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The present study relates a within-family variable, birth order position, to acculturation among second and third generation Japanese Americans. The study tests a general hypothesis that firstborn (including only children) will be less assimilated to the dominant culture than their siblings in families where the parents are trying to maintain their identity with the culture of origin. This hypothesis was generally supported. Compared to laterborn Nisei, firstborn Nisei were less assimilated. For example, firstborn Nisei were more likely to live in Japanese American neighborhoods, to use and learn Japanese language, to have stronger Japanese family values, and to be Buddhist or Shinto. Likewise, compared to laterborn Sansei, firstborns seemed to be more informed and interested in Japanese values and culture and to have more culturally traditional perspectives. Results support that, in general, compared to laterborns, firstborns in both generations were more traditionally "Japanese". Implications of these findings for understanding acculturation are presented.

Key words: acculturation, assimilation, birth order, Japanese

The Role of Birth Order in the Acculturation of Japanese Americans

The process of acculturation is often investigated within the context of the immigration of ethnic groups to the United States. However, because the focus is on ethnic *groups*, effects of within-family individual differences on acculturation have not been adequately studied. The present study explores the role of a within-family variable — birth order position — in the process of acculturation among second and third generation Japanese Americans (often referred to as Nisei and Sansei, respectively). The underlying premise of the study is that (1) within-family differences may better indicate the manner or rate of acculturation of the family and certain individuals within the family and (2) that birth order is a variable that conveys the intergenerational values of assimilation for the family and therefore may assist our understanding of acculturation.

Acculturation and Assimilation

Acculturation refers to "a culture change that results from continuous, first hand

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contact between two distinct cultural groups" (Berry, 1994, p. 25). In the acculturation process, immigrants may be assimilated into the dominant culture in varying degrees. They may either fully assimilate, partially assimilate developing a subculture mixing their own tradition and the dominant culture, or they may hold to their own traditions. This multifaceted concept of acculturation suggests an attitude of within-culture pluralism.

According to Park (1914), assimilation consists of a process where individuals naturally assume another culture's language, attitudes, habits, and modes of behavior. In so doing, groups with diverse beliefs and behavior patterns enter into a race relations cycle that includes elements of contact, competition, accommodation, and assimilation where ethnic groups are absorbed into the larger dominant group. The result may be the elimination of the cultural expression of a particular ethnic group and the subsequent creation of a new amalgamated people. It should be noted that the process of assimilation and the accompanying adjustment approach to coping in a new culture has been criticized in that it can be viewed as ethnocentric as well as stigmatizing to those struggling to adjust, and because it offers only a "pseudo-solution" for adequate adjustment. Bochner (1986) suggests that a "genuine pluralistic society" is only possible when newcomers are able to mediate (Bochner, 1981) and synthesize aspects of their own and the dominant culture (p. 350).

In the United States, the process of assimilation, a subprocess of acculturation, is often assumed to be one that encourages immigrants and their offspring to adopt the ways of the Anglo host culture resulting in the gradual dilution of ethnic culture into one identical social whole. Berry's (1984; see also Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Berry, 1994) model of the process of acculturation requires consideration of the individual value placed on preserving cultural identity versus relating to the dominant group or other groups. Assimilation results when relating in the dominant culture takes precedent over maintaining the culture of origin.

While there are many other earlier models of assimilation (Dohrenwend & Smith, 1962; Roy, 1962; Taft, 1957; Uyeki, 1960; Weiss, 1974), Gordon (1964, 1975) has, perhaps, formulated one of the most thorough models for measuring the underlying dimensions of assimilation. He distinguished seven components of assimilation: cultural, structural, marital, identificational, attitude receptional, behavior receptional, and civic (Gordon, 1964) arguing that once immigrants pass through the first stage of cultural assimilation and the second stage of structural assimilation, i.e., adopting the cultural patterns of the core society and then penetrating the cliques and associations of the society at the primary group, the remaining five stages naturally unfold. In actuality, complete assimilation is not inevitable because assimilation requires the desire to assimilate and the acquiescence of the dominant group (Kurokawa, 1970).

Demographic factors (Goldlust & Richmond, 1974), values (Szapocznik, Scopett, Kurtines, & Arnalds, 1978), communication (Kim, 1979), cultural awareness and preference (Padilla, 1980), and psychological role theory (Smither, 1982) have been shown to influence acculturation. Role theory, to some degree, also accommodates

these variables. "Acculturation, in role theory terms, is the process by which minorities learn to perform those roles valued by the majority" (Smither, 1982, p. 64).

Berry (1997) has recently offered a valuable framework on which to base acculturation research that incorporates both group and individual-level influences on the process. He suggests that acculturation research that fails to consider differences in the way that groups and individuals within those groups acculturate is incomplete. Pre-existing individual-level factors that are listed as possible moderators to the process include gender, age, education, and personality.

Research on Japanese Americans

Assimilation and acculturation research on Japanese Americans has followed several tacts with some research focusing on social mobility as an indicator of assimilation measured either by education (Montero & Tsukashima, 1977), a combination of occupational and educational attainment (Montero, 1981), or fertility levels that reflect the white middle class (Rhodes & Woodrum, 1981). Woodrum, Rhodes, and Feagin (1980) found that socioeconomic status levels of Japanese American immigrants and their parents in Japan affected their own and their progeny's economic adaptation to the United States and the character of their acculturation.

Other research emphasizes cultural and personality factors which facilitate the assimilation and acculturation of Japanese Americans. Caudill (1952) argued that certain Japanese values contribute to psychologically adaptive skills such as learning how to appropriately respond to social signals. Because of these values, the Nisei emphasize knowing how to act in a given situation and how to repress emotional feelings such as physical aggressiveness. These same psychologically adaptive mechanisms are used by middle class whites which may explain why the Nisei relate favorably to and win the approval of whites in the workplace (Caudill, 1952). Similarly, Petersen (1970) studied sources of Japanese American achievement by viewing the family and religion as transmitters of traditional ethnic moral values (e.g., diligence in work, frugality, and filial piety) that closely parallel the "Protestant Ethic." According to Lyman (1966, 1970), the source of Nisei character is found in the Samurai ethic where impulsive acts are repressed resulting in a personality characterized by self control in social interaction.

A weakness of acculturation research, however, is the paucity of systematic studies examining individual personality variables (as opposed to group characteristics) within the context of acculturation. The present investigation relates a within-group variable, birth order position, to acculturation among second and third generation Japanese Americans. The underlying premises of the study are 1) that within-group differences may better indicate the manner or rate of acculturation of the group and of certain individuals within the group, and 2) that birth order is a variable that conveys the intergenerational values of assimilation for a group and therefore may advance understanding of acculturation.

Birth Order

Birth order, or one's position relative to other siblings, essentially describes defined roles within families. Manaster (1977) stated that, "The assumption is that particular birth order positions have in common pressures or demands which influence the child's view of his or her position in the family and life, and increase the likelihood of the child developing attitudes and styles of behavior in correspondence with his or her perceived position" (p. 4).

There have been many birth order studies (over a thousand are listed in Ernst and Angst's 1983 bibliography), most embedded in the notions of Alfred Adler (1956). Adler pointed out "that before we can judge a human being we must know the situation in which he grew up. An important moment is the position which a child occupied in his family constellation" (Adler, 1927, p. 149). For clinical purposes the particularity of the individual's position in the family is considered crucial and useful.

Birth Order and Acculturation

Almost all of the birth order research conducted in the United States has been with Anglo/Caucasian subjects. Although some of these studies have included individual minority group members, very few studies have examined one homogeneous racial minority group. The present study of a national sample of second and third generation Japanese Americans (Nisei and Sansei) explores birth order and acculturation. The aim of this study is to first investigate birth order differences in acculturation in order to determine the efficacy of the birth order variable in explaining acculturation, and second, to extend the understanding of acculturation through use of a family and personality variable.

Working within an Adlerian framework, Manaster and Corsini (1982) noted that firstborns were more likely to hold a positive attitude toward the past, to stress tradition, and to be more conservative than laterborns. In the literature, firstborns were found to have closer relations to parents (Ernst & Angst, 1983, p. 283), to show a greater need for affiliation (Adams, 1972), to be more fearful (Collard, 1968), and to be higher achievers (Altus, 1966) than laterborns.

Applying these descriptions and findings to the second and third generations of Japanese Americans, we inferred that firstborns would be more likely to have had Japanese traditions transmitted to them by their parents or grandparents and would have more positive attitudes toward Japanese culture than laterborns. These differences were predicted to be especially true for males who are more likely chosen as the inheritor of family tradition in many cultures including Japanese. However, a positive attitude toward one's own tradition does not necessarily imply a negative or rejecting attitude toward other cultures. On the contrary, we hypothesized that if firstborns have higher self-esteem with respect to their own culture than laterborns, firstborns should tend to bridge their own culture and the dominant culture while laterborns assimilate more fully into the dominant culture.

In conclusion, birth order findings lead to the following hypothesis: Within immigrant or minority families where the parents are attempting to maintain their

culture, firstborn and only children will be less assimilated into the dominant Anglo culture than their siblings. Therefore, based on Japan's strong emphasis on family bonds, personal discipline, deference to authority, and male dominance, it was expected that firstborn and only children (particularly males) would be less acculturated and more involved in Japanese culture than laterborns among second and third generation Japanese Americans.

METHOD

Sample:

The sample for this study consisted of 1042 Nisei or second generation, and 802 Sansei or third generation Japanese Americans.¹ Females made up 51% of the Nisei sample and 53% of the Sansei sample. The sample was selected from the data pool collected by the Japanese American Research Project with the criterion that subjects selected belong to families with members in all three generations of the total sample population. The Japanese American Research Project interviewed 3817 Nisei, offspring of 907 Issei, first generation immigrant Japanese Americans, and 1063 Sansei offspring of the Nisei, who were randomly selected from a 1963 listing of approximately 18,000 Issei residing in the 48 contiguous states. Of these, 34.4% were interviewed by non-Japanese American professional interviewers from the National Opinion Research Center in regular NORC primary sampling units. An additional 3.5% were interviewed by telephone by NORC staff, and the remaining 62% were sent mail questionnaires with a 49% response rate after three mailings. Respondents were surveyed during 1967 in three stages using a modified version of the Issei schedule.

Three possible sampling problems were identified. First, Nisei whose parents had died or returned to Japan prior to the early sixties were not included in the sample. Thus, older Nisei would likely be under-represented. To counter this problem, records from two Japanese American mortuaries in Los Angeles were used to locate 38 Nisei who were interviewed. Aside from the expected age difference, survivors were not remarkably different from those Nisei respondents whose parents had been interviewed. A second test compared those Nisei interviewed with those who completed mail questionnaires. The basic finding suggested a greater social desirability bias for the interview respondents than for those replying by questionnaire. This response bias does not appear to unduly affect this sample and is widely documented in the literature (Knudsen, Pope, & Irish, 1967; McGinnis, 1953). Third, it was suspected that the sample would be biased by an over-representation of respondents immersed in organized Japanese American life. This bias is inherent in the original Issei listing which was derived from Japanese association, voluntary association and Buddhist and Christian church membership lists believed to include Japanese American members. Peripheral and unaffiliated Japanese Americans are probably under-represented while a disproportionate share of the sample is likely better educated and better-off financially. It should be pointed out that the sample is of a clearly delineated cultural group that reflects recent immigration and a repressive group existence. The clarity of traditional Japanese cultural values would, presumably, be a prominent feature in the lives of this population. Therefore, in comparison with some other minority groups in which singular and dominant values are more difficult to determine, this sample is in the beginning stages of assimilation into the majority group and is distinct in its strong and evident cultural values.

Measures:

The items selected from the interview questionnaire that are relevant to the present hypotheses are listed in the results section.

For Nisei, additional scales were constructed from sets of items to measure relevant constructs (Appendix). No comparable scales were constructed for Sansei because the interview did not include sufficient numbers of homogeneous items to make this possible.

¹ The data utilized in this research was gathered by the Japanese American Research Project funded through grants from the Japanese American Citizens League, the Carnegie Corporation, and the National Institute of Mental Health (Grant No. 5ROI OMA 1278-04). The data are archived at UCLA, Prof. Gene N. Levine custodian and principal investigator of the Project, and are available for public use.

RESULTS

To determine the extent of the differences between first and laterborn siblings of both sexes, crosstabs and ANOVA's were conducted.

In the present study, first- and only-born males were expected (1) to have more positive attitudes toward their own traditional culture and (2) to be more conservative than their siblings. Nisei results are presented in Table 1 (see Table 2 for Nisei scale means); Sansei results are presented in Table 3.

Nisei Results

Neighborhood. Responses to the question: "Was neighborhood lived in longest in era (1953 to present) primarily a Japanese neighborhood, non-Japanese neighborhood, or mixed neighborhood?" showed firstborn Nisei males to be more likely than laterborn Nisei males to live in Japanese-American areas and less likely to live in non-Japanese-American areas. No birth order effect was not found for females.

Locus of control / attribution for poverty. The question, "In your opinion, which is more often to blame if a person is poor — lack of effort on his own part or circumstances beyond his control?", yielded the following results within the Nisei group: Firstborn males were more likely than laterborn males to blame both lack of effort and circumstances beyond control, but were less likely than other males to attribute poverty to a lack of effort alone. Firstborn females were more likely than laterborn females to blame poverty on circumstances beyond their control or to blame both circumstances and lack of effort, but were less likely to blame only lack of effort.

Importance of religion. Firstborn males were more likely to rate religion as "very important" and were less likely than other males to rate it as only "fairly important" or "not important at all". No significant results were found for females. Subjects based their responses on the following interview question: "Aside from attendance at religious services, how important would you say religion is to you?"

Religious affiliation. Firstborn males were more likely than other males to be Buddhists or Shinto, and less likely to be non-believers, Protestants, or Roman Catholics. No significant results were found for females.

Political party. Firstborn males were more likely to support Republicans, and less likely to support either Democrats or Independents, than were other males. No significant results were found among females.

Japanese language. Firstborns were also more likely than laterborns to read and speak Japanese or to be willing to learn ($F(1, 1002)=17.58, p<.001$). The gender main effect showed that females were higher than males in their knowledge of Japanese or their willingness to learn ($F(1, 1002)=15.93, p<.001$). No birth order by gender interaction was found.

Japanese values (familism, determinism, and ambition). The main effect of birth order showed that firstborns exhibited a higher level of traditional Japanese values than laterborns ($F(1, 1010)=9.53, p<.01$) as did males compared to females ($F(1,$

Table 1. Expected and Actual Percentages of Responses of Firstborn and Laterborn Nisei Siblings

Group	N	Percentage (expected percentage)			df	Chi-sq
Neighborhood						
		Japanese	Non-Japanese	Mixed		
Males	508				2	6.28*
firstborn		2.2 (1.2)	14.8 (15.7)	11.6 (11.6)		
laterborn		2.0 (3.0)	40.4 (39.4)	29.1 (29.1)		
Females	521				2	.068
firstborn		1.0 (0.9)	10.7 (11.0)	9.6 (9.4)		
laterborn		3.3 (3.3)	40.7 (40.5)	34.7 (34.9)		
Locus of Control: Attribute Poverty to...						
		Lack of effort	Beyond control	Both		
Males	506				2	13.28**
firstborn		19.2 (21.2)	4.2 (4.3)	5.1 (2.9)		
laterborn		64.8 (61.5)	14.0 (15.9)	2.0 (3.4)		
Females	518				2	24.60**
firstborn		12.7 (16.0)	6.0 (4.2)	2.3 (0.9)		
laterborn		63.3 (60.1)	13.7 (15.5)	1.9 (3.4)		
Importance of Religion						
		Very important	Fairly important	Not important		
Males	506				2	7.89*
firstborn		12.6 (10.2)	12.6 (13.9)	2.8 (3.9)		
laterborn		23.7 (26.2)	37.0 (35.7)	11.3 (10.1)		
Females	518				2	4.28
firstborn		10.6 (9.1)	9.1 (10.9)	1.4 (1.0)		
laterborn		32.8 (34.3)	42.7 (40.8)	3.5 (3.8)		
Religious Affiliation						
		Non-believer	Protestant/ Roman Catholic	Buddhist/ Shinto	Other	
Males	510					3 7.89*
firstborn		1.0 (2.0)	14.1 (15.2)	12.0 (10.2)	1.0 (0.6)	
laterborn		6.1 (5.1)	40.2 (39.1)	24.5 (26.2)	1.2 (1.5)	
Females	519					3 3.20
firstborn		0.8 (0.7)	10.8 (11.8)	9.1 (8.3)	0.6 (0.3)	
laterborn		2.5 (2.6)	45.5 (44.3)	30.1 (30.8)	0.8 (1.1)	
Political Party						
		Democratic	Republican	Independent	Other	
Males	499					3 8.61*
firstborn		13.4 (14.6)	12.1 (10.0)	1.6 (2.8)	0.8 (0.8)	
laterborn		38.3 (37.1)	22.8 (25.3)	8.4 (7.2)	2.2 (2.2)	
Females	513					3 1.43
firstborn		10.9 (11.3)	8.6 (7.7)	1.2 (1.4)	0.4 (0.6)	
laterborn		42.9 (42.5)	28.1 (28.9)	5.7 (5.4)	2.3 (2.2)	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

1010)=4.55, $p < .05$). There was no significant interaction between birth order and gender.

Realism (being content / accepting life). The main effect of birth order showed that Nisei firstborns had higher realism scale scores than Nisei laterborns ($F(1, 990)=9.10, p < .01$). There were no gender or interaction effects.

Table 2. Mean Scale Scores — Nisei Only

	Males		Females		Total		Total	
	First	Later	First	Later	First	Later	Male	Female
Japanese Language	11.89	11.33	12.62	11.82	12.21	11.59	11.49	11.99
Familism, determinism, ambition	1.16	0.99	1.09	0.86	1.13	0.92	1.04	0.91
Realism	9.69	9.11	9.36	9.24	9.54	9.18	9.27	9.27
Minority equality	12.27	11.39	11.77	11.50	12.04	11.44	11.60	11.56
Discrimination experience	5.01	5.74	5.62	5.78	5.28	5.76	5.53	5.75
Problem with or projected problem with intermarriage	5.55	6.04	5.99	6.24	5.74	6.15	5.90	6.19
SES	27.77	29.02	26.48	28.97	27.27	29.00	28.65	28.39

Minority equality. The birth order main effect showed that more firstborns than laterborns in the Nisei group tended to think that minority members had been treated as equals in America and could not complain ($F(1, 720)=10.16, p=.001$). No gender main effects or interactions between birth order and gender were found.

Experience with discrimination. Similarly, the main effect of birth order showed that firstborns reported experiencing or hearing less about racial discrimination than did laterborns ($F(1, 998)=15.33, p<.001$). No gender or interaction effects were found.

Attitude toward interracial marriage. The main effect of birth order across attitudes toward interracial marriage showed that Nisei firstborns felt less disturbed and thought that Caucasians would feel less disturbed about interracial marriage than laterborns ($F(1, 939)=9.30, p<.01$). In addition, males were less likely to be disturbed or to think that Caucasians would be disturbed about interracial marriage than were females ($F(1, 939)=5.90, p<.05$). No significant interaction effect was found.

SES. The main effect of birth order showed that firstborns had lower SES than the laterborns ($F(1, 833)=8.27, p<.01$). There were no gender or interaction effects.

Conclusions about Nisei

Compared to later-born Nisei, firstborn Nisei were more likely to live in Japanese American neighborhoods, to use and learn Japanese language, to blame a combination of internal and external causes for poverty, to have stronger Japanese values in terms of familism and ambition, to be realistic, to emphasize the importance of religion, to be Buddhists or Shinto, to support Republicans, to feel that minorities had been treated equally, to experience or hear nothing about discrimination, to feel comfortable about marriage between Caucasians and Japanese, and to have a lower SES level. It seems generally true that the firstborn Nisei tend to be more traditional and conservative than the laterborns. This conclusion was especially true for males.

Table 3. Expected and Actual Percentages of Responses of Firstborn and Laterborn Sansei Siblings

Group	N	Percentage (expected percentage)				df	Chi-sq
Behavior: Importance of Proper Behavior to Avoid Shame Stressed by Grandparents							
		Yes		No			
Males	287					1	10.12***
firstborn		40.8 (36.4)		12.5 (16.9)			
laterborn		27.5 (31.9)		19.2 (14.8)			
Females	300					1	2.23
firstborn		43.3 (45.2)		18.0 (16.2)			
laterborn		30.3 (28.5)		8.3 (10.2)			
Reciprocity: Importance of Repaying All Kindness Stressed by Grandparents							
		Yes		No			
Males	293					1	9.49**
firstborn		41.3 (37.2)		11.6 (15.7)			
laterborn		29.0 (33.1)		18.1 (14.0)			
Females	244					1	0.15
firstborn		40.6 (41.1)		11.9 (11.3)			
laterborn		37.3 (35.0)		10.2 (12.5)			
Caucasians Disturbed if Japanese Girl Married Son							
		Yes		No			
Males	366					1	4.83*
firstborn		20.5 (23.3)		32.2 (29.4)			
laterborn		23.8 (20.9)		23.5 (26.3)			
Females	376					1	0.01
firstborn		37.8 (26.7)		26.9 (27.0)			
laterborn		26.9 (27.0)		19.4 (19.3)			
Cultural Instruction: Amount of Training in Japanese Culture							
		A great deal	Some	Only a little	None at all		
Males	377					3	8.91*
firstborn		3.2 (3.2)	20.2 (19.0)	24.7 (23.1)	4.8 (7.4)		
laterborn		2.9 (2.9)	15.9 (17.0)	19.1 (20.7)	9.3 (6.6)		
Females	425					3	5.45
firstborn		3.3 (4.7)	22.4 (22.0)	25.6 (24.2)	7.1 (7.6)		
laterborn		4.7 (3.3)	15.3 (15.7)	15.8 (17.2)	5.9 (5.4)		
Satisfaction with Amount of Knowledge on Japanese Culture							
		Know enough		Ought to know more			
Males	375					1	6.99**
firstborn		6.4 (9.0)		46.1 (43.6)			
laterborn		10.7 (8.1)		36.8 (39.4)			
Females	425					1	2.21
firstborn		4.7 (5.8)		53.6 (52.6)			
laterborn		5.2 (4.1)		36.5 (37.5)			
Locus of Control: Attribute Poverty to...							
		Lack of effort	Beyond control	Both			
Males	375					2	0.84
firstborn		40.3 (39.8)	11.7 (12.0)	0.8 (1.0)			
laterborn		35.2 (35.6)	10.9 (10.7)	1.1 (0.9)			
Females	421					2	6.38*
firstborn		40.6 (42.3)	16.2 (15.1)	1.7 (1.0)			
laterborn		31.8 (30.1)	9.7 (10.8)	0.0 (0.7)			

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Sansei Results

Behavior. Firstborn males were more likely than laterborn males to answer "yes" to the following question: "Did your grandparents stress when you were growing up that you must behave properly to avoid bringing shame to the family?". No significant result was found for females.

Reciprocity. The question, "Did your grandparents stress that one must make returns for all kindness received?", indicated that firstborn males were more likely to adhere to values of reciprocity than laterborn males. No significant result was found for the group of females.

Caucasian attitude toward interracial marriage. Sansei were asked: "Do you suppose that most Caucasians in American would be disturbed if a Japanese American girl married a son of theirs?" Results showed firstborn males as more likely to say "no" and less likely to say "yes" than laterborn males. No significant result was found for the group of females.

Cultural instruction. To the question, "When you were growing up, how much training or instruction in Japanese culture would you say you had?", responses indicated that firstborn Sansei males were more likely to say "some" or "only a little" and less likely to say "none", than Sansei laterborn males. In other words, firstborn males had more training in Japanese culture than laterborn males. No significant result was found for the group of females.

Satisfaction with cultural knowledge. Firstborn males were less likely than laterborn males to say that they knew enough about Japanese culture and more likely to say that they ought to know more about it. No significant result was found among females.

Locus of control / poverty attributions. Firstborn Sansei females were less likely than laterborn Sansei females to attribute poverty to one's "lack of effort" and more likely to either blame "circumstances beyond control" or both lack of effort and external circumstances. No significant result was found among Sansei males.

Conclusions About Sansei

Compared to laterborns, firstborns, and particularly male firstborns, seem to have received more education about Japanese values, more training in Japanese culture, and to have more desire to know about Japanese culture. Firstborns also appear less disturbed by interracial marriage, and to be more likely to blame external circumstances or the combination of circumstances and lack of effort for poverty. In essence, Sansei firstborns seem to be more knowledgeable about Japanese culture, more positive toward Japanese tradition, and, therefore, more "Japanese," than the laterborns.

DISCUSSION

As expected, firstborn second and third generation Japanese Americans embodied Japanese culture and values more than did laterborn Nisei and Sansei. Firstborn subjects more closely adhered to traditional family values, were more proficient in Japanese, and more often gravitated toward Japanese environments.

Conversely, the laterborns were more successful and became more involved in the majority culture.

Turning to specific acculturation findings, laterborn Nisei achieved higher socio-economic status than firstborn Nisei. This finding contradicts much of the birth order literature which consistently reports that firstborns and only children acquire the most education (Adams, 1972; Ernst & Angst, 1983; Travis & Kohli, 1995). This unique finding suggests that circumstances particular to this sample, as well as the present acculturation hypothesis may be involved.

Birth order differences in educational attainment within this sample may have occurred for various reasons. For example, the Issei may not have had the resources to help their older children acquire a college degree. Instead, older children may have had to work to help support the family. Also, education often was not a priority to early-born Nisei given the few job opportunities available for college-educated Asians before World War II. The younger sub-generation of Nisei, who matured during the 1950's, encountered less discrimination and more job opportunities and consequently saw education as beneficial for advancement.

Results also showed family as more important to firstborn Japanese Americans than to laterborns. One reason, as reported in the JARP data, is the high representation of proprietorships and farm ownerships (30.2 percent) and tenant and managerial positions (36.8 percent) (Woodrum, Rhodes, & Feagin, 1980, p. 1237). This means that Issei parents often required more assistance from their older children to operate their businesses and farms; a situation that strengthened the bond between them. The older children also played a crucial role in helping their parents interpret the norms and values of American society.

Degree of assimilation to American society is often measured by the level of fluency in the mother tongue. Most Issei were deficient in English. In the JARP data, 22 percent of the men and 6 percent of the women were fluent in English (Levine & Rhodes, 1981) making it necessary that older Nisei be able to communicate with their parents in Japanese. Because the oldest child provided the bridge between American and Japanese culture, laterborn Nisei were not as likely as their older sibling(s) to assist their parents with the English language or American culture. Laterborn children also looked to the older siblings for advice on how to negotiate in and adjust to white society as opposed to looking to their parents who seemed quite removed from the mainstream of American society.

Finally, from a perceptual standpoint, firstborn Nisei attitudes toward racial issues such as minority equality, their experience with discrimination, and their attitudes about interracial marriage also indicate a marked difference in their acculturation experience. Firstborn Nisei's belief that minority members have been treated equally, and their apparent satisfaction with that treatment, significantly differed from the perceptions of laterborns. One possible explanation is that firstborns may not have the expectation of full assimilation into the majority culture nor consequent expectations of sameness or equality. The firstborn Nisei may instead be fully accepting of and embrace the differences. As a result, different treatment, if

not justifiable, at least would be consistent with their own perceived differences from the majority culture. Another possible explanation is that firstborn Nisei's closer identification with traditional Japanese values may predispose them to feelings of contentment and acceptance of their lot.

Firstborn adherence to the Japanese culture may also explain the differences between perceptions of discrimination and attitudes toward interracial marriages across birth order. Firstborn Japanese Americans appear to have a higher cultural identity and a higher cultural self-esteem which may explain their reports of less discrimination and the unlikelihood that they would feel disturbed about inter-racial marriage or expect Caucasians to be disturbed.

The order and nature of birth order differences in the Sansei sample are similar to those in the Nisei sample, including the preponderance of birth order differences for males and not females. This replication of findings across generations speaks strongly to the importance of the within family variable — birth order — in the process of acculturation, and to the importance of the particular values and contexts of the immigrant group during the process.

CONCLUSION

The present study revealed two things: First, birth order, both a situational and personological variable, has been shown to differentiate extent of acculturation within an immigrant minority group; and second, birth order in relation to the specific culture of the immigrant group has been shown to relate to extent of acculturation.

Both of these findings have implications for both birth order and acculturation research. Culture, immigrant, and minority status have not been previously considered in birth order research. The quest for common birth order characteristics may need to include these variables to be complete. Different cultural and subcultural values may be more or less evident within different birth order positions. Therefore, mixing ethnic groups and migrant generations in research samples may dilute whatever strength the birth order variable may have had.

These findings add to prior acculturation research by considering the effects of the within-family variable, birth order. Related effects discussed in the birth order literature, such as birth spacing, sibship size, and sibship density may also, then, offer additional insight into acculturation. This study presented a hypothesis incorporating birth order into an acculturation study successfully testing a portion of a broader hypothesis. The general hypothesis was that firstborn and only children are more acculturated (more involved in the majority culture) than their siblings in immigrant or minority groups where the parents are actively striving to acculturate and that firstborn and only children are less acculturated than their siblings in immigrant or minority groups where the parents are, more conservatively, trying to maintain their original cultural identity. Future research on acculturation and birth order would build on the testing of the complete general hypothesis where the nature of the immigrant's cultural group is crucial, and additional variables such as family

size would speak to the directions and degree of acculturation and assimilation.

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Appendix

Nisei Scales

Japanese Language Scale

- 1) "Are you able to speak Japanese?" (1=not at all, 2=only a little, 3=pretty well, 4=quite fluently)
- 2) "Are you able to read Japanese?" (1=no, 2=yes)
- 3) "Do you think your children ought to know how to speak Japanese?" If no children, "If you had children, do you think they ought to know how to speak Japanese?" (1=no, 2=yes)
- 4) "Do you ever read any Japanese American newspapers?" (1=no, 2=yes)
- 5) "Do you read Japanese American newspapers regularly, occasionally, or hardly ever?" (1=hardly ever, 2=occasionally, 3=regularly)
- 6) "Did you attend Japanese language school when you were young?" (1=no, 2=yes)

Responses to the above questions were recoded so that high scores indicated a high tendency to speak, read, learn, and let children learn the Japanese language. In the current sample, the coefficient alpha for this measure is 0.61.

Japanese Value Index

This index, used by Levine and Rhodes (1981), was composed of the following three items:

- 1) "The most important qualities of a real man are determination and driving ambition." (agree/disagree)
- 2) "The most important thing for a parent to do is to help his children get further ahead in the world than he did." (agree/disagree)
- 3) "The best man is the one who puts his family above everything." (agree/disagree).

Responses to the above three questions were coded so that higher scores would indicate stronger ambition, determinism, and familism. In the current sample, the coefficient alpha for this measure is 0.60.

Realism Scale

This scale was composed of the following seven items, to which respondents could disagree or agree:

- 1) "A man shouldn't try to change fate but to live with it."
- 2) "The secret of happiness is not expecting too much out of life and being content with what comes your way."
- 3) "When a man is born the degree of success he is going to have is already in the cards, so he might just as well accept it and not fight against it."
- 4) "All a man should want out of life in the way of a career is a secure not too difficult job, with enough pay to afford a nice car and eventually a home of his own."
- 5) "Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself."
- 6) "The best way to judge a man is by his success in his profession."
- 7) "Next to health, money is the most important thing in life."

The score for this measure was coded so that high scores indicated high realism. In the current sample, the coefficient alpha for this measure is 0.60.

Minority Equality

This index was composed of seven items corresponding to the following seven minority groups: "Negros", Italian Americans, Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Jews, Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Ricans. The items ask whether each of the groups "can rightfully complain that they are not being treated as full and equal Americans." The coefficient alpha is 0.84 for this measure.

Experience with Discrimination

This index was composed of the following four items where possible responses were: 1=neither experienced nor heard about, 2=not experienced but heard about, and 3=experienced. The score was coded so that higher scores indicated greater likelihood to have experienced or heard about cases of discrimination:

- 1) "Have you experienced or heard about cases in which other Japanese Americans experienced

discrimination in housing in the past ten years only."

- 2) "Have you heard about cases in which other Japanese Americans experienced discrimination in schools in the past ten years only."
- 3) "Have you heard about cases in which other Japanese Americans experienced discrimination in jobs in the past ten years only."
- 4) "Have you heard about cases in which other Japanese Americans experienced discrimination with regard to police brutality in the past ten years only."

For the current sample, the coefficient alpha for this measure is 0.62.

Attitude toward Interracial Marriage

This index was composed of the following yes-or-no items where no=1 and yes=2. Therefore, a higher score indicates a more negative attitude toward interracial marriage.

- 1) "Do you suppose that most Caucasians in American would be disturbed if a Japanese American girl married a son of theirs?"
- 2) "Do you suppose that most Caucasians in American would be disturbed if a Japanese American boy married a daughter of theirs?"
- 3) "Do you suppose that you would be disturbed if a son of yours married a Caucasian girl?"
- 4) "Do you suppose that you would be disturbed if a daughter of yours married a Caucasian boy?"

In the current sample, the coefficient alpha was 0.85.

SES

This scale was composed of the following 6 items: Results from the present study yielded a coefficient alpha of 0.86.

- 1) "What kind of work do you/does your husband/did your husband usually do?"
- 2) "What is your longest held occupation in (era: 1953 to present)?"
- 3) "What is your current job?"

(Responses to the above three items were coded according to the International Scale of Occupational Levels (Manaster and Havinghurst, 1971).

- 4) "What is your total family income?" (1=under \$2,500; 2=\$2,500-\$4,999; 3=\$5,000-\$7,999; 4=\$8,000-\$9,999; 5=\$10,000-\$14,999; 6=\$15,000-\$19,999; 7=\$20,000-\$29,999; 8=\$30,000 or more).
- 5) "What was the highest degree you completed in school?" (0=never attended school, 1=1-4 years, 2=5-7 years, 3=8 years, 4=9-11 years, 5=12 years, 6=13-15 years, 7=16 years, 8=post graduate.)
- 6) "What was the highest degree your present spouse completed in school?" (Coding is the same as the last item).