Cultural Dissonance and Identity Confusion: The Mediating Role of Bicultural Integration

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A r t i c l e   I n f o

A B S T R A C T

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the mediating role of bicultural identity integration in the relationship between cultural dissonance and identity confusion among bicultural individuals residing in Iraq.

Methods and Materials: A descriptive correlational design was employed using a sample of 439 bicultural adults selected based on Morgan and Krejcie's sample size table. Participants completed standardized self-report instruments measuring cultural dissonance, bicultural identity integration (BII), and identity confusion. Data were analyzed using SPSS-27 for descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficients, and AMOS-21 for structural equation modeling (SEM). The normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity assumptions were checked and met. The SEM model included direct, indirect, and total paths, and model fit was evaluated using Chi-square, RMSEA, GFI, AGFI, CFI, and TLI indices.

Findings: Cultural dissonance showed a significant positive correlation with identity confusion ($r = .52$, $p < .001$), while BII was negatively correlated with both cultural dissonance ($r = –.48$, $p < .001$) and identity confusion ($r = –.55$, $p < .001$). The structural model demonstrated excellent fit ($\chi^2/df = 1.99$, RMSEA = .048, CFI = .96, TLI = .95). Direct paths revealed that cultural dissonance significantly predicted identity confusion ($\beta = .39$, $p < .001$) and negatively predicted BII ($\beta = –.47$, $p < .001$); BII significantly reduced identity confusion ($\beta = –.45$, $p < .001$). The indirect effect of cultural dissonance on identity confusion through BII was significant ($\beta = –.21$, $p < .001$), confirming partial mediation.

Conclusion: The results highlight that bicultural identity integration serves as a critical psychological mechanism that buffers the negative impact of cultural dissonance on identity development. Enhancing BII may therefore serve as a valuable strategy in reducing identity confusion among bicultural individuals, particularly in socioculturally complex environments.

Keywords: *Cultural Dissonance, Identity Confusion, Bicultural Identity Integration.*

1. Introduction

In an increasingly globalized and migratory world, the phenomenon of biculturalism—where individuals internalize and navigate two distinct cultural frameworks—has become a central subject of psychological and sociocultural inquiry. Bicultural individuals often straddle cultural norms, languages, identities, and belief systems, necessitating complex internal negotiations that influence their psychosocial adjustment and mental health outcomes. One such outcome, identity confusion, emerges prominently in contexts of cultural dissonance, where conflicting cultural expectations can destabilize the formation of a coherent sense of self. While some individuals integrate their dual cultural heritages successfully, others may experience tension, fragmentation, or a profound sense of cultural misalignment. As such, bicultural identity integration (BII) has garnered attention as a mediating psychological construct that explains how individuals reconcile cultural dissonance and reduce associated confusion about identity (Xiao, 2024).

Identity confusion, originally conceptualized by Erikson, refers to a lack of clarity or consistency in one's values, roles, and self-definition. Among bicultural individuals, this confusion often arises not only from typical developmental challenges but also from cultural incongruities—where one's heritage culture clashes with the norms of the dominant or host culture. These inconsistencies can be intensified in postcolonial, migratory, or diasporic societies where systemic marginalization or racialized experiences exacerbate feelings of alienation and self-doubt (Grossu, 2024). In this context, cultural dissonance can be defined as the psychological discomfort resulting from exposure to divergent or contradictory cultural frameworks. This dissonance impairs identity development by introducing incompatible expectations for behavior, emotional expression, and worldview (Weisskopf & Uhrich, 2024).

The social environments in which bicultural individuals develop play a critical role in shaping whether cultural dissonance leads to confusion or whether it becomes a catalyst for integration. Bicultural identity integration (BII) is defined as the individual's perceived compatibility between their two cultural identities and the ability to blend or compartmentalize them in a psychologically coherent manner (Petkanopoulou et al., 2021). High BII is marked by feelings of harmony and blendedness between cultural affiliations, whereas low BII is characterized by conflict and compartmentalization. Research indicates that BII can serve as a resilience factor, mediating the adverse effects of cultural dissonance on psychological well-being and providing a scaffold for identity coherence (Soliman, 2022).

The theoretical model underpinning this study draws on cross-cultural psychology, identity development theories, and empirical models of bicultural adjustment. Lin and Ramírez-Esparza (2024) have demonstrated that bicultural individuals who report higher levels of cultural harmony are more likely to express stable self-concepts and lower levels of emotional distress (Lin & Ramírez-Esparza, 2024). Similarly, Mok (2022) found that BII moderates the relationship between cultural exposure and authenticity, suggesting that integrated identity frameworks foster more consistent self-perceptions and mitigate feelings of internal conflict (Mok, 2022). In contrast, when individuals perceive their two cultures as incompatible, they are more vulnerable to identity dissonance and may internalize contradictory value systems, contributing to confusion and decreased self-esteem (Chen et al., 2022).

Socialization experiences, including familial and educational influences, further shape the capacity for bicultural integration. Shein and Zhou (2023) identified that structured family cultural socialization promotes bicultural coherence and acts as a protective factor against identity confusion among Burmese refugee-background students in higher education (Shein & Zhou, 2023). This is echoed in Deverick and Mooney's (2023) work on collaborative bicultural social work, which emphasizes the importance of culturally grounded practices in promoting self-affirmation and coherent identity formation (Deverick & Mooney, 2023). Furthermore, educational settings that intentionally braid bicultural elements into pedagogy—such as the He Awa Whiria approach—help normalize cultural duality and reduce perceived identity conflict among learners (Houghton-Katipa, 2024).

From a psychological standpoint, unintegrated bicultural identity has been linked to maladaptive emotional outcomes. Hu et al. (2023) argued that cultural misalignment in the digital learning environment can lead to identity incongruence, especially when ethnic minority students perceive their social experiences as invalidated or marginalized (Hu et al., 2023). These experiences contribute to emotional dysregulation and social anxiety, both of which compound the development of identity confusion. In contrast, interventions that support BII, such as those explored by Soliman (2022), have been shown to increase

authenticity, self-worth, and adaptive functioning by promoting internal consistency in self-representation (Soliman, 2022).

The corporate and market domains also highlight the broader sociocultural dynamics influencing bicultural identity. For instance, Rodas et al. (2021) observed that paradox brands—brands that blend culturally contrasting elements—resonate strongly with bicultural consumers because they reflect their lived realities of navigating multiple cultural schemas (Rodas et al., 2021). This alignment between identity and representation reduces dissonance and reinforces a sense of belonging. Similarly, branding strategies in international sports management demonstrate the power of bicultural positioning in establishing cultural legitimacy and psychological attachment among global audiences (Weisskopf & Uhrich, 2024).

Nostalgia has also emerged as a unique pathway through which bicultural individuals cope with dissonance. Petkanopoulou et al. (2021) argue that host-culture nostalgia fosters integration by emotionally anchoring individuals within their new environments, thereby strengthening BII and reducing the sense of cultural loss or fragmentation (Petkanopoulou et al., 2021). Tan et al. (2024) add that BII moderates the effects of broader ideological factors—such as conspiracy beliefs—on ingroup bias, showing that individuals with high BII are better equipped to handle sociopolitical threats to identity (Tan et al., 2024).

This growing body of literature highlights the need to better understand the mediating role of bicultural integration in the psychological outcomes of identity development. Despite increased attention, gaps remain in the contextual specificity of bicultural identity research. Many studies focus on North American or European samples, with limited representation from Middle Eastern or post-conflict regions such as Iraq, where cultural plurality and generational trauma intersect. As such, localized research is necessary to determine how cultural dissonance manifests in these populations and whether bicultural integration functions similarly as a buffer against identity confusion.

Cross-cultural differences in bicultural adjustment are influenced not only by individual factors but also by structural and historical variables. Zong et al. (2021) found that perceived racial discrimination during the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted cultural integration processes among Chinese-American youth, leading to increased anxiety and identity fragmentation (Zong et al., 2021). Stogianni et al. (2021), through a meta-analysis, demonstrated that country-level variables such as multicultural policy strength and collective cultural orientation significantly moderate the link between biculturalism and psychological adjustment (Stogianni et al., 2021). Such findings urge caution in generalizing results and underscore the importance of considering socio-political context in bicultural identity research.

Moreover, emerging educational strategies advocate for culturally responsive approaches to mitigate identity fragmentation. Williams et al. (2023) emphasize the value of indigenous perspectives and local epistemologies in early childhood education to support bicultural learning environments, a principle that can be extended to adolescent and adult education (Williams et al., 2023). Potiki et al. (2024) reinforce this through their design-based model, which embeds bicultural principles into institutional frameworks to foster inclusive, integrated identity development (Potiki et al., 2024).

The interplay of language and identity is another relevant dimension. According to Purpuri et al. (2024), bilingualism among bicultural individuals enhances cognitive flexibility and self-regulation, which in turn facilitate smoother transitions between cultural contexts and reduce identity tension (Purpuri et al., 2024). This capacity for linguistic and psychological code-switching is integral to the successful navigation of cultural dissonance, especially in dynamic, multicultural societies.

In light of these considerations, the present study investigates how cultural dissonance relates to identity confusion in bicultural individuals residing in Iraq, and whether bicultural identity integration mediates this relationship.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to explore the relationship between cultural dissonance, bicultural integration, and identity confusion. The target population consisted of bicultural individuals residing in Iraq. Using the Morgan and Krejcie (1970) sample size table, a total of 439 participants were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation across gender, age, and educational levels. Inclusion criteria required participants to be at least 18 years old and to self-identify with two distinct cultural backgrounds. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and ethical

approval was secured from the relevant institutional review board prior to data collection.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Identity Confusion

To assess identity confusion, the study utilized the Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (EIPQ) developed by Balistreri, Busch-Rossnagel, and Geisinger (1995). This 32-item self-report instrument evaluates identity development across ideological and interpersonal domains, capturing both exploration and commitment dimensions. Identity confusion is operationalized as low commitment and high exploration scores, particularly in ideological subdomains such as occupation, religion, and politics. Participants respond on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The EIPQ has demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values typically ranging from 0.68 to 0.86 for its subscales, and has been validated in diverse adolescent and emerging adult populations. Its psychometric soundness supports its use in studies exploring developmental identity trajectories and related constructs such as confusion and diffusion.

2.2.2. Cultural Dissonance

Cultural dissonance was measured using the Cultural Dissonance Scale (CDS) developed by Kim and Omizo (2005), specifically designed to assess the psychological tension individuals experience when navigating conflicting cultural expectations. The CDS consists of 16 items across two subscales: Perceived Discrepancy Between Cultures and Emotional Discomfort. Responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating greater dissonance. The scale has shown high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87) and has been validated among bicultural populations, including Asian American and Latino samples, establishing its reliability in capturing the cognitive-affective strain caused by incompatible cultural norms.

2.2.3. Bicultural Integration

Bicultural integration was assessed using the Bicultural Identity Integration Scale – Version 2 (BIIS-2) developed by Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005). This 20-item instrument evaluates the extent to which individuals perceive their two cultural identities as compatible and integrated versus oppositional and compartmentalized. The scale includes two main subscales: Cultural Harmony versus Conflict and Cultural Blendedness versus Compartmentalization. Responses are provided on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate greater bicultural identity integration. The BIIS-2 has demonstrated robust psychometric properties, with reported Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.80 in multicultural samples. Validity has been supported through its correlations with measures of well-being, acculturation strategies, and identity coherence, making it a widely accepted tool for assessing bicultural psychological functioning.

2.3. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 27 for initial descriptive and bivariate statistical procedures, and AMOS version 21 for structural equation modeling (SEM). Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages) were used to summarize demographic variables. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the dependent variable (identity confusion) and the independent variables (cultural dissonance and bicultural integration). SEM was applied to test the hypothesized mediating model and evaluate both direct and indirect pathways, with model fit assessed using standard indices such as the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Chi-square/df ratio.

3. Findings and Results

The sample included 439 participants, of whom 232 (52.85%) identified as female and 207 (47.15%) as male. Regarding age distribution, 161 participants (36.68%) were between 18 and 25 years old, 193 (43.96%) were aged 26 to 35, 61 (13.90%) were aged 36 to 45, and 24 (5.47%) were older than 45. In terms of educational background, 121 participants (27.56%) held a high school diploma, 198 (45.10%) had completed a bachelor's degree, 87 (19.82%) had a master's degree, and 33 (7.52%) reported holding a doctoral degree. These demographics reflect a diverse adult population with varying academic and cultural experiences within Iraq.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Main Variables (N = 439)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Cultural Dissonance	3.42	0.71
Bicultural Identity Integration	3.68	0.65
Identity Confusion	3.27	0.76

The descriptive statistics in Table 1 show that the mean score for cultural dissonance was 3.42 (SD = 0.71), indicating moderate levels of perceived cultural conflict among participants. Bicultural identity integration had a slightly higher mean of 3.68 (SD = 0.65), suggesting a relatively strong perception of cultural compatibility. Identity confusion was moderately rated, with a mean score of 3.27 (SD = 0.76), reflecting variability in self-concept clarity among the bicultural population studied.

Prior to conducting the main analyses, assumptions for parametric testing were evaluated and confirmed. The data demonstrated normality, with skewness values ranging between -0.64 and 0.58, and kurtosis values ranging from -0.71 to 0.82, indicating that all variables were within acceptable thresholds (±2). Linearity was visually inspected through scatterplots, revealing consistent linear trends between predictor and outcome variables. Homoscedasticity was verified by plotting standardized residuals against predicted values, which showed no clear pattern. Additionally, multicollinearity was not a concern, as variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.12 to 1.47, well below the critical cutoff of 5. These findings support the validity of subsequent correlational and SEM analyses.

Table 2

Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Variables

Variable	1	2	3
1. Cultural Dissonance	—		
2. Bicultural Identity Integration	-.48** (p < .001)	—	
3. Identity Confusion	.52** (p < .001)	-.55** (p < .001)	—

As presented in Table 2, cultural dissonance was positively and significantly correlated with identity confusion (r = .52, p < .001), indicating that higher cultural dissonance is associated with greater identity confusion. Bicultural identity integration was negatively correlated with both cultural dissonance (r = −.48, p < .001) and identity confusion (r = −.55, p < .001). These correlations suggest that BII plays a potential mitigating role in the negative effects of cultural conflict on identity development.

Table 3

Fit Indices for Structural Equation Model

Fit Index	Value	Threshold Criteria
χ^2 (Chi-Square)	127.64	—
df	64	—
χ^2/df	1.99	< 3.00 (acceptable)
GFI	0.94	> 0.90 (good fit)
AGFI	0.91	> 0.90 (good fit)
CFI	0.96	> 0.95 (excellent fit)
TLI	0.95	> 0.95 (excellent fit)
RMSEA	0.048	< 0.06 (excellent fit)

As shown in Table 3, the model demonstrated excellent fit to the data. The Chi-square/df ratio was 1.99, below the threshold of 3.00, indicating an acceptable level of model parsimony. Other indices such as the CFI (0.96), TLI (0.95),

GFI (0.94), and AGFI (0.91) all exceeded recommended cutoffs, and RMSEA was 0.048, confirming a well-fitting model. These values validate the proposed mediating structure between the three variables.

Table 4

*Standardized Path Coefficients in Structural Model (N = 439)*

Path	b	S.E.	β	p
Cultural Dissonance → Identity Confusion (Direct)	0.42	0.06	0.39	< .001
Cultural Dissonance → BII (Direct)	−0.51	0.05	−0.47	< .001
BII → Identity Confusion (Direct)	−0.49	0.06	−0.45	< .001
Cultural Dissonance → Identity Confusion (Indirect)	−0.25	0.04	−0.21	< .001
Cultural Dissonance → Identity Confusion (Total)	0.17	0.07	0.18	< .001

Table 4 presents the total, direct, and indirect effects among the study variables. The direct effect of cultural dissonance on identity confusion was significant ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < .001$), indicating that cultural dissonance contributes to increased identity confusion. Cultural dissonance was also a strong negative predictor of bicultural identity integration ($\beta = -0.47$, $p < .001$), which in turn significantly reduced identity confusion ($\beta = -0.45$, $p < .001$). The indirect path from cultural dissonance to identity confusion via BII was also significant ($\beta = -0.21$, $p < .001$), confirming the mediating role of BII. The total effect ($\beta = 0.18$) suggests that while cultural dissonance contributes to identity confusion, much of its effect is buffered through the mediating influence of BII.

Figure 1

Model with Beta Coefficients

Structural Model of the Mediating Role of Bicultural Identity Integration
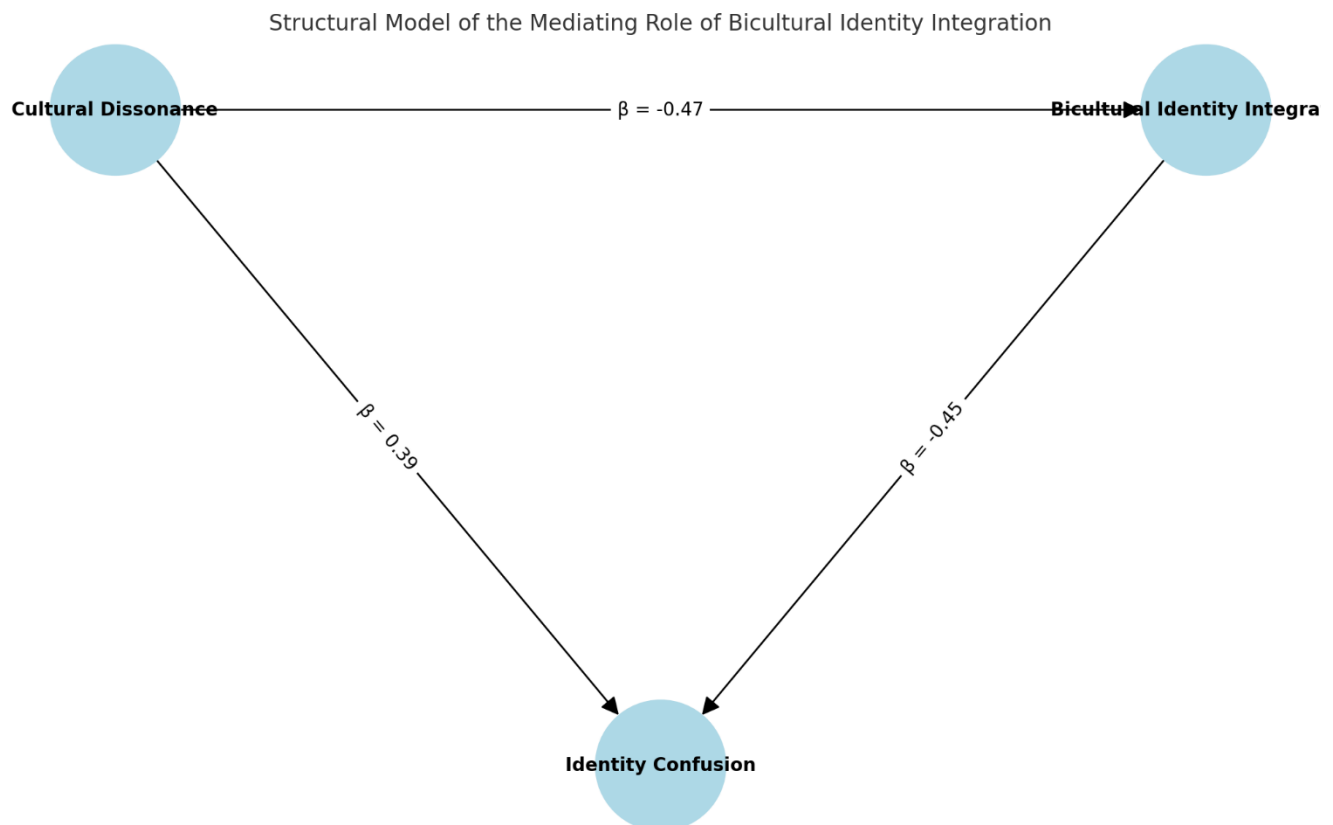
4. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence for the hypothesized model in which bicultural identity

integration (BII) mediates the relationship between cultural dissonance and identity confusion. The results of the Pearson correlation analyses revealed a significant positive relationship between cultural dissonance and identity confusion, and a significant negative relationship between bicultural identity integration and identity confusion. Structural equation modeling (SEM) further confirmed that BII partially mediates the effect of cultural dissonance on identity confusion. These findings support the conceptualization that unresolved cultural tension contributes to confusion in self-concept formation, but that this effect is mitigated when individuals perceive their two cultural identities as compatible and harmonious.

The strong positive association between cultural dissonance and identity confusion aligns with previous work demonstrating that internal cultural conflict undermines individuals' ability to develop a stable sense of self (Chen et al., 2022; Grossu, 2024). Cultural dissonance, characterized by contradictory norms and incompatible expectations from heritage and host cultures, can create a psychological impasse that leads to incoherent self-representations. As Rodas et al. (2021) noted, bicultural individuals often operate in contexts where brands, institutions, and social structures reflect divergent cultural codes, which in turn reinforce identity contradictions (Rodas et al., 2021). When these external contradictions are internalized, individuals may experience self-alienation and difficulty reconciling core values, resulting in identity confusion.

Bicultural identity integration emerged as a crucial buffer in this process, moderating the extent to which cultural dissonance translates into confusion. High levels of BII allowed individuals to perceive cultural differences not as antagonistic but as complementary, enabling them to derive strength and coherence from cultural multiplicity. This is consistent with Lin and Ramírez-Esparza's (2024) findings, which demonstrated that individuals who perceive harmony between their cultural identities exhibit higher psychological adjustment and self-consistency (Lin & Ramírez-Esparza, 2024). Similarly, Petkanopoulou et al. (2021) found that nostalgia for the host culture can activate a unifying narrative for bicultural individuals, further promoting integration (Petkanopoulou et al., 2021). These emotional anchors provide affective resources to manage dissonance and sustain identity coherence.

The mediating effect of BII in the current model echoes the theoretical proposition advanced by Mok (2022), who argued that BII moderates the effect of external stressors—such as discrimination or incongruent cultural messaging—

on psychological authenticity and self-acceptance (Mok, 2022). The current study expands on this model by demonstrating that BII not only protects authenticity but also significantly reduces identity confusion, particularly when cultural environments impose conflicting value systems. This is especially relevant in the Iraqi context, where the intergenerational legacies of war, migration, and multicultural tension may intensify the salience of dissonant cultural narratives.

Moreover, the results are in line with the meta-analytic findings by Stogianni et al. (2021), who demonstrated that the protective function of BII is robust across diverse national contexts but is also contingent on systemic variables such as multicultural policy strength and societal openness (Stogianni et al., 2021). Given Iraq's complex socio-political landscape, the data underscore how individual-level integration processes can serve as compensatory mechanisms in the absence of structural support. This suggests that psychological strategies for integration—rather than policy alone—may be critical in contexts where formal multiculturalism is limited or emerging.

The negative correlation between BII and identity confusion also resonates with the work of Soliman (2022), who emphasized the utility of targeted interventions in increasing BII among bicultural and biracial individuals (Soliman, 2022). These interventions aim to reconstruct personal narratives that view cultural duality as an asset rather than a deficit. In the current study, participants with higher BII scores reported lower confusion despite comparable levels of cultural dissonance, reinforcing the notion that subjective integration is more determinative of psychological outcomes than the mere presence of cultural conflict.

Furthermore, the relationship between cultural dissonance and identity confusion may be exacerbated by educational and institutional practices that fail to affirm bicultural identities. As shown by Shein and Zhou (2023), students from refugee backgrounds often experience identity confusion when family cultural socialization is at odds with educational narratives that prioritize assimilation over integration (Shein & Zhou, 2023). Conversely, educational models such as the He Awa Whiria approach championed by Houghton-Katipa (2024) demonstrate that intentional inclusion of bicultural content in curricula fosters a sense of belonging and reduces identity fragmentation (Houghton-Katipa, 2024).

In commercial and consumer behavior contexts, studies like those by Weisskopf and Uhrich (2024) and Rodas et al.

(2021) emphasize how bicultural brand positioning can affirm identity by representing cultural complexity authentically (Rodas et al., 2021; Weisskopf & Uhrich, 2024). This commercial validation can serve as an indirect form of psychological affirmation, reinforcing internal integration and buffering against dissonance-induced confusion. The current findings support this interpretation, suggesting that congruent cultural representation—whether in media, education, or branding—can have downstream effects on identity development.

Additionally, digital and social media environments also contribute to the navigation of bicultural identity. Hu et al. (2023) found that digital spaces that affirm cultural identity and allow expression of ethnic pride improve academic identity and reduce emotional dissonance among minorities (Hu et al., 2023). In the Iraqi context, where media platforms often reflect polarized cultural narratives, such findings underscore the need for culturally inclusive digital ecosystems that foster narrative harmony rather than discord.

The findings of this study are also supported by recent work examining bicultural identity among children and adolescents. Trifiletti et al. (2022) introduced a specialized instrument for measuring BII in childhood, arguing that early bicultural integration facilitates psychological adjustment across the lifespan (Trifiletti et al., 2022). This aligns with our observation that older participants, likely having more experience in navigating cultural boundaries, showed higher levels of BII and lower identity confusion. These developmental insights support a life-span perspective on identity integration, suggesting that intervention and support should begin early.

Educational and sociopolitical contexts must also be considered. Williams et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of embedding Māori principles into early childhood education in New Zealand to support bicultural coherence and reduce identity dissonance (Williams et al., 2023). Likewise, Potiki et al. (2024) demonstrated how urban planning and institutional design, when informed by bicultural principles, promote inclusive identity development (Potiki et al., 2024). These systemic considerations offer practical models that could be localized and adapted to the Iraqi sociocultural context.

The protective power of biculturalism was also highlighted in the work of Deverick and Mooney (2023), who stressed that bicultural research practices promote shared ownership of knowledge and contribute to more culturally aligned identity narratives (Deverick & Mooney, 2023). Tan et al. (2024) added that high BII can moderate

sociopolitical effects—such as conspiracy belief-induced ingroup bias—by providing individuals with a nuanced understanding of cultural alignment (Tan et al., 2024). In culturally complex societies like Iraq, such psychological flexibility may be key in navigating not only personal identity but also intergroup dynamics.

Finally, the study confirms Xiao's (2024) review of BII literature, which emphasized that individuals who construct integrative cultural narratives are more resilient in the face of psychological fragmentation (Xiao, 2024). Taken together, the findings reinforce a model in which identity confusion is not simply a consequence of cultural dissonance, but rather the result of insufficient mechanisms—internal or external—for resolving that dissonance. Bicultural identity integration offers one such mechanism, deserving of deeper theoretical and practical engagement.

5.   Limitations & Suggestions

Despite its valuable findings, this study is not without limitations. First, the cross-sectional design limits causal inferences regarding the directional influence of BII in mediating the relationship between cultural dissonance and identity confusion. Longitudinal data would be necessary to track changes in identity processes over time. Second, although the sample was geographically diverse within Iraq, it may not capture the full heterogeneity of the Iraqi bicultural population, especially among displaced persons or minority communities with unique cultural experiences. Third, the self-report nature of the measures introduces potential biases such as social desirability or limited introspective accuracy, particularly concerning complex constructs like integration and dissonance.

Future studies should prioritize longitudinal and cross-cultural comparative designs to assess the stability of bicultural identity integration across different contexts and over developmental timeframes. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or narrative analysis, may also yield richer insights into the lived experiences of identity negotiation. Moreover, future research could explore the intersectionality of identity, examining how factors such as gender, religion, and socioeconomic status intersect with cultural dissonance and influence the development of identity confusion and integration.

Practitioners working with bicultural populations—whether in education, counseling, or community programming—should prioritize interventions that cultivate

cultural harmony and affirm dual heritage. Programs designed to strengthen narrative integration, cultural storytelling, and heritage affirmation can be implemented in schools and youth centers. At a policy level, culturally inclusive practices in curriculum design, media representation, and institutional branding can contribute to a collective atmosphere that reduces dissonance and fosters psychological coherence among bicultural individuals.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

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