky, Kray, & King, 2010). The present findings thus also provide an interesting avenue for future research on the possible positive effects of experienced decisional conflict as well as the long-term effects of identity and decision conflict in organizations.

Overall, the present dissertation bridges and extends literatures on multiple social identities and identity-based decision-making to advance an identity account of decisional conflict in identity-relevant decision domains. By focusing on individual differences in the psychological management of multiple identities and experiences of decisional conflict, the current analysis sheds light on how and why people's multiple identities matter for decision-making experiences, particularly in these identity domains. Through a better understanding of these relationships, we can begin to better navigate the decisions we need to make on a regular basis around our multiple social identities and indeed may, like Facebook CFO Sheryl Sandberg, who appears to have successfully integrated work, family, and gender identities, become "true believers in bringing our whole selves to work" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 206).

Appendices

APPENDIX A

IDENTITY INTEGRATION SCALES

A1. Studies 1and 2

What is your opinion on how you generally manage your different selves? Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

1. I am often conflicted between my different selves.

2. My different selves blend together seamlessly.

3. I can be described by all my different selves.

4. I keep my different selves separate.

5. In any given situation, I only have one dominant self.

6. I feel comfortable having many selves.

7. I am often torn between my different selves.

8. My different selves give me an edge in life.

9. Having different selves creates tension.

10. I am best described by a blend of all my different selves.

A2. Study 3

Please read the statements below and rate the extent to which they describe your experience:

1. At work, I have completely integrated the Mexican and German cultures.

2. At work, I feel conflicted between my Mexican identity and my identity as an employee of a German company.

3. At work, I am someone whose behavior switches between the cultural norms of Mexico and the cultural norms of Germany.

4. At work, I feel torn between the expectations of being a resident of Mexico and an employee of a German company.

A3. Study 4

Please read the statements below and rate the extent to which they describe your experience:

1. I feel conflicted between my identity as a(n) [Culture 1]* and my identity as a(n) [Culture 2]*.

2. I feel torn between the expectations of being a(n) [Culture 1] and a(n) [Culture 2].

3. I do not feel any tension between my goals as a(n) [Culture 1] and a(n) [Culture 2].

* Participants' responses to the question "Please write down the two cultures you identify with (e.g., American, Chinese, Italian, etc.)" were piped into each scale item. If a participant entered "American" and "Chinese," for example, the first item would be "I have completely incorporated the American culture and the Chinese culture."

A4. Studies 5 and 6

Please read the statements below and rate the extent to which they describe how you see your identities:

1. I feel conflicted between my identity as a working professional and my identity as a family person.

2. I feel torn between the expectations of being a working professional and a family person.

3. I do not feel any tension between my goals as a working professional and a family person.

APPENDIX B

INDECISIVENESS ITEMS

B1. Study 1

To what extent do you wish you had chosen the other organization?

To what extent do you regret not choosing the other organization?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1. I should have chosen the other organization.

2. If I could do it over again, I would change my choice to the other organization.

3. I would be happier if I had chosen the other organization.

B2. Study 2

Indecisiveness Scale

Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

1. I try to put off making decisions.

2. I always know exactly what I want.

3. I find it easy to make decisions.

4. I have a hard time planning my free time.

5. I like to be in a position to make decisions.

6. Once I make a decision, I feel fairly confident that it is a good one.

7. When ordering from a menu, I usually find it difficult to decide what to get.

8. I usually make decisions quickly.

9. Once I make a decision, I stop worrying about it.

10. I become anxious when making a decision.

11. I often worry about making the wrong choice.

12. After I have chosen or decided something, I often believe I've made the wrong choice or decision.

13. I do not get assignments done on time because I cannot decide what to do first.

14. I have trouble completing assignments because I can't prioritize what is most important.

15. It seems that deciding on the most trivial thing takes me a long time.

Post-choice Regret

To what extent do you wish you had chosen your other idea?

To what extent do you regret not choosing your other idea?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1. I should have chosen my other idea.

2. If I could do it over again, I would change my choice to my other idea.

3. I would be happier if I had chosen my other idea.

B3. Study 3

Please think about what you are generally like at work. Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

1. At work, I find it easy to make decisions.

2. At work, once I make a decision, I feel fairly confident that is a good one.

3. At work, I become anxious when making a decision.

4. At work, after I have chosen or decided something, I often believe I've made the wrong choice or decision.

5. At work, it seems that deciding on the most trivial thing takes me a long time.

B4. Studies 5 and 6

To what extent do you wish you had chosen your other idea?

To what extent do you regret not choosing your other idea?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1. I should have chosen my other idea.

2. If I could do it over again, I would change my choice to my other idea.

3. I would be happier if I had chosen my other idea.

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