



universität
wien

DISSERTATION / DOCTORAL THESIS

Titel der Dissertation /Title of the Doctoral Thesis

„Acculturation re-examined: the construct, its boundaries, relationships and consequences. Theoretical and empirical analysis of a disputed concept“

verfasst von / submitted by

Mag. Ina Teresa Wilczewska

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doktorin der Philosophie (Dr. phil.)

Wien, 2023 / Vienna 2023

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme code as it appears on the student
record sheet:

UA 796 310 122

Dissertationsgebiet lt. Studienblatt /
field of study as it appears on the student record sheet:

Sociology

Betreut von / Supervisor:

ao. Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Christoph Reinprecht

Acknowledgements

I want to thank my supervisor Professor Christoph Reinprecht who kindly took me under his wing after I had just moved to Austria from Poland and was trying to find my footing in the new academic environment. I am especially grateful for his understanding and support in navigating the even more challenging disciplinary transition from the field of psychology into sociology. His kind words and expertise have encouraged me throughout conducting my research and writing this thesis.

I thank my family and friends who always encouraged me in this endeavour. My special gratitude goes to my husband Angel, who endured all my ups and downs while working on this thesis and was always my greatest supporter.

I thank my colleagues and fellow doctoral students for their valuable criticism and comments as well as practical advice.

Table of Contents

Papers included in the doctoral thesis	7
General introduction	9
State of the art in the chosen fields of research	10
Discussion of the research questions that connect the individual publications	15
Chosen research approach, theoretical foundations and methods	17
Discussion of the central research findings	19
Contribution of the research to the academic debate in the relevant disciplines	22
Presentation of the papers included as well as the doctoral candidate's contribution to each paper	24
Individual papers	30
Paper 1. Breaking the chains of two dimensions: the tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model TDPOM	32
Paper 2. The role of perceived cultural distance in the acculturation of Polish immigrants in Vienna	46
Paper 3. Examining the Relationship Between Acculturation and Socioeconomic Status and Their Role for the First Generation Polish Immigrants' Well-Being	66
Appendix	85
Abstract (English)	85
Kurzfassung (Deutsch)	86
Supplementary file for paper 2	87

Papers included in the doctoral thesis

Publications

Paper 1

Wilczewska, I. T. (2023). Breaking the chains of two dimensions: The tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model TDPOM. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 95, 101810. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2023.101810>

Paper 3

Wilczewska, I. T. (2023). Examining the Relationship Between Acculturation and Socioeconomic Status and Their Role for the First Generation Polish Immigrants' Well-Being. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 24(3), 1337-1355. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-023-01006-y>

Papers prepared for submission

Paper 2

Wilczewska, I.T. (in preparation). The role of perceived cultural distance in the acculturation of Polish immigrants in Vienna.

General Introduction

International migration is a wide topic consisting of various aspects which have been intensively studied by many disciplines. One aspect of great interest to researchers and the general public is immigrants' acculturation into a new cultural context, the ways of achieving it, and its various consequences (e.g. for immigrants' physical and mental health). Despite the numerous research conducted in this field, the topic has not lost its relevance, and remains up to date since migration continues to increase globally, while the structure of immigrant groups, as well as the context of migration is changing, further generating new challenges. However, the concept of acculturation carries a considerable historical burden and has been intensively disputed by scholars. It remains under criticism, particularly in the field of social sciences, where the term has been largely abandoned and replaced by alternative terms such as integration¹. More recently, the need for rethinking the acculturation concept and exploring new approaches has been voiced within the psychological field, a discipline which still intensively uses the acculturation concept. Apart from the conceptual concerns and debates, also the results of empirical research on acculturation have been criticized for its inconclusive and sometimes contradictory nature (for the relationship between acculturation and health see: Bhugra, 2001; Koner, et al., 2007; Lopez-Class, Castro, Ramirez, 2011; for the nature of ethnicity see: Wimmer 2008) as well as their low practical value (Rudmin, 2009; Zick, 2010). This situation has been attributed to the considerable plurality of acculturation measures, as well as the failure to carefully consider the role of other related concepts as mediators and moderators in analyzed relationships. Against this backdrop, this dissertation aims to reexamine the concept of acculturation by reconsidering its understanding, boundary conditions, and relationship with other related concepts. It addresses the issues recounted above, and proposes possible solutions to some of the problems in this field of research. The dissertation entails conceptual, as well as empirical contributions in which the acculturation concept plays the central role. While the conceptual contribution introduces a new theoretical model for understanding and studying acculturation, the empirical contributions, based on data collected among Polish immigrants living in Vienna, provide insights into the relationship between acculturation and other concepts relevant for migration and acculturation research. The dissertation is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on knowledge from several academic disciplines concerned with immigrant research and the acculturation concept such as sociology, psychology and social and cultural anthropology.

¹ The integration concept has also been criticized on numerous grounds, such as for masking power asymmetries and strengthening the image of the ill-fitting immigrant (Meissner, F., & Heil, T. (2021). Deromanticising integration: On the importance of convivial disintegration. *Migration Studies*, 9(3), 740-758. <https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnz056>

❖ State of the art in the chosen fields of research

Conceptualization of acculturation

Currently, the term acculturation, in relation to immigrants, is used predominantly in psychological studies. However, sociologists, anthropologists, as well as health researchers, traditionally are also interested in this topic using, however, often different terminology: acculturation, assimilation, integration – these terms are used in literature more or less interchangeably with their meaning, varying according to the tradition of thinking and/or scientific discipline. This plurality of terms, as well as disciplinary differences in their use and meaning within migration research, are an important characteristic of this interdisciplinary research field. The significant differences in the conceptualization of acculturation and the disputed nature of this concept can be best understood in regard to the historical development of migration, and more specifically acculturation research. The concept of acculturation had been first employed in anthropological studies at the end of the 19th century to describe the consequences of contact between indigenous societies, as well as indigenous societies and colonizers for their cultural practices (Boas, 1966; Rudmin, 2003). Later, it found application in anthropological studies on rural to urban migration. In this early research, the term had been used in reference to ‘how so-called “primitive” societies changed to become more “civilized” following cultural contact with an “enlightened” group of people’ (Berry et al., 2016, p. 12). In sociology, assimilation has been the dominant term in relation to migration research. These terms have been sometimes used as synonymous of each other, and other times as subsets of one another. In 1936, a committee of the US Social Science Research Council made the first formal definition of acculturation for anthropological and sociological research purposes: ‘Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups. Under this definition, acculturation is to be distinguished from culture change, of which it is but one aspect, and assimilation, which is at times a phase of acculturation’ (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Milton Gordon (1964) suggested that acculturation needed to be differentiated from structural assimilation, whereby the latter is defined as the incorporation of members of ethnic groups into primary relationships (e.g., social clubs, marriage) with individuals from the majority group. At the same time, Gordon defined acculturation as the adoption of cultural norms and behavioral patterns of the majority group (often called the ‘core culture’), a process he considered an essential component of the experiences of ethnic groups.

In this early period of migration research, the unidimensional model of acculturation, also named bipolar, was predominant. Its assumption that, given time, immigrants move ever closer to adopting the host culture, while simultaneously losing their heritage culture, was constitutional for the theoretical models such as Park’s and Burgess’s Race Relation Cycle (Park, Burgess, & McKenzie, 1925) as well as the 7-step assimilation model outlined by Gordon (1964). The models were embedded in the prevailing theoretical orientation of that time, the modernization theory. As most of the immigrants at that time were peasants coming from less developed areas to the industrial cities, assimilation/acculturation was implicitly understood as becoming more modern, less traditional and as a reflection of progress (Kearney, 1986). The 1960s and 1970s brought a turn to ethnicity and the acknowledgement of plural identities in scholarly studies, which unfolded in the context of broader social movements of that time (Green, 2006). The assumption of assimilation as

the implicit outcome of immigration, together with its normative nature, had been criticized and confronted with the persistence of ethnic identities and racial inequality. At that time, psychologist John Berry developed his acculturation model, which has become one of the most influential models in the field of acculturation research (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2022a). He distinguished four acculturation strategies derived from two dimensions: the first dimension refers to the relative preference for maintaining one's heritage culture and identity, and the second refers to the relative preference for having contact with, and participating, in mainstream society (Berry, 1980; Berry et al., 1989). The great strength of the model lay in its integrating both modes of immigrants' functioning (assimilation into the mainstream and maintenance of distinct ethnic characteristics) into one framework. The four strategies corresponding to the extreme positionings on two dimensions were: assimilation (low cultural maintenance, high contact), integration (high cultural maintenance, high contact), separation (high cultural maintenance, low contact) and marginalization (low cultural maintenance, low contact). The salient aspect of this bidimensional approach has been the assumption that the dimensions are independent of one another, which contrasts with the earlier unidimensional approach. To the present day, Berry's acculturation model remains one of the most important conceptual propositions in the field of acculturation research and is still being applied in numerous empirical studies (see Schmitz & Schmitz, 2022). However, in recent years, the model has encountered increasing criticism for being overly simplistic to fit the current reality of immigrant societies with its new challenges and superdiversity (e.g. van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2022b).

The concept of acculturation faced significant criticism throughout the decades of its existence. One of the main points of the criticism has been related to the understanding of culture incorporated in acculturation models and research. The acculturation concept, developed largely within the modernization paradigm, was based on the understanding of culture prevalent at that time. The modern, systemic view of culture, which is also entailed in the above quoted definition of acculturation by the Social Science Research Council, conceives of culture as an enclosed system with consistent patterns of behaviour and clear boundaries (Bauman, 1999). The systemic understanding of culture has been strongly criticized, especially since the 80s and 90s (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1991; Barth, 1969, 1994; Appadurai, 1996; Clifford, 1988). The major critique enclosed in the skeptical postmodern writings on culture was that the concept wrongly suggests boundedness, homogeneity, coherence, continuity, stability and structure, whereas social reality is characterized by variability, inconsistencies, conflict, change and individual agency (Brumann, 1999). The culture concept, according to critics, failed to represent and theorize the heterogeneous character of dispositions and conduct within cultures or societies (Brightman, 1995). For example, Ronaldo writes, 'the classic version of unique cultural patterns... emphasizes shared patterns at the expense of process of change and internal inconsistencies, conflicts, and contradictions.' (1989, p.28). He then stresses that 'human cultures are neither necessarily coherent nor always homogeneous'. (1989, p.207). Together with the shifting understanding of culture, also the notion of cultural or ethnic groups, has been problematized (Barth, 1969; Brubaker, 2002). The assumption of discrete, natural cultural groups has been questioned by many scholars, contributing further to the ongoing criticism and practically a dismissal of acculturation and assimilation studies in social sciences (FitzGerald, 2015; Waldram, 2009; Wimmer, 2009). Despite this criticism, the acculturation concept has remained very much in use within the field of psychology, not least because these changes in understanding of culture and ethnic groups have been largely ignored in psychological acculturation studies for many years (Waldram, 2009). However, in the last decade, there has also been a growing criticism of

acculturation studies within this field. In 2009, the International Journal of Intercultural Relations published a special issue on 'Critical Acculturation Psychology' where numerous scholars pointed out the weaknesses and potential solutions for empirical studies on this topic. One of the main points of criticism concerned the under-theorization of research regarding the notion of culture (Chirkov, 2009; Bhatia & Ram, 2009; Tardif-Williams & Fischer, 2009; Broesch & Hadley, 2012; Boski, 2006, 2008; Zick, 2010). Acculturation researchers rarely explicitly discuss the concept of culture. Many studies lack a solid grounding in any theory of culture and use theoretically detached methods (Broesch & Hadley, 2012). The majority of acculturation studies tend to operationalize culture by equating it with ethnicity and nationality (Chirkov, 2009). Another point was the limited knowledge transfer between scientific disciplines concerned with the adaptation of migrants (Zick, 2010, Chirkov, 2009). The scholars stressed the need for a multidisciplinary and multi-method approach in order to improve the quality and applicability of acculturation research (Bhatia & Ram, 2009; Chirkov, 2009; Weinreich, 2009). A further critical point raised in recent acculturation literature concerns the inability of the established acculturation models to accommodate the newest societal developments such as changing demographics, growing diversity of societies and the rise of minority majority cities (Benkirane & Doucerain, 2022; Doucerain et al., 2013; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2022b). The traditional assumption that immigrants belong to the cultural minority, and have to define their identity against a host majority culture, has become ever more often inadequate in light of the growing number of cities and neighborhoods where immigrants outnumber the autochthonous population (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2022b). Furthermore, clearly defining a mainstream cultural group, as well as identifying single coherent heritage group, further becomes increasingly challenging due to the complex multicultural experiences of many contemporary individuals (Douceirain et al., 2013). Because the acculturation model proposed by John Berry has dominated the field of acculturation research for so long, and is still frequently used, a considerable portion of the criticism has been directed towards it (see Berry, 2009; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2022a).

As a response to these newest challenges in conceptualizing and measuring acculturation, in recent years several new conceptual models have been proposed. Some of the propositions constitute an extension of Berry's acculturation model, such as including more than two cultural groups as references for acculturation dimensions (e.g. Ferguson et al., 2012; Taušová et al., 2019), and some constitute an alternative approach to understanding acculturation (e.g. Gamsakhurdia, 2019) and acculturative change (e.g. Chirkov, 2022). In the field of biculturalism, new conceptual propositions have focused on how individuals negotiate multicultural identities, with some of them still relying on Berry's model as a foundation (Ward et al., 2018) and some going explicitly beyond the bidimensional framework (West et al., 2017) (for a more detailed discussion of those models see the first paper included in this dissertation).

Following this criticism, I have also proposed a new conceptual model of acculturation, which addresses the above recounted issues and current challenges in the field of acculturation research, and aims at improving the modelling of acculturation process. By taking into account criticism from all the above-mentioned disciplines, the model constitutes an attempt to reduce the disciplinary divisions regarding the acculturation concept, and contribute to better knowledge integration. I describe the model in more detail in the discussion of research findings.

Boundary conditions of acculturation and perceived cultural distance

Boundary conditions (BC) refer to the generalizability of a theory across contexts, and provide the answer to the question when a given theory is applicable, and how accurate are its predictions in a given context. The exploration of boundary conditions constitutes an important element in theory development, and allows to refine conceptual models (Busse et al., 2017). Following the definition of acculturation (Berry et al., 2016) which poses that the acculturative change results from continuous contact with a new culture, the perception of cultural differences appears to be an important boundary condition for the process of individual change. In the case of immigrants, it means that the new place of settlement would have to be perceived as culturally different from the home place (or the location where they migrated from) in order to trigger (acculturative) change and the need to adapt to the new environment (Demes & Geeraert, 2013). The perception of cultural differences between two places has been studied under the term perceived cultural distance (PCD). In contrast to cultural distance (CD), which is usually applied in country-level comparisons, and refer to broad classifications of cultures or countries such as proposed by Hofstede (2001) as well as objective measures such as differences in GDP or Gini coefficient, PCD is an subjective individual level variable. It was first introduced by Babiker et al.(1980), and since then analysed as a factor in acculturation studies. However, the focus of those studies has been predominantly on adaptation, which can be understood as a consequence, also often a long-term outcome, of the acculturation process (Sam & Berry, 2010), rather than an extent of acculturative change. The studies demonstrated that, in general, larger PCD is associated with poorer psychological as well as sociocultural adaptation (e.g Demes & Geeraert, 2013; Galchenko & van de Vijver, 2007; Ward & Kennedy, 1999; Waxin, 2004).

Two of the domains in which acculturative change can take place are behavioural practices and values (Schwartz et al., 2010). Few studies have analysed PCD and acculturation in the practice domain, still focusing rather on cultural preferences and difficulties in adaptation than on the extent of change (e.g Demes & Geeraert, 2013; Nesdale & Mak, 2003; Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009). A handful of studies analysed changes in values following migration (e.g Bardi et al., 2014; Lönnqvist et al., 2011, 2013), but to the best of my knowledge, no studies have so far focused on the relationship between PCD and value change. Furthermore, studies interested in the role of PCD for acculturation typically use samples comprised of multiple ethnic groups, and therefore treat PCD implicitly as a group-level variable in accordance with the systemic view of culture. The constructivist understanding of culture also suggests that members of the same ethnic groups could significantly differ regarding PCD between the same contexts, and that one shouldn't assume that categorisations based on ethnicity are necessarily the most meaningful. Another issue is that the participants also predominantly belong to the category of expatriates and international students, which mostly mean time-restricted migration. The role of CD and PCD for acculturation has been mostly overlooked for the first-generation immigrants (Bierwiazzonek & Waldzus, 2016).

Given that change constitutes the core of the acculturation process and that PCD can be considered an important boundary condition of this process, it is surprising that the relationships between these two constructs appears to be so understudied. This dissertation aims at filling this research gap. Furthermore, it addresses the above-mentioned sampling bias by focusing on an ethnically homogeneous group of first-generation migrants.

Acculturation consequences

Migration is one major cause for undergoing the process of acculturation. As migrants acquaint themselves with, and adjust to, the new cultural context, they may change the way they act, think and feel. This change can have various consequences, among others for their mental health. Migrants' health in general, particularly mental health, has often been studied in relation to acculturation process and strategies (Broesch & Hadley, 2012; Schumann et al., 2020). The historical focus on migrants' difficulties with adaptation and mental health problems have been subsequently shifted towards positive adaptation and well-being, with more recent research increasingly applying subjective measures of health (Sam et al., 2016). However, despite the various research on this topic, the findings have been inconclusive and contradicting (Bhugra & Jones, 2001; Koneru et al., 2007; Lopez-Class et al., 2011; Sam et al., 2016).

A few possible explanations for such state-of-the-art can be found in the literature. One of the concerns, not including or controlling for relevant variables, such as socio-economic status (SES), which can influence the relationship between mental health and acculturation. Socio-economic status "represents individuals' possessions of normatively valued social and economic resources" and can be further conceptualized as a set of structural features with the power to influence the decisions and behaviours of individuals (Antonoplis, 2022, p. 5). Education, income and occupation are the features (indicators) of SES most commonly used in empirical studies (Antonoplis, 2022). Research has shown that low SES is a crucial predictor of low health among minorities, often stronger than acculturation variables (Rudmin, 2009). However, when SES is not measured, its effect can be confounded with the effects of acculturation on variables of interest. Moyerman and Forman (1992) conducted a meta-analysis of acculturation and adjustment, and found that "SES was the most influential study characteristic" that modified the effect of acculturation on various measures of adjustment. Several reviews of acculturation research have underscored the need to clearly distinguish between measures of SES and acculturation, and to consider both aspects when studying psychological adjustment including well-being (Caetano & Clark, 2003; Rogler et al., 1991; Rudmin, 2009; Yamada et al., 2006).

In the last decade, more studies have examined multivariate models including both SES, as well as acculturation measures, as predictors of immigrants' well-being. However, the results are still equivocal. For example, Angelini et al. (2015) conducted a study on immigrants' life satisfaction using data from the German Socio-Economic Panel. After controlling for a variety of factors, including several indicators of SES, they found a positive, significant association between acculturation and life satisfaction. While SES and other indicators remained significant predictors in the model, acculturation could further explain immigrants' level of life satisfaction. Research conducted in Sweden among immigrants from Poland, Turkey and Iran brought similar results (Wiking et al., 2004). The researchers failed to confirm their initial hypothesis that the relation between ethnicity and poor self-reported health could be fully explained by low SES only. Socioeconomic conditions explained just a part of the association. Their findings showed that acculturation and discrimination were two important mediators in the pathway between ethnicity and poor health besides low SES. A study on Polish economic immigrants living in the UK produced different results (Bak-Klimek et al., 2018): here, the indicators of SES appeared to have no significant effect on immigrants' well-being in contrast to the acculturation variables, which were significant predictors. Yet, contrary results were reported by Lönnqvist et al. (2015), who conducted a longitudinal study analysing the changes in

immigrants' well-being, and the predictors of immigrants' well-being over the course of migration. They showed that acculturation attitudes did not appear as key determinants of psychological well-being, in contrast to the subjective economic situation, which was significantly associated with immigrants' well-being. Similarly, a meta-analysis of studies analysing the determinants of well-being among international migrants (Bak-Klimek et al., 2015), found evidence of a small effect of SES, particularly income (no effect of education) on well-being, but no effect of acculturation.

Another potential explanation for the discrepant findings regarding acculturation consequences, concerns inconsistencies in operationalization and measurement of the concept, as well as inadequate measurement (Broesch & Hadley, 2012; Koneru et al., 2007; Matsudaira, 2006; Sam et al., 2016; Schumann et al., 2020). In order to measure acculturation in quantitative studies, researchers may use multiple-item scales or single acculturation proxies. Over the years, numerous scales have been developed for measuring acculturation. They differ in regard to operationalization, as well as to the postulated dimensions of this construct and the acculturation domains they cover (Rudmin, 2009). These circumstances raise questions as to their content validity, the adequate choice of acculturation areas, and cause problems regarding comparability and generalizability of research findings (Schumann et al., 2020; Zane & Mak, 2003). To the comparability and generalizability issues may also contribute the fact that some scales have been developed for a specific immigrant population, such as Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (Suinn et al., 1992) or Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics (Marin et al., 1987). Furthermore, the practice of using a single acculturation score for research analysis derived from answers to multiple questions, which cover diverse areas, can disguise the complexity of the phenomenon, and has been questioned for its credibility (Schumann et al., 2020). Acculturation proxies are single measures of characteristics, which are assumed to reflect the level of acculturative change of an individual. Popular proxies refer to country of birth, length of stay or fluency in the language of the immigration country and use of language at home (Schumann et al., 2020). The use of acculturation proxies, in relation to health outcomes, have been criticised on the grounds that, because they do not measure the acculturative change directly, it is not certain that what they capture is indeed acculturation (Thomson & Hoffman-Goetz, 2009). Based on a recent systematic review of the use of acculturation in health research, Schumann et al. (2020) recommend the use of single-item, but several acculturation indicators covering key acculturation domains, rather than multiple-item scales.

As part of this dissertation, I have proposed an empirical model to test one further possible explanation for the discrepant results on acculturation consequences for health, which included aspects mentioned in both previously described explanations. I describe it in more detail in the discussion of research findings.

❖ Discussion of the research questions that connect the individual publications

This dissertation is centred around the concept of acculturation, and the focus on this concept connects all three papers. The goal of this dissertation has been to reexamine the concept of acculturation from theoretical, as well as empirical perspectives.

My interest in the theoretical perspective, which took the form of a conceptual analysis and model development, resulted from the observed significant disciplinary differences regarding the understanding and current use of acculturation concept and other related concepts such as assimilation and integration. I began my research by studying the understanding of those concepts in sociology, psychology and anthropology. I also examined how acculturation research has developed and changed over time, and what criticisms have been raised regarding acculturation concept in the respective academic fields. As described in the state-of-the-art section, a significant portion of the criticism of acculturation models and research resulted from the changing understanding of culture from a systemic view to a more constructivist view. Consequently, anthropologists all but abandoned acculturation concept and acculturation research (Waldram, 2009), and sociologists have begun to prefer the integration concept, and turned their attention from cultural to structural aspects of immigrant adaptation (Schmitter Heisler, 2008). As already noted, currently most acculturation research is conducted within the field of psychology and health-related research, notably disciplines and research fields where the constructivist turn had less influence. The dominant acculturation model used in these fields is the model proposed by John Berry, which, as I argue in the first paper included in this dissertation, still relies on the systemic understanding of culture. Considering the historical developments regarding acculturation concept and the disciplinary differences, I became interested in the question if and how can the contemporary understanding of culture be integrated within the currently dominant approach in acculturation research, which I have identified as John Berry's bidimensional acculturation framework and model. This question further led me to consider a more general issue of what changes during acculturation. A question which is well known in acculturation literature, however, one that is usually answered without reference to any theory of culture (see the criticism on under-theorization of acculturation research mentioned in the state-of-the-art section). Consequently, I have set the aim of designing an acculturation model which fits the contemporary understanding of culture, and is based on a concrete conception of culture. The latter would provide a theoretically based answer to the question of what the object of acculturative change is.

Another question I became interested in regarding the concept of acculturation, relates to the dimensionality of acculturation. I have considered the question of how can or does acculturation take place, or how do people acculturate. The proposed dimensionality of acculturation concept have undergone significant changes over time, with the unidimensional model being substituted by the bidimensional acculturation model. However, although the bidimensional approach is still dominant in the field of acculturation research, the most up to date literature and research findings increasingly suggest that other ways of acculturating, not included in the two-dimensional approach, may be possible. I have aimed at including such possibilities in the acculturation model I have developed.

The contemporary understanding of culture embedded in the acculturation model which I have proposed, together with the defining elements of the acculturation process, have inclined me to consider further the perceived cultural distance as an important boundary condition of acculturation. A similar point have been raised in the literature (Demes & Geeraert, 2013), however the research on this topic remains scarce. A few existing studies focus almost exclusively on the consequences of PCD for adaptation, understood as a long-term outcome of acculturation. Because of the conceptual consideration and acculturation model I have proposed in the first paper of this dissertation, I became interested in the relationship between PCD and the extent of acculturative change.

Therefore, I have aimed at examining this relationship. Furthermore, following the contemporary understanding of culture, which stresses the idiosyncratic character of cultural knowledge and experiences, I was interested in examining how this relationship looked like when considering ethnically homogeneous group of immigrant who live in the same city. So far, all previous studies on PCD and acculturation included ethnically heterogeneous samples, and predominantly considered differences in PCD between ethnic groups following the systemic view of culture.

As noted in the state-of-the-art section, apart from issues related to the conceptualization, another point of criticism in the debate about acculturation relates to the inconclusive nature of findings obtained in acculturation studies. The area of special interest to me concerns the consequences of acculturation for health, and more specifically well-being. The question I became interested in consists of how the discrepancies in the results of research concerning the relationship between acculturation and well-being can be explained. In this regard, I have focused my attention particularly on the socio-economic status (SES), as it has been shown in previous research to be an important variable predicting immigrants' health and well-being along acculturation variables. Also, due to these findings, in the last decade SES has increasingly been included as a control variable in studies on acculturation and well-being. However, the empirical results of such studies remain unequivocal, as I described in the state-of-the-art section. Therefore, my goal has been to inquire more closely at the relationship between socio-economic status and acculturation by carefully examining the relationships between different indicators of those two constructs, as well as their role for immigrants' well-being. I have aimed at examining not only the direct, but also indirect relationships between indicators of acculturation, SES and well-being, in order to help explain the discrepant results.

❖ Chosen research approach, theoretical foundations and methods

John Berry's acculturation framework and acculturation model (Berry, 1980; Berry, 2005; Berry et al., 1989) constitute the main theoretical foundation of this dissertation project. As mentioned in the state-of-the-art section, Berry's conceptualization of acculturation process, and the model he proposed, have become the dominant approach to study acculturation. In contrast to earlier acculturation and assimilation theories, he rejected the understanding of acculturation based on the modernization paradigm, in favour of a bidimensional approach free of normative assumptions. In accordance with the early definitions of acculturation, he defines it as a process of change resulting from contact with a new culture. However, in his framework, change can unfold in different directions. Furthermore, he conceptualized assimilation as one of four acculturation strategies, and distinguished individual- and group-level acculturation. Although Berry's approach was revolutionary at the time, recently it has faced increasing criticism (see the state-of-the-art section). The first paper is centred on Berry's acculturation model. In addition to existing criticism, I provide further criticism of the model and propose a modification. The two remaining papers refer to the understanding of acculturation developed by Berry as a starting point for empirical investigations.

Another significant theoretical framework relates to the concept of culture. As previously mentioned, an outdated understanding of culture has been one of the main points of criticism of acculturation research. Particularly in the first paper I address this criticism, discuss the concept of culture, and

choose to base my conceptual proposition on the constructivist understanding of culture (Abu-Lughod, 1991; Barth, 1969; Barth, 1994; Bauman, 1999). Thereafter, culture is viewed as heterogeneous and constantly changing, and cultural knowledge as idiosyncratic. Cultural boundaries are difficult to define, and the notion of cultural groups is problematized. Furthermore, in the second empirical paper, constructivist understanding of culture provides the basis for the research questions and research design. When considering the concept of culture, I further refer to the practice approach, and regard practices as the smallest unit of social and cultural analysis (Cetina et al., 2005; Reckwitz, 2003; Schatzki, 1996). In this approach, culture is conceived as a process, and the focus lies on the carrying out of practices, on “doing culture” (Hörning & Reuter, 2004). This approach also allows the conceptualization of acculturative change, in this case changes in practices, as a result of coping with new situations, as pragmatic adjustments (Reckwitz, 2003). Practice approach is especially relevant in the first paper, which focuses on the nature of acculturation process.

One of the domains of acculturation where change can be expected are values (Schwartz et al., 2010). In the second paper, which includes analysis of value change, I refer to the theory of the content and structure of personal values developed by Schwartz (1992). He distinguishes ten basic values, defined as beliefs about desirable goals. He further proposes a circular structure of the values, reflecting the degree of their compatibility. The assumption of the universal structure and content of the proposed values has been supported by empirical findings from diverse societies around the globe (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022). The Schwartz’s catalogue of value has been extensively used in cross-cultural studies to compare countries. It is currently the most widely applied value theory in this kind of research (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022).

This dissertation includes a conceptual, as well as empirical contributions. The conceptual contribution is based on an extensive literature review of the acculturation literature, which have encompassed publications in the field of psychology, sociology and anthropology. The focus of the review lies on the understanding and conceptualization of acculturation, particularly on acculturation models and frameworks proposed within these research fields. The review covers the historical models, beginning with the works of the Chicago School of Sociology, until the most recent propositions. I have placed a special emphasis on the aspects of proposed dimensionality of the models, and the understanding of culture embedded in them. I have also reviewed empirical publications reporting findings related to such forms of acculturation as exceeding the bidimensional model. Due to the length limits in the journal where the conceptual contribution was published, the literature review was presented there in a very limited form. As per the reviewers’ suggestions, I have focused predominantly on the description of the proposed model, the rationale for it, and its implications.

The dissertation includes two empirical contributions. For the purpose of this dissertation I have collected data from the first-generation Polish immigrants living in Vienna. The choice of Polish immigrants as the research sample resulted from my good access to this group and language competences, allowing me to contact potential participants in their native language, as well as construct a questionnaire in this language. Furthermore, within migration studies, many of the analyses concerning acculturation tend to focus on the experiences of refugees and third country nationals, as well as ‘guest workers’. In contrast, less is known about the acculturation and its consequences for people migrating within the EU (Collett, 2013; Ryan, 2018). People born in Poland constitute the fourth largest immigrant group in the city of Vienna, and apart from German

immigrants, who have the benefit of sharing the same language, they form the largest immigrant group from within the European Union (Statistik Austria, 2022). A total of 307 persons participated in this dissertation research. They have been recruited through diverse methods. These included recruiting through online forums and Facebook groups, Polish formal and informal associations in Vienna, institutions such as the Polish Culture Institute in Vienna, during events for Polish immigrants, as well as through informal contacts and snow-ball sampling. The full sample has been included in the analysis described in the third paper of this dissertation. The analyses in the second paper are based on a smaller sample of 286 persons. Because this part of the research has focused on acculturative change in practices and values, and not, for example, on preferences or identification with home and host country, such a design has required participants who had migrated after their practices and values have been, at least to some degree, learned or internalized, so that an actual change can take place. Therefore, following Rudnev (2014) and the formative period hypothesis, those participants who were born in Poland, and lived there during their childhood and adolescence (until the age of 15 at least), were included in the analysis.

For the data collection I composed a questionnaire in the Polish language, which participants could complete in paper and pencil form, as well as online. It comprises of items and questions which I developed for the purpose of this research, as well as already established scales. I have used two published instruments for measuring such aspects of well-being as life satisfaction and happiness (for more information see the third paper included in this dissertation). The main acculturation measure (a battery of items), I have developed in reference to my conceptualization of acculturation and acculturation model I have proposed in the first paper included in this dissertation. The items for measuring acculturation reflect the three dimensions proposed in my model. They are supplemented by items measuring perceived cultural distance in all measured acculturation domains. Additionally, I included several single-item measures, as well as popular proxy measures of acculturation. In order to measure value acculturation, I partially adapted an established scale, partly supplementing it with additional questions (for more information see the second paper included in this dissertation). Throughout the questionnaire I applied a city scale as opposed to country scale with regard to the acculturation variables. This means that I did not refer to home and host country, or Austria and Poland, but to the region or city where the participants lived before migration and to the city of Vienna. This approach allowed me to depart from methodological nationalism for which migration studies have been strongly criticized (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002), and take into account regional cultural differences. Therefore, the sample was restricted to Polish immigrants living in the city of Vienna. The participants needed approximately 40 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The choice of the quantitative approach was based on the research questions structuring the two empirical papers. Particularly in the case of the research question posed in the third paper, it was necessary to rely on quantitative data in order to test a specific proposed pattern of relationships between variables through the use of path modelling.

❖ Discussion of the central research findings

One goal of this dissertation has been to reconsider the understanding of acculturation. I have particularly taken into consideration the issues of how people acculturate, or how might acculturation unfold, as well as what changes during acculturation. The last issue relates to the

understanding of culture, which builds a necessary foundation for any acculturation model. I focused on the acculturation framework and model proposed by John Berry (Berry, 1980; Berry, 2005; Berry et al., 1989). I have provided criticism regarding the proposed dimensionality of the model, and the understanding of culture implicit in the framework and the model. Referring to empirical research findings, as well as other conceptualizations of acculturation in the literature, I have argued that acculturation process can sometimes take on a creative form, and that this form of acculturation cannot be accommodated within the two dimensions of John Berry's acculturation model and similar models. This creative form refers to instances when individuals develop new ways of acting and living, which are neither adopted from other people, nor maintained from before the contact with a new culture. Findings illustrating this type of creative acculturation come mostly from research on multi/biculturalism (e.g. Stuart & Ward, 2011; Vietze et al., 2018) which often rely on Berry's acculturation model. I have argued that such practices pose logical and methodological problems. Furthermore, I have argued that Berry's acculturation model implicitly relies on a systemic view of culture, and reifies cultural groups. Following the criticism, I have proposed a new acculturation model, the Tridimensional Process-oriented Acculturation Model TDPOM, which extends and modifies the model proposed by John Berry. The model consists of three dimensions and integrates the constructivist understanding of culture. Following the practice approach, practices are conceived to constitute the smallest unit of cultural analysis, and therefore also the object of acculturative change (Reckwitz, 2008). Furthermore, the model departs from using cultural groups as reference points of acculturation dimensions in favour of a process-oriented approach. This means that the focus of the analysis is not upon members of which groups people become similar or dissimilar to in the course of acculturation, but what people do, and how they respond to the situation of contact with a new culture. The first dimension of the proposed model refers to the process of maintaining familiar practices, the second to the process of adopting unfamiliar practices, and the third to the process of creating novel practices. I have also discussed the potential mechanisms responsible for the creation of novelty within the acculturation process in the context of two theoretical approaches: the creative cognition approach (Ward et al., 1998) and the practice approach (Cetina et al., 2005; Reckwitz, 2003). Both approaches share some assumptions which provide further arguments for postulating that acculturation can take on a creative form. Firstly, both approaches share the view that each person has the potential to be creative, and therefore creativity can be perceived as an ordinary occurrence which does not require any qualitatively different set of skills than what is used in everyday life. Secondly, both approaches assume that new experiences which challenge habitual ways of acting and thinking, and therefore require adjustment, can facilitate creativity. I have further discussed the methodological implications of the proposed model.

This dissertation also aims to explore the boundary conditions of acculturation. Based on the definition of acculturation (Berry et al., 2016) as well as the proposed Tridimensional Process-oriented Acculturation model, I have identified the perceived cultural distance (PCD) as such a condition, and examined its role for acculturation. I have applied the newly proposed model in this research. In accordance with the contemporary understanding of culture as homogeneous and unevenly distributed, the results demonstrated that even within a single immigrant group, significant variations in the PCD, regarding different domains of practice and values, can occur. Regarding the relationship between PCD and acculturation, the findings showed that PCD is significantly associated with the extent of acculturative change. Extending findings from the previous studies (e.g. Galchenko & van de Vijver, 2007; Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009), which focused on comparisons between

different ethno-cultural groups, I have shown that this relationship is also significant when considering a single ethnic group living in one city. The acculturative change was measured regarding nine behavioural practice domains and ten values. The change in behavioural practices was measured on three dimensions, according to the Tridimensional Process-oriented Acculturation Model. Furthermore, based on the model, the first step of the measurement was examining PCD between Vienna and the place of origin in all the domains of practices and values. Subsequently, acculturative change was measured for participants who indicated that they do perceive at least some cultural differences between the contexts of interest.

In general, larger PCD was associated with greater changes in practices. This was especially true for the dimensions of adopting and creating. In most of the domains, the more differences participants perceived, the more they adopted practices from the place of settlement, and the more they developed novel practices. Regarding the dimension of maintaining, in several domains, larger PCD was associated with less maintenance of home practices, and in others with more maintenance of home practices. The results showed that the nature of acculturative change associated with the PCD varied across different practice domains, and suggest the importance of fine analysis differentiating between them.

The measurement of changes in values concentrated on their importance in Vienna and in the place of origin as perceived by study participants. Participants also indicated whether at all, and in which direction they have changed. This change was therefore operationalized as unidimensional. Similarly, as in case of practices, the larger PCD was generally associated with greater changes in value importance, regardless of the direction of this change. Nonetheless, the most prevalent participants' answer was that a given value importance had not changed for them, which corroborates the assumption that values are relatively stable personality aspects (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022). The direction and/or strength of change in value importance varied across measured values. The findings suggest that, on one hand, some of the values may be more prone to environmental cues, as the changes in their importance are of assimilative nature, and follow their perceived importance in the place of settlement. On the other hand, the direction of changes in the importance of other values was dependant on where they are perceived to be more important (place of settlement or of origin), and could unfold in both directions, suggesting their greater immunity to influence from their immediate surroundings. The reason for this immunity could potentially be their universally high desirability across the countries (comp. Borg, 2021; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001).

Within this dissertation I have also considered the consequences of acculturation for immigrants' mental health, particularly well-being, and in this context the relationship between the concept of acculturation and the concept of socio-economic status (SES). In an attempt to provide further possible explanation for the discrepant results regarding acculturation consequences for immigrants' well-being, I proposed and empirically tested a model specifying a pattern of direct and indirect relations between acculturation, socio-economic status and well-being. For this purpose, I have measured acculturation through several commonly used indicators: language proficiency, length of stay, social contacts and sense of belonging. The results demonstrated that SES, measured as subjective economic situation, is at least partially predicted by the two most popular indicators of acculturation: language proficiency and length of stay. Furthermore, both indicators, referring to structural and social aspects of acculturation, also predicted sense of belonging to the new place of settlement, a subjective indicator of acculturation. In turn, when controlling for their common predictors, both SES and belonging were independently associated with immigrants' well-being. This

result suggests that acculturation can be associated with immigrants' well-being directly, as well as indirectly through SES. It is possible that not considering and including this relationship in tested models may contribute to inconsistent research findings.

❖ Contribution of the research to the academic debate in the relevant disciplines

This dissertation is centred around the concept of acculturation, and aims to re-examine this concept from different angles. It contributes to the academic debate on acculturation in several ways.

Firstly, it responds to the longstanding, as well as recent criticism of the conceptualization of acculturation by proposing a new acculturation model. The tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model provides an alternative approach to conceptualizing acculturation by implicitly integrating the contemporary understanding of culture, and shifting the focus from cultural groups to the processes involved. The model responds to the main interdisciplinary point of criticism of acculturation research (the outdated understanding of culture and groupism), as well as to the challenge of studying acculturation in diverse contemporary societies. Furthermore, by including the third dimension, which refers to the creative form of acculturation, the model provides a new analytical dimension which can be used in empirical research, and allows the integration of some of the existing findings on biculturals and multiculturals in a more systematic way. The proposed conceptualization of acculturation further allows acculturation to be considered more broadly, and to reorient the unit of analysis from the migrant population to the whole population. In doing so, it responds to the plea for de-migrantization of research on migration and integration (Dahinden, 2016).

Secondly, the dissertation extends knowledge about the boundary conditions of acculturation, specifically about the role of PCD for acculturation. Although PCD is considered an important factor in cross-cultural adaptation (Bierwaczek & Waldzus, 2016) research regarding its role for acculturation is scarce. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, none of the existing studies have focused on the relationship between PCD and the extent of acculturative change in behavioural practices and values. This dissertation provides empirical findings which allow to fill this gap. Furthermore, the results indicate the benefits of fine analysis on item level, instead of using only an aggregated acculturation score, and to the value of using matching items for measuring PCD and acculturation in order to analyse potential moderators. Another related point is the use of subjective versus objective acculturation standards. Significant differences between participants regarding perception of cultural differences can suggest the benefits of using subjective acculturation standards in acculturation studies. They refer to what participants perceive to be common practices and beliefs in a given context/place, rather than to what can be considered as such, based on data from the population in question. Considering acculturative changes in value importance among participants, such an approach has allowed to more accurately interpret their answers. Knowing where participants perceive a given value to be more important (in the place where they come from or in Vienna) made it possible to observe that becoming more similar to people living in Vienna in practice could be related to opposite changes in value importance. And further, that for some participants assimilation and separation (becoming more similar to people from the homeplace and not new place of settlement) could be related to the same changes in value importance.

Thirdly, the empirical research unpacks the relationship between acculturation and socioeconomic status, and in doing so, it proposes a possible explanation for discrepant results concerning the relationship between acculturation and immigrant's mental health. Considering that failure to control for relevant variables such as SES, as well as variations in how acculturation is measured, have been named as potential sources of these inconsistent results, I have proposed and tested a structural model addressing those issues. The findings suggest that it is important to differentiate between different indicators of acculturation in order to accurately represent its relationship with SES, and point to the benefits of using single acculturation indicators instead of composite scores derived from multi-item scales. Furthermore, based on these findings, future studies can benefit from including the mutual relationship between SES and acculturation in tested models, rather than juxtaposing these two constructs. Careful consideration of the chosen indicators of acculturation and SES, and attention to their potential relationships in the empirically tested models, may help achieve more accurate and consistent results regarding the acculturation consequences for mental health.

The dissertation also contributes to the debate about factors important for immigrants' well-being, particularly in case of intra-EU migration. The findings suggest that financial situation plays a crucial role for the assessment of one's life satisfaction, and is still important, but less so for one's level of happiness. Furthermore, social contacts with the native population appear to strengthen the sense of belonging to the new place of settlement, which further contributes to immigrants' well-being. The level of proficiency in the language of the immigration country is another important factor, which is associated with well-being indirectly. Lastly, corroborating previous findings, the results point to the significant detrimental effect of perceived discrimination for well-being.

Another contribution of this dissertation relates to its interdisciplinary character. As already mentioned in the state-of-the-art section, and the discussion of the research questions, the concept of acculturation has a considerable history, which spans several academic disciplines. However, the different developmental trajectories within these disciplines resulted in significant disciplinary divisions in the current approach to this topic, as well as diverse terminology. A regrettable consequence of this situation is the limited knowledge transfer between scientific disciplines concerned with the adaptation of migrants (Zick, 2010, Chirkov, 2009). As previously discussed, it can be largely attributed to the differences regarding the understanding of culture, as well as terminological differences. While social sciences' growing awareness of the issues associated with the systemic view of culture, groupism and methodological nationalism resulted in shifting the attention away from the cultural dimension of immigrant adaptation, and the adoption of new terminology, the limited reflection on these issues in the field of psychology has resulted in further development of acculturation research and continuous acknowledgement of the importance of the cultural dimension in immigrants' experiences. However, acculturation research in the field of psychology has increasingly struggled with shortcomings of the established models in the face of highly diverse modern societies, and not easily categorized individuals with multicultural experiences. With the papers included in this dissertation, and particularly the proposed acculturation model, I have attempted to build a bridge between these disciplinary divisions, and bring together the best of both worlds. It is not an easy task, as such attempts can easily be rejected from both sides of this division for not committing enough to one approach. I can only hope that by integrating the contemporary understanding of culture into the model, and utilizing social theory such as practice theory as its theoretical foundation, I can make the acculturation concept more fit

for use again in social sciences, and solve some problems within the current acculturation research. It is, however, my experience that sometimes terminological issues can, at the outset, already hamper interdisciplinary exchange, and prevent closer analysis of the given arguments. The terms acculturation and also assimilation bring different associations depending on the scientific discipline, with its political and normative dimensions much more acutely present in the awareness of people with basic training in sociology or anthropology, contrasted with more neutral and benign associations with these terms of those trained in psychology. This has, at least, been my experience. Another example is the integration term, which is one of the key terms in the current sociological literature on migration, but can be considered only as a minor term in psychology, where its understanding has been mostly shaped by the acculturation model of Berry, where the term refers to one of four acculturation strategies. As the field of migration research, of which acculturation research is a part, constitutes an important and vivid area of research, it was of surprise to me during the work on this dissertation, to observe how difficult it is to “talk across disciplines” on this topic. I have also discovered that the level of integration of findings in this research area was lower than I would expect, especially considering cross-referencing between the social science disciplines and psychology. With this dissertation, for which I have utilized knowledge from several disciplines, I hope to contribute to a more intense interdisciplinary knowledge transfer.

- ❖ Presentation of the papers included as well as the doctoral candidate’s contribution to each paper

This dissertation includes three papers. The **first paper** constitutes a conceptual contribution. It has been published as a review article in the International Journal of Intercultural Relations under the title: Breaking the chains of two dimensions: the Tridimensional Process-Oriented Acculturation Model TDPOM. In this paper I discuss the acculturation concept and acculturation models and propose my own acculturation model. My focus in reviewing previous acculturation models, as well as describing my model, lies on the dimensionality of the acculturation process, as well as on the understanding of culture, which builds the theoretical foundation of the model. I am the sole author of this publication.

The **second paper** constitutes an empirical contribution. It is based on the data collected for this dissertation research. It focuses on the role of perceived cultural distance for the acculturation of Polish immigrants living in Vienna. It builds on the previous paper by applying the model I have developed, therefore it was important that the first paper would be published before I submit it to a journal. I have designed the research, collected and analysed the data, and written the manuscript. The **third paper** constitutes another empirical contribution. It has been published in the Journal of International Migration and Integration as a research article under the title: Examining the Relationship Between Acculturation and Socioeconomic Status and Their Role for the First Generation Polish Immigrants’ Well-Being. In this paper I use path modelling to test an empirical model, specifying a pattern of direct and indirect relationships between indicators of acculturation, socioeconomic status and well-being. The analyses are based on the data collected for this dissertation research. I am the sole author of this publication.

References

- Abu-Lughod, L. (1991). Writing against culture. In R. G. Fox (Ed.), *Recapturing anthropology : working in the present* (pp. 137-162). School of American Research Press.
<https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC00408273>
- Angelini, V., Casi, L., & Corazzini, L. (2015). Life satisfaction of immigrants: does cultural assimilation matter? *Journal of Population Economics*, 28(3), 817-844. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00148-015-0552-1>
- Babiker, I. E., Cox, J. L., & Miller, P. M. (1980). The measurement of cultural distance and its relationship to medical consultations, symptomatology and examination performance of overseas students at Edinburgh University. *Social psychiatry*, 15, 109-116.
- Bak-Klimek, A., Karatzias, T., Elliott, L., & Maclean, R. (2015). The Determinants of Well-Being Among International Economic Immigrants: A Systematic Literature Review and Meta-Analysis. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 10(1), 161-188. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-013-9297-8>
- Bak-Klimek, A., Karatzias, T., Elliott, L., & MacLean, R. (2018). The Determinants of Well-Being Among Polish Economic Immigrants. Testing the Sustainable Happiness Model in Migrant Population. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 19(6), 1565-1588. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-017-9877-7>
- Bardi, A., Buchanan, K. E., Goodwin, R., Slabu, L., & Robinson, M. (2014). Value stability and change during self-chosen life transitions: self-selection versus socialization effects. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 106(1), 131-147. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034818>
- Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries : the social organization of culture difference*. Univ.-Forl. [u.a.]. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC06751773>
- Barth, F. (1994). Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity. In H. Vermeulen (Ed.), *The anthropology of ethnicity : beyond "ethnic groups and boundaries"* (pp. 11-32). Het Spinhuis.
- Bauman, Z. (1999). *Culture as Praxis* <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446218433>
- Benkirane, S., & Doucerain, M. M. (2022). Considering intersectionality in acculturation: Bringing theory to practice. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 91, 150-157.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.10.002>
- Berry, J. W. (1980). Acculturation as varieties of adaptation. In A. M. Padilla (Ed.), *Acculturation: Theory, models and findings* (pp. 9-25). Westview.
- Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 697-712.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.07.013>
- Berry, J. W. (2009). A critique of critical acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(5), 361-371. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.06.003>
- Berry, J. W., Kim, U., Power, S., Young, M., & Bujaki, M. (1989). Acculturation Attitudes in Plural Societies. *Applied Psychology*, 38(2), 185-206. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1989.tb01208.x>
- Berry, J. W., Sam, D. L., Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2016). Theoretical perspectives. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology* (pp. 11-29).
<https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781316219218.003>
- Bhugra, D., & Jones, P. (2001). Migration and mental illness. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, 7(3), 216-222. <https://doi.org/10.1192/apt.7.3.216>
- Bierwiazek, K., & Waldzus, S. (2016). Socio-Cultural Factors as Antecedents of Cross-Cultural Adaptation in Expatriates, International Students, and Migrants. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 47(6), 767-817. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022116644526>

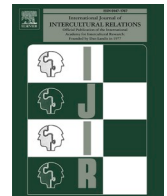
- Boas, F. (1966). The aims of ethnology. In *Race, Language and Culture* (pp. 647-659). Free Press.
https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C1825939
- Borg, I. (2021). Age and the subjective importance of personal values. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 173, 110605. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.110605>
- Broesch, J., & Hadley, C. (2012). Putting culture back into acculturation: Identifying and overcoming gaps in the definition and measurement of acculturation. *The Social Science Journal*, 49(3), 376-385. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2012.02.004>
- Brubaker, R. (2002). Ethnicity without groups: European Journal of Sociology. *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, 43(2), 163-189.
<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0003975602001066>
- Caetano, R., & Clark, C. L. (2003). Acculturation, alcohol consumption, smoking, and drug use among Hispanics In K. M. Chun, P. Balls Organista, & G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement, and applied research* (pp. 223-239). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1037/10472-000>
- Cetina, K. K., Schatzki, T. R., & Von Savigny, E. (2005). *The practice turn in contemporary theory*. Routledge.
- Chirkov, V. (2009). Critical psychology of acculturation: What do we study and how do we study it, when we investigate acculturation? *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(2), 94-105. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2008.12.004>
- Chirkov, V. (2022). Alfred Schutz's 'Stranger', the theory of sociocultural models, and mechanisms of acculturation. *Culture & Psychology*, 0(0), 1354067X221103991.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067x221103991>
- Dahinden, J. (2016). A plea for the 'de-migrantization' of research on migration and integration. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 39(13), 2207-2225.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2015.1124129>
- Demes, K. A., & Geeraert, N. (2013). Measures Matter. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 45(1), 91-109. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022113487590>
- Doucerein, M., Dere, J., & Ryder, A. G. (2013). Travels in hyper-diversity: Multiculturalism and the contextual assessment of acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37(6), 686-699. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2013.09.007>
- Ferguson, G. M., Bornstein, M. H., & Pottinger, A. M. (2012). Tridimensional acculturation and adaptation among Jamaican adolescent-mother dyads in the United States. *Child Dev*, 83(5), 1486-1493. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01787.x>
- FitzGerald, D. S. (2015). The sociology of international migration. In C. Brettell & J. F. Hollifield (Eds.), *Migration theory : talking across disciplines* (Third edition.. ed., pp. 115-147). Routledge.
<https://doi.org/https://doi-org.uaccess.univie.ac.at/10.4324/9781315814933>
- Galchenko, I., & van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2007). The role of perceived cultural distance in the acculturation of exchange students in Russia. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 31(2), 181-197. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2006.03.004>
- Gamsakhurdia, V. L. (2019). Proculturation: Self-reconstruction by making "fusion cocktails" of alien and familiar meanings. *Culture & Psychology*, 25(2), 161-177.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067x19829020>
- Hofstede, G. H., & Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*. SAGE Publications.
https://books.google.at/books?id=w6z18LJ_1VsC
- Hörning, K. H., & Reuter, J. (2004). Doing Culture: Kultur als Praxis. In H. H. Karl & R. Julia (Eds.), *Doing Culture* (pp. 9-16). transcript Verlag. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1515/9783839402436-001>
- Koneru, V. K., Weisman de Mamani, A. G., Flynn, P. M., & Betancourt, H. (2007). Acculturation and mental health: Current findings and recommendations for future research. *Applied and Preventive Psychology*, 12(2), 76-96.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appsy.2007.07.016>

- Lönnqvist, J.-E., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., & Verkasalo, M. (2011). Personal Values Before and After Migration. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2(6), 584-591.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611402362>
- Lönnqvist, J.-E., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., & Verkasalo, M. (2013). Rebound Effect in Personal Values. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 44(7), 1122-1126.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022113480040>
- Lönnqvist, J.-E., Leikas, S., Mähönen, T. A., & Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. (2015). The mixed blessings of migration: Life satisfaction and self-esteem over the course of migration. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 45(4), 496-514. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2105>
- Lopez-Class, M., Castro, F. G., & Ramirez, A. G. (2011). Conceptions of acculturation: a review and statement of critical issues. *Soc Sci Med*, 72(9), 1555-1562.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2011.03.011>
- Marin, G., Sabogal, F., Marin, B. V., Otero-Sabogal, R., & Perez-Stable, E. J. (1987). Development of a Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanics. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 9(2), 183-205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07399863870092005>
- Matsudaira, T. (2006). Measures of psychological acculturation: a review. *Transcult Psychiatry*, 43(3), 462-487. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461506066989>
- Meissner, F., & Heil, T. (2021). Deromanticising integration: On the importance of convivial disintegration. *Migration Studies*, 9(3), 740-758. <https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnz056>
- Moyerman, D. R., & Forman, B. D. (1992). Acculturation and Adjustment: A Meta-Analytic Study. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 14(2), 163-200.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/07399863920142001>
- Nesdale, D., & Mak, A. S. (2003). Ethnic identification, self-esteem and immigrant psychological health. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27(1), 23-40.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767\(02\)00062-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(02)00062-7)
- Reckwitz, A. (2003). grundelemente einer Theorie sozialer Praktiken. *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 32(4), 282.
- Reckwitz, A. (2008). *Unscharfe Grenzen: Perspektiven der Kultursoziologie* (2., unveränderte Auflage 2010). transcript Verlag.
- Rogler, L. H., Cortes, D. E., & Malgady, R. G. (1991). Acculturation and mental health status among Hispanics. Convergence and new directions for research. *Am Psychol*, 46(6), 585-597.
<https://doi.org/10.1037//0003-066x.46.6.585>
- Rudmin, F. (2009). Constructs, measurements and models of acculturation and acculturative stress. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(2), 106-123.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2008.12.001>
- Rudmin, F. W. (2003). Critical History of the Acculturation Psychology of Assimilation, Separation, Integration, and Marginalization. *Review of General Psychology*, 7(1), 3-37.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.7.1.3>
- Rudnev, M. (2014). Value Adaptation Among Intra-European Migrants. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 45(10), 1626-1642. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022114548482>
- Sagiv, L., & Schwartz, S. H. (2022). Personal Values Across Cultures. *Annu Rev Psychol*, 73, 517-546.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-020821-125100>
- Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2010). Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet. *Perspect Psychol Sci*, 5(4), 472-481.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610373075>
- Sam, D. L., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Ryder, A. G., Hassan, G., Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2016). Health. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology* (pp. 504-524).
<https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781316219218.029>
- Schatzki, T. R. (1996). *Social practices: A Wittgensteinian approach to human activity and the social*. Cambridge University Press.

- Schmitter Heisler, B. (2008). The sociology of Immigration. In C. B. Brettell, Hollifield, J.F. (Ed.), *Migration theory : talking across disciplines* (2. ed., pp. 83-111). Routledge.
<https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC06272932>
- Schmitz, P. G., & Schmitz, F. (2022). Correlates of Acculturation Strategies: Personality, Coping, and Outcome. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 53(7-8), 875-916.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00220221221109939>
- Schumann, M., Bug, M., Kajikhina, K., Koschollek, C., Bartig, S., Lampert, T., & Santos-Hovener, C. (2020). The concept of acculturation in epidemiological research among migrant populations: A systematic review. *SSM Popul Health*, 10, 100539.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2020.100539>
- Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 25, pp. 1-65). Academic Press.
[https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60281-6](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60281-6)
- Schwartz, S. H., & Bardi, A. (2001). Value Hierarchies Across Cultures: Taking a Similarities Perspective. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(3), 268-290.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022101032003002>
- Schwartz, S. J., Unger, J. B., Zamboanga, B. L., & Szapocznik, J. (2010). Rethinking the concept of acculturation: implications for theory and research. *Am Psychol*, 65(4), 237-251.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019330>
- Stuart, J., & Ward, C. (2011). A Question of Balance: Exploring the Acculturation, Integration and Adaptation of Muslim Immigrant Youth. *Psychosocial Intervention*, 20(3), 255-267.
<https://doi.org/10.5093/in2011v20n3a3>
- Suanet, I., & Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2009). Perceived cultural distance and acculturation among exchange students in Russia. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 19(3), 182-197. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.989>
- Suinn, R. M., Ahuna, C., & Khoo, G. (1992). The Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale: Concurrent and Factorial Validation. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 52(4), 1041-1046. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164492052004028>
- Taušová, J., Bender, M., Dimitrova, R., & van de Vijver, F. (2019). The role of perceived cultural distance, personal growth initiative, language proficiencies, and tridimensional acculturation orientations for psychological adjustment among international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 69, 11-23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2018.11.004>
- Thomson, M. D., & Hoffman-Goetz, L. (2009). Defining and measuring acculturation: A systematic review of public health studies with Hispanic populations in the United States. *Social Science & Medicine*, 69(7), 983-991.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2009.05.011>
- van der Zee, K., & van Oudenhoven, J. P. (2022a). A dynamic approach to acculturation revisited. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 91, 110-112.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.09.005>
- van der Zee, K., & van Oudenhoven, J. P. (2022b). Towards a dynamic approach to acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 88, 119-124.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.04.004>
- Vietze, J., Juang, L., Schachner, M. K., & Werneck, H. (2018). Feeling Half-Half? Exploring Relational Variation of Turkish-Heritage Young Adults' Cultural Identity Compatibility and Conflict in Austria. *Identity*, 18(1), 60-76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2017.1410159>
- Waldram, J. B. (2009). Is there a future for "Culture" in acculturation research? An anthropologist's perspective. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(2), 173-176.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.03.004>
- Ward, C., & Kennedy, A. (1999). The measurement of sociocultural adaptation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 23(4), 659-677. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767\(99\)00014-0](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(99)00014-0)

- Ward, C., Ng Tseung-Wong, C., Szabo, A., Qumseya, T., & Bhowon, U. (2018). Hybrid and Alternating Identity Styles as Strategies for Managing Multicultural Identities. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 49(9), 1402-1439. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022118782641>
- Ward, T. B., Smith, S. M., & Finke, R. A. (1998). Creative Cognition. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of Creativity* (pp. 189-212). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/DOI:10.1017/CBO9780511807916.012>
- Waxin, M. F. (2004). Expatriates' interaction adjustment: the direct and moderator effects of culture of origin. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 28(1), 61-79. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2003.12.006>
- West, A. L., Zhang, R., Yampolsky, M., & Sasaki, J. Y. (2017). More Than the Sum of Its Parts: A Transformative Theory of Biculturalism. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 48(7), 963-990. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022117709533>
- Wiking, E., Johansson, S. E., & Sundquist, J. (2004). Ethnicity, acculturation, and self reported health. A population based study among immigrants from Poland, Turkey, and Iran in Sweden. *J Epidemiol Community Health*, 58(7), 574-582. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2003.011387>
- Wimmer, A. (2009). Herder's Heritage and the Boundary-Making Approach: Studying Ethnicity in Immigrant Societies*. *Sociological Theory*, 27(3), 244-270. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2009.01347.x>
- Yamada, A. M., Valle, R., Barrio, C., & Jeste, D. (2006). Selecting an Acculturation Measure for Use With Latino Older Adults. *Research on Aging*, 28(5), 519-561. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0164027506289721>
- Zane, N., & Mak, W. (2003). Major approaches to the measurement of acculturation among ethnic minority populations: A content analysis and an alternative empirical strategy. In K. M. Chun, P. Balls Organista, & G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement, and applied research* (pp. 39-60). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1037/10472-005>
- Zick, A. (2010). *Psychologie der Akkulturation : Neufassung eines Forschungsbereiches*. VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften / Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, Wiesbaden. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-92183-9>
- <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC08292774>

Individual papers



Review

Breaking the chains of two dimensions: The tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model TDPOM

Ina Teresa Wilczewska

Department of Sociology, University of Vienna, Rooseveltplatz 2, A-1090 Vienna, Austria

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Acculturation model
Acculturation dimensions
Culture concept
Creativity
Practice theory
Culture change

ABSTRACT

This paper considers the acculturation process and the ways in which it can unfold. The main focus is directed towards the possibility of creating novel ways of acting and living as a form of acculturation. Although this possibility has been acknowledged by researchers, it has been mostly integrated into typologies of biculturalism based on John Berry's bidimensional acculturation model, and considered to belong to integration strategy. It is argued that such an approach poses logical and methodological problems, and that the form of acculturation, where something novel is created, goes beyond the bidimensional conceptualization of acculturation. A new model extending Berry's model is proposed. It includes a third dimension which refers to the possibility of creating new ways of acting and living to the process which will be subsequently referred to as cultural creation. Distinctions and relationships with other tridimensional models and/or models including cultural creation process are discussed. Subsequently, another layer to the model is introduced which relates to the understanding of culture providing foundation for the model. Familiarity, unfamiliarity and novelty are proposed as reference points for the model's dimensions, enabling the model to move away from the systemic conception of culture and integrate the constructivist understanding of culture. The potential mechanisms responsible for the creation of novelty within the acculturation process are discussed in context of two theoretical approaches: the creative cognition approach and the practice approach.

Introduction

Paraphrasing Berry's introductory question on the topic of acculturation (cf. Berry, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010), it is reasonable to consider how individuals act when they move from a cultural context where they have been living for a longer period of time, perhaps even since they were born, to another, unfamiliar cultural context. This fundamental question of acculturation research is often answered by referring to two possible options, building the bidimensional model of acculturation based on the work of John Berry: people can "continue to act in the new setting as they did in the previous one" (Berry, 1997, p. 6) or they can adopt the way of living encountered at the new location. There can also be different patterns of combining these two possibilities, which John Berry called acculturation strategies. However, are these really all the options that individuals have, or is there possibly also a third way of how they can respond to cultural context change, besides continuing to act the same and adopting the way others act? In this paper I would like to draw attention to such a third possibility, which refers to creating new ways of acting and living as a part of the acculturation process. It has been noted that bi/multicultural people can develop their own ways of living which go beyond boundaries of concrete cultures (e.g. Kim, 2015; Stuart & Ward, 2011). However, it has been difficult to place such findings within existing theoretical

E-mail address: ina.wilczewska@univie.ac.at.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2023.101810>

Received 11 July 2022; Received in revised form 16 March 2023; Accepted 22 April 2023

Available online 5 May 2023

0147-1767/© 2023 The Author. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

frameworks for studying acculturation, a situation which has prompted some scholars to look for new conceptual solutions (e.g. West et al., 2017). The present contribution belongs to this stream of thought, and constitutes an attempt to modify the acculturation model as to be able to better integrate this third possibility.

Acculturation can be defined as the process of cultural and psychological change, resulting from contact between groups and individuals of different cultural backgrounds (Berry & Sam, 2016, p.11). Change is considered to be the key component of the acculturation concept. The other crucial component is that this change has a specific and necessary trigger, namely continuous contact with a new culture. In the present theoretical account I intend to argue that people can respond to contact with a new culture by developing new ways of thinking, feeling and acting, and that this process should be considered as one of the ways in which acculturation may take place. Therefore, I propose to extend the bidimensional acculturation model developed by John Berry by adding to it a third dimension that refers to this form of acculturation.

Another aspect I intend to discuss in the present paper is the understanding of culture, which builds a necessary foundation for every acculturation model. The concept of culture in social sciences has undergone a radical change, with the previous systemic view of culture being replaced by the constructivist view (Bauman, 1999; Wimmer, 2009). However, the dominant framework in acculturation research proposed by John Berry (2005) still implicitly relies on the systemic view. The present theoretical account is an attempt to build an acculturation model which is compatible with the current understanding of culture. The proposed solution is to focus on the processes involved in acculturative change, and not cultural groups. The process orientation of the proposed model means that the focus of the analysis is not upon members of which groups people become similar or dissimilar in the course of acculturation, but on what they do and how they respond to the situation of contact with a new culture in terms of practices

The first part of this theoretical contribution focuses on John Berry's bidimensional acculturation model, and on why and how it could be extended in order to better accommodate the form of acculturation when individuals develop new ways of living. The second part focuses on the understanding of culture, and introduces another layer to the model proposed prior. The last section presents a discussion of potential mechanisms making possible the creation of novelty within the acculturation process in the context of two theoretical approaches: the creative cognition approach and the practice approach.

John Berry's bidimensional acculturation model

In 1974, John Berry published a paper pleading for "the recognition of the psychological and cultural value of pluralism in a nation" (s. 1) and stressing the importance of ethnic identity (Berry, 1974). He outlined a taxonomy of modes of group relations in complex society, which have been later called acculturation strategies. The revolutionary aspect of the model lay in its integrating both modes of immigrants' functioning (assimilation into the mainstream and maintenance of distinct ethnic characteristics) into one framework, and treating them as parts of a broader, more general taxonomy of patterns of group relations. Four strategies corresponding to the extreme positioning on two dimensions (based on answers to the questions: (1) whether the ethnic identity and characteristic cultural features of a given group are retained; (2) whether positive intergroup relations, including positive attitudes and frequent contact are maintained) were defined and empirically verified (Berry et al., 1989): assimilation (low cultural maintenance, high contact), integration (high cultural maintenance, high contact), separation (high cultural maintenance, low contact) and marginalization (low cultural maintenance, low contact). This model, with its subsequent refinements, became one of the most widely utilized approaches to measure acculturation in psychological research (Berry, 1997) and is considered to represent the bidimensional approach to acculturation. The salient aspect of this approach is the assumption that the two dimensions are independent of one another. This contrasts with the earlier unidimensional approach, which assumed that, while adopting the host culture, immigrants simultaneously lose their heritage culture. Empirical analysis comparing the two approaches brought evidence in favour of bidimensional operationalization of acculturation compared to unidimensional operationalization as a more valid solution (Ryder et al., 2000).

Subsequently, other acculturation models retaining the bidimensional conceptualization of acculturation have been proposed (e.g. Bourhis et al., 1997; Chirkov, 2023; Navas et al., 2005; Schwartz et al., 2010). In their proposition, Bourhis et al. (1997) reformulated the question pertaining to the second dimension from Berry's model in order to better correspond to the attitudes measured on the first dimension. The new question referred to the adoption of the cultural identity of the host community instead of the maintenance of relationships and contact with other groups. This reformulation has also been later adopted by other researchers (see Ward & Kus (2012) for a comparison of different formulations).

The model proposed in this paper builds on the bidimensional model developed by John Berry and extends it, adding a third dimension which refers to the possibility of creating new ways of acting and living, which will be subsequently named cultural creation.

Cultural creation in acculturation literature and research

The idea that acculturation process can take on a creative form can be found already in early acculturation literature, as well as more recent studies, particularly in the field of bicultural research. In 1953, the Social Science Research Council (Barnett, 1954) published a paper in which cultural creativity was acknowledged as one form of acculturation:

Acculturation is, however, neither a passive nor a colorless absorption. It is a culture-producing as well as a culture-receiving process. Acculturation, particularly when not forced, is essentially creative. It is a productive process even though in consequence there may be a decrease in the number and variety of pre-existent elements. (p. 985).

The authors further specified reorganization, reinterpretation and syncretism as examples of the creative processes, and urged researchers to focus on the "generation of new and qualitatively different patterns" (p. 985). Anthropologists indeed have been

studying these kinds of processes, producing extensive literature, based primarily on qualitative data, related to key terms such as hybridity, creolization and syncretism (cf. [Canclini, 2015](#)), however, for the most part, without linking them to any acculturation models.

Furthermore, the possibility of cultural creation as a form of acculturation has been present in the earliest conception of acculturation, namely the idea of American society as a melting pot. It was an alternative way of envisioning the formation of the American nation to that of assimilation into Anglo-Saxon culture ([Gordon, 1964](#)). The idea was that, given time, and through interaction and shared experience, all the various ethnic groups living in America would eventually blend and melt together creating a new culture for everyone involved. A century later, [LaFromboise et al. \(1993\)](#) returned to this conception and named it the Fusion Model, positing that cultures sharing space “will fuse together until they are indistinguishable to form a new culture” ([LaFromboise et al., 1993](#), p. 401). Hitherto, the idea of cultural creation was considered from the group-level perspective. However, in a subsequent publication, [Hardin Coleman \(1995\)](#) translated it into the individual-level phenomenon as one of the strategies for coping with cultural diversity and labelled it the fusion strategy. This strategy is described as consisting of engagement in activities that provide the opportunity “to develop new standards of behaviour that are appropriate for a particular context” and creating “new cultural structures and beliefs” and “new ways of interaction” ([Coleman, 1995](#), p. 732). Although Coleman focused on the behaviour of individuals in his analysis, he still envisioned the outcome of the fusion strategy from the group-level perspective, with the development of the urban gay and lesbian culture provided as examples.

The individual-level perspective was initially conceptualized in reference to marginalization. Similar to Berry’s marginalization strategy, migrants were portrayed as caught between cultures, and not truly belonging to any of them ([Park, 1928](#); [Stonequist, 1935](#)). The possible way of coping with this experience hinted again towards potential cultural creation: constructing a unique identity that goes beyond a single culture ([Adler, 1977](#); [Bennett, 1993](#); [Yoshikawa, 1987](#); [Wilson, 2018](#)).

Empirical research focusing on bi/multicultural individuals provided further evidence that acculturation can be experienced as a process through which novelty is created. [Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver \(2004\)](#) conducted a study investigating which of the theoretical acculturation models present in the literature is most reflected in the implicit theories held by migrants about how they integrate multiple cultures. They considered three models in the analysis: the unidimensional, the bidimensional and the fusion model, the latter defined as picking and mixing elements from two cultures and/or creating entirely new cultural forms. The results showed that, 41 % of the participants indicated that combining cultures resulted in a mixture of them, where unique contributions of each culture was not easily determinable. Additional 8 % of the participants explicitly mentioned in interviews that this mixture amounted to creating something new, an “intercreation” ([Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004](#), p. 29), as in the baking process when adding separate ingredients produces “something very new, what you have never had before” ([Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004](#), p. 29). [Stuart and Ward \(2011\)](#) interviewed young Muslims in New Zealand and concluded that “Individuals who choose to blend their orientations effectively create a new set of ways of thinking, feeling and acting that did not belong discretely within any one of their orientations on its own” (p.261). Another example comes from the qualitative study by [Vietze et al. \(2018\)](#), who identified within the modes of combining cultural identities an integrated mode, in which participants “felt like they had fully merged different cultures into one complete hybrid” (p.66). One interviewee, referring to the cultures she identifies with through the metaphor of chairs, said “With me, this all became one entity, this third chair. I’m not between chairs. I have a third chair and that encompasses everything. It’s something new” ([Vietze et al., 2018](#), p. 66).

Cultural creation versus integration strategy

The above examples show that cases of cultural creation can be found in the personal narrations of acculturation experiences in empirical research.¹ However, these types of findings and considerations have been mostly integrated into theoretical constructs and typologies of biculturalism within the bidimensional model of acculturation. One example is the construct of Bicultural Identity Integration (BII; [Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005](#)). One of the two dimensions of BII is cultural blendedness. Blendedness refers to seeing oneself as part of a combined culture, which is a blend of different cultures or even a “third emerging culture” ([Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005](#), p.1019). Furthermore, the dimensions of BII have also been described as representing “an original and creative way of combining and synthesizing one’s two cultural backgrounds so that they are experienced as a single, individualized culture” ([Schwartz et al., 2019](#), p. 28). Another example is the recently proposed typology of multicultural identity styles with hybrid and alternating identity styles ([Ward et al., 2018](#)). The hybrid identity style “entails picking and choosing desirable elements of two or more cultures and blending them in a way that suits the acculturating individual” (p.1405). The authors further emphasize that hybrid identities reflect dynamism, flexibility and a “degree of novelty in the integration process” (p.1405). Both of these typologies explicitly include elements referring to cultural novelty, but are also based on Berry’s bidimensional acculturation model, which I consider to be problematic. In these cases, as well as others, bi/multiculturalism is conceived as an integration strategy from Berry’s model at the personal identity level (cf. [Schwartz et al., 2016](#)). It is a strategy derived from two dimensions involving strong orientation towards the heritage culture, as well as towards the host culture. The proposed typologies are an elaboration on or unpacking of this strategy, and they do not challenge the bidimensional conceptualization of acculturation. [Berry \(2012\)](#) also included the merging (hybrid) variant as

¹ Apart from psychological studies on combining identities, as mentioned earlier, there exists a vast literature within anthropology and other social science disciplines, related foremost to the concept of hybridity, where the theme of cultural creation can also be found. However, a review of the entirety of this literature exceeds the scope of this article. For an overview of the theorization of hybridity see: [Werbner and Modood \(1997\)](#); [Anthias \(2001\)](#); [Hutnyk \(2005\)](#); [Burke \(2009\)](#).

one of the two forms of the integration strategy. However, I find that it is worth considering that this form of acculturation, wherein something novel is created, goes beyond the bidimensional conceptualization of acculturation process. I intend to further consider this point from two perspectives: logical and methodological.

When considering the logical perspective, since the integration strategy is a derivative of the two dimensions: cultural maintenance and cultural contact/adoption, what it represents should also be reducible to these two dimensions. Yet, exactly the opposite is visible in the research findings, where interviewees refer to something new, a point maybe best illustrated by the popular baking analogy.² Furthermore, translations of such findings into descriptions of concepts, as recounted above, refer to a third emerging culture (Benet-Martinez & Haritatos, 2005), intercultural transformation (Kim, 2015), creative combining and synthesizing, individualized culture (Schwartz et al., 2019, p. 28) novelty as a defining quality (e.g., Ward et al., 2018), or creative synthesis (e.g. Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004), to notions which, per definition, are not reducible to other, potentially preceding elements. Sometimes, hybrid identifications or practices are portrayed through the process of picking and choosing from two cultures. Through this lens, the bidimensional model can appear sufficient to account for them, but as soon as the creative aspect is included in this process – with regard to how exactly the chosen elements of each culture come together or are blended – the bidimensional approach is not sufficient any more. For example, they can come together as seen through the synergy model, in which an added, new value arises through the combination of elements, or the transformation model, according to which the initial structure is changed. The outcomes of neither the synergy process nor the transformation process, both of which can start with a range of pre-existing elements, can be reduced back to those elements. Similar views have been voiced by Doucerain et al. (2013), who conducted a study in Montreal where they found that, when given such a possibility, participants reported a variety of hybrid identities, and in the conclusion of their study wrote: “The findings suggest that hybrid cultural identification is distinct from heritage or mainstream identifications and that it might represent a qualitatively different phenomenon rather than a mere mid-point between heritage and mainstream poles” (p.697). If what is created through the process of dealing with two or more cultures is a new value, then it cannot be reduced back to the two dimensions of maintaining heritage culture and adopting host culture. And should it reach beyond these two dimensions then it cannot be accurately represented by them.

This reasoning further leads to an important issue when looking from the methodological perspective. The use of bilinear scales, where two dimensions are measured separately, is a popular and recommended method to measure acculturation (Rudmin, 2009). Many scales, based on the bidimensional model, are constructed in this way (e.g. Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). However, since the form of acculturation, where novel ways of life and novel identities develop, goes beyond the two dimensions, it also cannot be derived from them. Combining data on the two dimensions in order to obtain scores on integration cannot produce anything beyond what was measured on these two dimensions. Therefore, when researchers apply scales measuring solely home and host orientations, they are blind to any potential forms of cultural creation.

Both groups of scholars who developed the afore discussed typologies of biculturalism also developed scales to assess it. These scales (Bicultural Identity Integration Scale BIIS and Multicultural Identity Scale MISS) measure integration/biculturalism directly, however, they are restricted to the identity domain. They include a variety of items which refer to ways of combining and managing multiple cultural identities, with some of them referring to novel and creative solutions (e.g. item from the MISS: “For me being (Chinese) and being (New Zealand) come together in a culturally novel way”). Such scales are well suited to capturing and measuring the creative aspect of acculturation. What I consider problematic, however, is that they still refer to Jon Berry’s bidimensional acculturation model as the underlying model, and to biculturalism as an integration strategy defined within this model. Due to the reasons detailed above, I am led to the conclusion that such conceptualized and measured biculturalism, as in BIIS and MISS, should not be equaled with the integration strategy from John Berry’s model. What these scales attempt to capture goes beyond what can be derived from the maintenance and contact/adoption dimensions.

The tridimensional process-oriented model of acculturation

As discussed in the previous paragraphs, acculturation process can sometimes take on a creative form, and individuals living in a diverse cultural environment can develop novel ways of living and identifying. This form of acculturation, however, cannot be accommodated within the two dimensions of John Berry’s acculturation model and other similar models. Therefore, I propose to extend the bidimensional model and add to it a third dimension, which refers to such instances. I furthermore propose shifting the focus from cultural groups a person has contact with to the underlying processes that can occur in the context of acculturation, and regard the acculturation dimensions as corresponding to those processes. Moreover, instead of commonly used heritage versus host culture as reference points for the first two dimensions, I propose to refer to familiarity versus unfamiliarity of cultural practices. These changes allow the model to accommodate the contemporary understanding of culture and avoid groupism (cf. Brubaker, 2002). The topic of culture concept and reference points for acculturation dimensions will be discussed later in more detail.

In the proposed tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model TDPOM (Fig. 1), the first dimension refers to the process of

² An analogy also used by one interviewee in the Yampolsky et al. (2013) study, and further as a quote utilized by West et al. (2017) to make the same point as in the present paper.

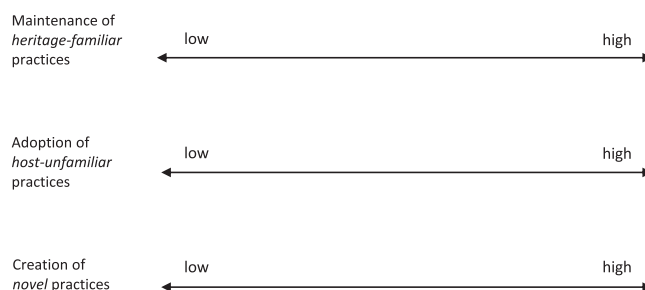


Fig. 1. The Tridimensional process-oriented Model of Acculturation.

maintaining cultural practices as it was already proposed by John Berry. The second dimension refers to the process of adopting cultural practices. It deviates from the original proposition by Berry, and relies on the reformulation proposed by Bourhis et al. (1997). The third dimension refers to the process of creating cultural practices.³ The defining aspect of this process is the emergence of novelty. However, this novelty is subjective to a given individual. A practice is conceived as being created by a given individual if he or she has not encountered this practice in such a form earlier. Therefore, it may well be that he or she, in the course of living, encounters people who perform very similar or even identical practices, but the crucial point is that this person developed the practice more or less independently from others, that he or she created it as opposed to adopting it. Adoption of practices refers to instances of including practices encountered as a result of contact with a new culture, into one's repertoire of performed practices. Maintenance of practices refers to instances when practices that have been performed earlier are still being performed or are being performed again. It can represent a lack of acculturative change, or a change in the direction of practices from the heritage culture, in the sense that their performance can be reinforced, or that the practices learned and performed earlier can be reintroduced into the repertoire of performed practices.

In contrast to the discussed bi/multicultural models, the model proposed here sees cultural creation as a separate type of process present in acculturation, qualitatively different from the other two processes: maintenance and adoption, and not reducible to them. Referring to the definition of acculturation discussed at the beginning of this paper, it can be said that first, by creating novel practices and including them in the repertoire of performed practices a person changes, and second, if this cultural creation takes place as a result of contact with a new culture, as in triggered by it, then it is reasonable to view cultural creation as a type of acculturation process. Furthermore, I also think that it can be more accurate to consider the creation of novel practices more as a coping strategy than as an expression of creativity (cf. Coleman, 1995, who writes about strategies for coping with cultural diversity). This point will be elaborated further in the section of the paper regarding the mechanism behind cultural creation.

These three processes are conceived to be conceptually independent and applying potentially to all people in a situation of prolonged contact with a new culture. What can, predictably, strongly differ between groups and individuals, is the content to which they refer, meaning what exact practices are being maintained, adopted, and/or created.

As noted earlier in footnote 3, I use the term practice in a very broad sense as understood in the practice theory, meaning the smallest unit of cultural/social analysis (Reckwitz, 2010). However, I would like to consider the question of content to which the proposed processes can refer more carefully. Schwartz et al. (2010) distinguished three acculturation domains in which acculturative change can take place: practices, identifications, and values. Here, the term practice is used in a more narrow sense, meaning practice as behaviour. The three described processes can be potentially attributed to all those three domains. Considering the cultural creation process, in the domain of practices, it can lead to novel ways of doing things, for example, novel ways of celebrating holidays, novel eating habits, or a novel clothing style. Regarding the domain of identifications, the aforementioned studies already show how individuals can create novel identities by transcending their home and host identities. Cultural creation in the domain of values is probably the most challenging to imagine. And as difficult as it could be to create a completely new value for an individual, the more likely scenario would refer to a unique value profile of a person, spanning, for example, potentially contradicting value orientations (cf. Greenholtz & Kim, 2009). With that in mind, going forward I will be using the term practice in its broad theoretical meaning, assuming that it encompasses all those acculturation domains.

Distinctions and relationships between the process-oriented model and other tridimensional models

In recent years, researchers have begun proposing acculturation models which directly address the dimensionality of acculturation, offering extended versions, often called tridimensional (e.g., Ferguson et al., 2012; Taušová et al., 2019). At their core, these models include another cultural group, the characteristics of which immigrants can maintain or adopt, conceptualizing it as the third dimension of the model. Examples include: Jamaican immigrants orienting towards Jamaican, European-American mainstream and

³ Within the current understanding of culture, several theoretical positions exist as to what constitutes culture and the smallest unit of social/cultural analysis (cf. Reckwitz, 2010). I adopt the practice theory position, which places cultural practices at the centre of analysis and treats them as the smallest unit, as opposed to, for example, signs or ideas. The assumptions of the practice theory will be discussed in more detail later in the article.

African-American cultures (Ferguson et al., 2012, Ferguson et al., 2014), Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union orienting towards Russian, Jewish and mainstream American culture (Birman et al., 2010), ethnic minority immigrants orienting towards French and English-Canadian culture besides their ethnic cultures (Doucerain et al., 2013) or international students orienting towards the heritage, host and expatriate culture (Taušová et al., 2019). The important difference between such tridimensional models and the TDPOM is their focus on the cultural groups as reference points, versus the focus on underlying processes. Although these models are called tri- or multidimensional, if we consider the processes entailed in the dimensions they include, and not the reference groups, then from this point of view such models can be still be considered bidimensional. As in the segmented acculturation by Portes and Zhou (1993), what they propose is to subdivide the culture adoption and/or maintenance dimension according to the different reference groups. Though they acknowledge the multiplicity of cultural reference groups, they do not postulate any processes that go beyond the bidimensional model. Even if orientation toward the ethnic or heritage culture is conceptualized not only as the degree of maintenance, but also as the possible degree of change, as a rule there is an already existing group or culture “out there,” which is being adopted or maintained by the given individual. No new cultural creation is specifically theorized within these models, so the process underlying the newly postulated dimension(s) is not qualitatively different from maintenance or adoption.

However, it is possible to find affinity between the third dimensions of those models, which relate this dimension to a new or hybrid cultural group, and the cultural creation dimension in the TDPOM, when looking at the creation process from the group-level perspective. For example, within research already mentioned, Taušová et al. (2019) studied expatriates, and included three acculturation orientations in the tested model: the heritage, host and expatriate orientation. The method of measuring acculturation towards the expatriate group suggests that it was assumed that a specific and distinct way of acting and thinking characterize it, and that an expatriate culture indeed exists. When viewed from the perspective of this group, the processes underlying the dimension of expatriate orientation can be cultural creation, in a sense that the expatriate culture has been created by expatriates, and the study participants belonged also to this group. However, firstly, Taušová et al. (2019) focused their research on individuals, and secondly, they focused on participants' level of similarity to the reference groups (people in my homeland, people in Netherlands and other expatriates) and not on the processes involved. Another example can be found within a study by Kim and Hou (2016), who included Chinese American orientation as a third dimension in their study. They provided further evidence that Chinese American culture can be considered to be unique and distinct from Chinese and mainstream American cultures (cf. Flannery et al., 2001). Assuming that Chinese American culture has been created by Chinese immigrants living in the U.S., the process of cultural creation lies at the foundation of this acculturation orientation. However, again, the way it was measured in the study focuses on participants' relation to already existing elements of Chinese American culture and not on the process of (co)creating them. The authors themselves refer to “adapting to Chinese American culture” (p.12).

Cultural creation at the group-level and individual-level of analysis

On a group level, the process of cultural creation could manifest in the emergence of a new culture. This is also the context in which cultural creation appears in early acculturation literature. In order to study this process, ethnographic research would likely be best suited (cf. Berry, 2005). On the individual level, the process of cultural creation can manifest in the development of new practices which can potentially, at some point, become building blocks for a wider and shared new culture. An example of such a practice can be “tiger parenting”, which, according to some scholars, can be perceived as a part of Chinese American culture (Kim & Hou, 2016). It can also be an example of a practice developed in the context of acculturation. This parenting style is characterized by high levels of both positive parenting (e.g. warmth and democratic parenting) and negative parenting (e.g. hostility, shaming and punitive parenting). It includes elements typically attributed to Chinese culture, such as strong emphasis on academic achievement, as well as to American culture, such as granting children autonomy (Kim et al., 2013), but it constitutes a distinct style compared to the classic parental styles used to described practices of European American parents. It is also a modification of typical Chinese parenting style (Cheah et al., 2013). Thus, although tiger parenting entails some elements from both heritage and host culture, it is a unique practice, constituting a new quality. For Chinese immigrants who developed this parenting style as a result of their experiences in a new cultural environment, the underlying process would be cultural creation. However, it is also possible that later, some individuals were able to observe this parenting style in other families, and then began to apply it themselves. In this case, the underlying process would be adoption.

Other models including cultural creation process and its relation to TDPOM

Other conceptual frameworks including creation process in the context of acculturation exist. Among them is the transformative theory of biculturalism introduced by West et al. (2017), which is explicitly positioned as going beyond the previous unidimensional and bidimensional models of acculturation. The theory focuses on the processes individuals use to negotiate cultural identities, and describes three such processes: hybridizing, integrating and frame switching. The hybridizing process understood as the mixing of cultures, which results in a novel product, is the one that corresponds to the cultural creation process represented in the third dimension of the TDPOM. However, the next process, frame switching, would not constitute a separate acculturation process in the logic of the proposed model. Frame switching refers to using different practices in different situations, typically practices from two or more cultures. But frame switching involves practices which a person already has in his/her repertoire because he or she kept them, adopted them or developed them. In this sense, frame switching would be a secondary process to the three processes in the proposed model. The final theorized process, integration, seems to be the most diffused. It seems to refer to reflecting on a meta-level about one's cultures, and is defined as “the process of bridging the different aspects of one's cultures together” (p. 974). Here, the relation to the TDPOM is more complex. Although the authors distinguish this process from the hybridizing process, if such integration amounts to a

unique and novel way of bridging differences for a given person, then the underlying process would be cultural creation. The person would be creating a new practice of dealing with his or her cultures. This shows that the process of hybridizing, although referring to cultural creation, is still conceptualized more narrowly in the transformative theory than the process of cultural creation in the proposed model. Furthermore, the transformative theory focuses on understanding the specific characteristics of bicultural people, differentiating them from monoculturals, and predicting the consequences of being bicultural and not as such on the process of acculturation.

Another theoretical proposition, which explicitly includes the process of cultural creation, is Gamsakhurdia's (2019) proculturation model. He proposes a new conceptualization of the acculturation process, based on a definition of culture as a "multi-self-centered semiotic field, which is populated by signs and meanings" (p. 161) and introduces a new term – 'proculturation' – as an alternative to acculturation. Only one dimension of acculturation/proculturation is postulated, and it is described as the "continuous transformation of a person's meaning system" (Gamsakhurdia, 2019, p.170) through the process of creative synthesis, where mixing of various elements produces a new element/sign that is qualitatively different from the previously existing parts. The process of creative synthesis corresponds to the cultural creation process, however, the important difference with TDPOM is that Gamsakhurdia constricts acculturation to solely one process, thereby rejecting other processes.

The acculturation model closest to the one proposed in this paper is notably that conceptualized by Flannery et al. (2001). In an attempt to explain correlation between the host and home dimensions in the sample of first and second generation Asian students in the U.S, the authors referred to the process of ethnogenesis – the creation of a new ethnicity – and postulated that Asian American acculturation transgresses the home and host orientation and cannot be reduced to it. They proposed a tridirectional model of acculturation, including home and host dimensions from the bidirectional model, as well as a third dimension, representing the development of a "unique, ethnic identity" (Flannery et al., 2001, p.1042). The examples given to support this new dimension of ethnogenesis illustrate the group-level perspective taken by the authors. The reasoning is that a group of acculturating individuals creates a new ethnicity, which they all share to an extent, such as in the case of the Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles, who identify as Chicanos. The process of ethnogenesis would therefore correspond to the cultural creation process at the group-level.

Understanding of culture and acculturation

So far I have focused on the dimensions of acculturation, and used the notion of culture more or less uncritically and without defining it. At this point, I would like to add another layer to the proposed model, and discuss the understanding of culture laying at its foundation, as well as the consequences of this understanding for the construction of the model.

Each acculturation model necessarily needs to rely on some conception of culture. The postmodern, constructivist understanding of culture, as opposed to the modern, systemic view of culture, is proposed as the foundation for the presented model. According to the systemic view, culture is a "self-enclosed, system-style totality" (Bauman, 1999, p. XXI), consisting of cultural elements, such as values and behaviours, which are highly patterned and interconnected, and exist within clear boundaries. These boundaries separate distinct cultures from one another. A culture within boundaries is thought of as homogenous and shared among its members. Consequently, members of a cultural or ethnic group are perceived as similar in their essence to each other, and distinct from people belonging to other cultural groups. Therefore, dividing people into cultural groups that can be meaningfully compared appears natural and sensible. This way of understanding culture is apparent in early definitions of acculturation (Barnett, 1954; Redfield et al., 1936) referring to the group level of analysis. It is also implicit in John Berry's acculturation framework, where he refers to two original cultural groups whose characteristics may change during the acculturation process and which can pursue different acculturation strategies according to their preferences and the goals they want to achieve (Berry, 2005, p. 702). Groups are treated here as substantial entities with common purposes and agency (cf. Brubaker, 2002, p. 164).

The systemic understanding of culture has been heavily criticized, especially since the 1980s, and by anthropologists in particular (e.g., Abu-Lughod, 1991; Barth, 1969, 1994; Appadurai, 1996; Clifford, 1988) and with it also the notion of cultural or ethnic groups. The tendency to treat internally homogeneous and clearly differentiated groups as essential elements of social life and units of social analysis to which common interest and agency can be attributed has been criticised under the term groupism (Brubaker, 2002, p.164). The newer perspective highlights the constructed character of ethnic boundaries, the heterogeneity and fluidity of cultural forms, and their uneven distribution among group members that makes cultural analysis on a group level problematic. Rather than focusing on particular characteristics of ethnic groups, the focus has been shifted to universally shared human experience, as well as to unique individual experiences (Hannerz, 1996). Within the last strain, anthropologists have emphasized that cultural knowledge and behaviors are nonuniformly distributed among individuals and subsets of individuals occupying different positions in the social field. Some of the main sites of intracultural diversity can be age, gender, occupation or social status (Benkirane & Doucerain, 2022; Romney et al., 1986). Barth (1996) pointed out that the heterogeneity and continuous transformation of culture result from the way it is reproduced. Although people learn it predominantly from others through interactions, each person carries a unique version of culture being the outcome of his/her own experiences. Consequently, the assumption of discrete, natural cultural groups has been questioned by many scholars. The dismissal of acculturation research in anthropology (Waldram, 2009) and the enduring criticism of assimilation studies in sociology (e.g., Wimmer, 2009) can also be attributed to this changed understanding of culture and problematization of the group-level analysis.

Since the postmodern approach to culture provides the foundation for the proposed tridimensional acculturation model, it seems reasonable to consider the processes represented in the model first and foremost from the individual-level perspective. Furthermore, in light of the postmodern view of culture, using cultural groups as reference points for acculturation dimensions (even at the individual-level of analysis) becomes problematic. This is because if participants are asked how similar they are to [...], or if they think the way the

[...] and insert in this place the name of a culture or ethnic group, then we suggest again that this culture or ethnic group is externally bounded, i.e. that we can distinguish people and cultural elements that belong and not belong to it, and that it is internally homogeneous, i.e. people belonging to one group do the same things in the same way. The same logic can be attributed to asking about maintenance of heritage culture practices and adoption of host culture practices, as I have previously proposed for TDPOM. An example of when group references remain valid is when inquiring about identity understood as sense of belonging to a particular group. Recognizing that cultural diversity in many places is rapidly growing, that distribution of cultural practices is complex, uneven and renders unique combinations, that individuals have unique and idiosyncratic (cultural) knowledge, experiences etc., one could ask what heritage culture or host culture really stands for in an interconnected, globalized and superdiverse world. Upon reflection of this question, I propose to anchor the dimensions of acculturation to subjective perceptions of familiarity, unfamiliarity and novelty of cultural practices, as experienced by individuals during the acculturation process. The dimension of familiarity and unfamiliarity is derived from Zygmunt Bauman's considerations as to the origins and meaning of the distinction between one's own and others' cultural communities and the perception of difference between them. In attempting to unpack this phenomenon, Bauman (1999) referred to "the degree of taming, domestication and familiarity of various (human as much as non-human) fragments of the surrounding world" as its underlying dimension (p. XXIII). At the root of the perceived cultural divisions, he saw the significant geographical distance between groups of people and, throughout much of history, the resulting slow and scarce communication between them. One's own cultural community, the "inside," concerned "humans and things seen, met, dealt or interacted with daily, intertwined with habitual routine and day-to-day activities." It was a space "where one seldom, if at all, finds oneself at a loss, feels lost for words or uncertain how to act." (Bauman, p. XXIII) The space "outside," i.e. all other communities, was the opposite of the "inside" space, related to feelings of uncertainty, hesitation and failing comprehension. It was everything unfamiliar. Bauman concludes that "whatever has come to be retrospectively dubbed as 'community' used to be brought into being by this opposition between 'right here' and 'out there,' 'inside' and 'outside'" (p. XXIII). Furthermore, nowadays, because of the possibilities of instantaneous communication, independent of or much less dependent on geographical distance, these oppositions have lost much of their once apparent meaning.

In the proposed tridimensional acculturation model, this opposition between familiar and unfamiliar is mapped into the first two dimensions of the acculturation process, maintenance and adoption. While the somewhat abstract inside-outside dichotomy cannot be any more easily comprehended in reference to the shape of the outer world, the familiar-unfamiliar distinction stands out as the clearer, more tangible and more meaningful description of the inner landscape of experience, when faced with modern reality. Moreover, the focus on the opposition between familiar and unfamiliar as perceived/experienced by an individual person allows to go beyond thinking in terms of heritage culture/s and host culture/s. From this perspective, what can be maintained by the individual are all those cultural practices that he or she perceives as familiar. Similarly, what can be adopted are all the cultural practices with which the person has come into contact following a defined period, event or point in time, for example after migration into another country, and that he/she perceives as new and unfamiliar. Hence, instead of the category "heritage culture" we now have a set of familiar practices, and instead of the category "host culture", a set of newly encountered unfamiliar practices.⁴ The third dimension of the model, the cultural creation dimension, reaches in some ways beyond this dichotomization. It encompasses all the practices developed by a person, all significant innovations implemented to the familiar and/or newly encountered practices by the acculturating individual. In this sense, it brings to the set of practices known to a person as novel practice, which is created by this person herself/himself and thus is not adopted from elsewhere.

Returning to the group level analysis, the question can be posed if it is at all possible to talk about group level acculturation and how a sense of commonality and community can be achieved in light of the postmodern view of culture. The idiosyncratic character of cultural knowledge does not preclude the possibility of people finding similarities in their experiences. People can still share similar experiences related to the process of acculturation, regarding what they find familiar or unfamiliar, and how they cope with these experiences, possibly leading to a sense of community. The important point, however, is that it should not be assumed that these similar experiences and sense of community go necessarily along the lines of national or ethnic cultures. In this sense, postmodern understanding of culture leads to the acknowledgment that groups cannot be taken for granted, and that they should not be presupposed (Brubaker, 2002). Instead, theoretical models and empirical research should be open to the possibility that other characteristics than country of birth or mother tongue, or a combination of them, may also form a base to identify common experiences and to distinguish groups (cf. Wimmer, 2009), and that common experiences can be restricted to specific domains. Therefore, it is also possible to consider the proposed acculturation model and its dimensions from the group-level perspective, however it remains open to analysis whether such perspectives would indeed fit a given situation, and along which lines groups' boundaries could be drawn.

Mechanisms behind the third (Creation) dimension of acculturation

Since the cultural creation dimension of acculturation constitutes the new proposition, and extends the bidimensional model, it is of interest to consider the potential mechanisms behind it. Why and how can novelty be produced within the acculturation process? In the following section, potential explanations within two theoretical approaches will be presented. The first will refer to the creative cognition approach, a popular approach within the discipline of psychology, used for studying creativity resulting from multicultural experience. The second explanation will be based on the practice theory, a type of social theory which has gained increasing attention since the end of the 20th century in many social science disciplines including sociology. The second account will be broader than the

⁴ Since there can potentially be multiple degrees of familiarity, familiar and unfamiliar is not a clear-cut distinction, but rather a continuum. Criteria for establishing a boundary thus need to be specifically defined for purposes of concrete empirical inquiries.

first, since practice theory is preferred as the basis for the proposed model.

The creative cognition approach

The cognitive view of creativity assumes that creative thinking is based on ordinary thinking processes and knowledge of the relevant domain, and that no qualitative differences in thinking exist between highly creative and non-creative people, so that everyone is capable of being creative (Weisberg, 2010). Furthermore, mundane and extraordinary creative performance are parts of one continuum of cognitive functioning. Individual differences in creativity can be understood “in terms of variations in the use” of concrete cognitive processes (Ward et al., 1999, p. 191). Such processes encompass e.g. associations, transformations, syntheses or extensions of existing cognitive schemes (Ward et al., 1999). Moreover, the creative cognition approach acknowledges that external or internal factors can influence the likelihood of any individual generating something novel. The emphasis on the ordinary character of creative processes and the possible effect of external factors makes this approach suitable for analysing acculturating individuals. The situation of context change and increased exposure to a range of new, unfamiliar stimuli can be considered as potentially affecting the cognitive processes of individuals in a way that results in generating novelty. So, the answer to the first question, why is novelty produced, would be that the new external factors stimulate people’s cognitive processes in such a way that it enhances their natural predisposition for generative thinking. Furthermore, people make use of this type of thinking while adjusting to the new environment. With time, utilising generative thinking skills can become a chronically accessible strategy for an individual. Consistent with this perspective, Chang et al. immigrants (Chang et al., 2014; Falavarjani & Yeh C. J., 2018; Lee & Kim, 2011; Simonton, 1997, 1999; Tadmor et al., 2012).

Researchers have proposed and tested several mechanisms, such as conceptual expansion (Leung et al., 2008), ideational fluency (Saad et al., 2012), integrative complexity (Tadmor et al., 2012) and cognitive flexibility (Aytug et al., 2018), through which experience with multiple cultures can foster creative performance. In the case of cognitive flexibility, interacting with people from different cultures who respond differently to similar situations can make individuals aware of having many options when choosing how to behave (Aytug et al., 2018). Subsequently, individuals can challenge their internalized culture-specific assumptions, and their routinized responses to situations can be destabilized. They can integrate and combine new ideas into existing cognitive structures and make novel connections between them (Maddux et al., 2010). Besides the effect of knowledge expansion, the differences in general cognitive processing of information can also account for higher domain-general creativity among bicultural people. The relatively more complex and integrative information processing style of biculturals, resulting from the constant comparing, integrating and negotiating between two or more cultural contexts, can become a common way of interacting with the world (Tadmor et al., 2012, p. 523). The above-mentioned examples provide the answer to the second question as to how novelty could be produced.

Practice theory⁵

The notion of creativity lies at the core of creative cognition approach. However, as mentioned earlier, developing novel practices, especially in the context of acculturation, could also be considered as a form of coping with new situations caused by the contact with a new culture. Practice theory provides a base for such understanding.

Practice theory places all that is cultural and social (since the two elements can’t be separated) into everyday life practices. This goes together with the understanding of culture as a process. The notion of ‘doing culture’, often used in studies utilizing the practice approach, assumes the literal meaning, that the focus of (cultural) analysis lies on the practices carried out by the members of the group under study (and not on these members per se) (Hörning & Reuter, 2004). In this sense, culture is defined as a practice (in general) or as a set of (some concrete) practices (Swidler, 2001). Furthermore, cultural identity is understood as an “unfinished, bricolage-shaped combination of various, complexes of practices” (Reuter, 2004, p. 239, my translation). What is a practice? Practice is an organized nexus of activities, a set of actions (Schatzki, 2001b).

Practice theorists distinguish between practice as a coordinated entity or a block, and practice as a performance. In the first case, a practice is seen as a pattern consisting of several components linked in certain ways, such as: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, things and their use, and background knowledge, for example, a way of cooking or consuming (Reckwitz, 2002). In the second case, practice as performance “refers to carrying out of practices” (Warde, 2005, p. 134). This could be, for example, a concrete act of consumption or a concrete act of cooking which represents this certain way of consuming goods or cooking.

Although practices can be understood as routines (Reckwitz, 2002) learned through participation in shared practices from childhood onward, and can be very stable throughout the lifespan of an individual, practices can also be changed and transformed, if they, for example, do not fit a given situation (Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2017). The newer theoretical contributions to practice theory emphasize that practice should be conceived of as a contingent accomplishment. One major source of this contingency is the contextuality of practices (Reckwitz, 2003). While performing a practice, participants need to adjust to situational necessities and possibilities. The context in which a practice is performed includes constraints, as well as possibilities for the “transformative interventions of participants” (Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2017, p. 10). Therefore, according to practice approach, the novelty produced by individuals within the acculturation process would occur as a response to the new, unfamiliar situations they face, and the challenges these situations pose to their typical practices. Novelty would be the result of the “everyday crisis of routines, [...] constellations of

⁵ This term doesn’t designate a unified theory, but a family of conceptions sharing some basic assumptions (cf. Schatzki, 2001a).

interpretative indeterminacy and of the inadequacy of knowledge with which the agent, carrying out a practice is confronted in the face of a 'situation' (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 255). Furthermore, the novelty inherent in the response takes the form of a "pragmatic innovation" (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 256). Practice theory does not see the source of innovativeness in the individual features of the person, nor in the deliberate action of an individual to be creative. The source of inventive action rests in the logic of practice itself, which allows and forces a person to change his or her behaviour to break the routine, in order to adjust when confronted with a challenging situation. This mechanism can be likened to a coping strategy, more than to being creative. Moreover, innovativeness (creation) is seen as something inherent to the practice itself, and not as the property of the individual, insofar as novelty can be produced by anyone participating in the practice.

Shove et al. (2012) proposed a model of how practices emerge, persist and disappear. Their main assumption is that this happens as links between elements defining a practice are constantly being established, sustained and broken. In this sense, a practice persists when similar elements are linked together in the same way over and over again (Shove et al., 2012). When existing or new elements are combined in a novel way, a new practice emerges. These novel combinations are made while a practice is carried out, i.e. through performance. Maller and Strengers (2013) used this model to analyse the changes in everyday practices of immigrants from Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Italy living in Australia, related to the use of energy and water. Several examples provided by the authors show how elements from existing practices performed in the country of origin become integrated with the local form encountered in Australian context, creating what they call a hybrid entity. Those entities were neither the replication of practices performed by them before the migration, nor the complete adoption of practices observed in the place of settlement. Through adjustment to the local conditions, such as the availability of dishwashers and washing machines, their earlier practices were transformed, yielding novel practices.

Because a practice is always performed in a specific space and time, "when understandings, materials, practitioners and activities come together in a particular way" (Hui, 2017, p. 55) it can never be carried out in exactly the same way. Hence, any practice is necessarily characterized by continuous internal variation (Hui, 2017), and each performance includes some amount of change and transformation. In this sense, Hörning (2004) defines the repetition of a practice as the re-creation of the same state in a different context. However, depending on the expected level of similarity, one can conceive of two performances as the same thing, or not (Hörning, 2004). Therefore, in the definition of the cultural creation dimension of the proposed acculturation model, the expression "significant innovation," used in reference to a practice, indicates a form of a (necessarily fuzzy) boundary between the re-creation of the same state and the creation of a new state/practice.

The two presented approaches, creative cognition and practice theory, differ in their theoretical position as to what constitutes the smallest unit of analysis and where they locate "the site of the cultural". For creative cognition it is in the cognitive processes, while for practice theory it is in the practices (cf. Reckwitz, 2003). However, they also converge on at least two points. Firstly, both conceive of creativity as something ordinary, not requiring any qualitatively special set of skills apart from what is utilised in everyday life, just the use of common cognitive processes or the pragmatic readjustment of actions, correspondingly. Secondly, both approaches view the situation of migration, or more general context change, as the trigger for processes resulting in the potential creation of new cognitive structures or new practices respectively. This trigger comes in the form of new experiences, challenging previous cognitive schemes/practices, and encouraging or requiring adjustment and change in the functioning of the individual. This is why it is reasonable to view cultural creation as a type of acculturation process, as well as one of the dimensions of acculturation.

Conclusions and implications for future research

I have argued that apart from adopting unfamiliar or maintaining familiar ways of living, people can develop new ways as a result of contact with a new culture, which are neither adopted nor maintained. I also argued that Berry's bidimensional acculturation model cannot account for such eventualities, and that research tools based on the model are blind to such a possibility. I proposed to extend the bidimensional acculturation model by adding to it a third dimension, and called this proposition the tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model. I further proposed to base this extended model on a postmodern understanding of culture, and to focus on the underlying process in the context of acculturation instead of on the involved cultural groups. In conclusion, I would like to discuss the implications of the proposed model for acculturation research.

Firstly, the model provides a new analytical dimension which can be used in empirical research in order to study the acculturation process more comprehensively. As discussed earlier, research and measures based on the bidimensional acculturation model are at risk of being blind to the possibility of individuals creating new cultural practices, a "third value", during the acculturation process. The proposed model provides a conceptual base for acculturation measures, including such options and a category for analysing gathered data. Conceiving of cultural creation as a distinct dimension of acculturation allows the integration of some of the existing research findings on biculturals or multiculturals in the acculturation model in a more systematic way. Secondly, redefining the reference points of the acculturation dimensions allows conceptualizing acculturation in a way that fits contemporary societies. Considering that societies become increasingly diverse, with people from multiple cultural backgrounds living together (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2022; Vertovec, 2007) as well as that high mobility and growing interconnectedness facilitate regular contact with diverse practices for increasing number of people, making their cultural makeup more idiosyncratic (Hannerz, 1996), applying categories of unfamiliar and familiar practices may be more useful than defining a mainstream or heritage cultural group (e.g. Doucerain et al., 2013). Thirdly, the present theoretical account allows the consideration of acculturation concept more broadly, and to potentially reorient the unit of analysis from the migrant population to the whole population (cf. Dahinden, 2017). The acculturation model presented here, with dimensions defined through familiarity, unfamiliarity and novelty of cultural practices, takes on a very generic character. The advantage of abandoning cultural groups as reference points and focusing on the processes, apart from adhering to the contemporary anthropological views on culture, allows the model to be flexibly applied to various scales of analysis and contexts. The three types of

acculturation processes postulated here: maintenance, adoption and creation, can potentially be observed not only in the case of individuals moving to a new country, but also to a new city, neighbourhood, school or company. This theoretical perspective makes it possible to discuss acculturation not only in the context of international migration or ethnic minorities. The precondition to study the acculturation process conceptualized in such a way is limited to the individual's subjective perception of differences in terms of familiarity versus unfamiliarity between contexts where he or she moves. Consequently, this means that even migration between continents wouldn't in itself provide enough reason to discuss acculturation if the new and old context of living wouldn't differ (on dimensions/domains of interest) in the perception/experience of the people in question. Furthermore, there would be nothing inherent in the move itself to trigger an acculturative change, and any observed change would necessarily have a different source than the acculturation. On the other hand, moving from the countryside to a city, different neighbourhood, or having a new employer could all be reasons to study acculturation if an individual notices significant differences in practices in the old and the new place of settlement or place of work, which could trigger a change in his or her way of living (repertoire of performed practices).

One methodological implication of this reasoning is that the first step in an acculturation research should be to examine participants' subjective perception of differences in different domains between the contexts of interest. Furthermore, any analysis of the acculturation process should be then restricted to those domains in which differences are perceived. Another implication relates to the process focus of the model. The researchers should inquire how individuals have changed as a result of contact with a new culture, and not solely to which groups they are more similar to, or practices of which groups they perform. This change could be further analysed along the three dimensions of the proposed model, focusing on what practices individuals have maintained, adopted, or created in the course of acculturation. As noted earlier, when studying identity, group references may be inevitable, but even in this case, it is possible to focus on the processes involved in negotiating multiple and/or novel identities rather than on group labels.

The operationalization of the proposed dimensions, especially the cultural creation dimension, would necessarily be dependent on the investigated domain. As previously mentioned, some questionnaires on multicultural identity already entail items referring to cultural creation in this domain (e.g. Ward et al., 2018). Regarding practices understood as behaviors, the items would need to refer to novel ways of acting individuals developed as a result of contact with a new culture. Qualitative research focusing on individuals' lived experience of acculturation would be especially well suited to provide more in-depth knowledge about the nature of the cultural creation process. Through quantitative research, the relative prevalence of the proposed cultural creation process and its relationship with other processes and constructs could be tested.

One criticism that could be raised is that the generic character of the model makes it less useful in explaining typically migratory experiences. However, redefining migratory phenomena in more generic terms, by going back to the underlying process and the meaning behind distinguishing one's own and other's cultural community, does not limit the explanatory capacities of the model. The model can still be applied to studies focusing on international migration or ethnic minorities, but it can also be applied to studies investigating people without such backgrounds. In this sense, the present theoretical proposition responds to the plea for demigranticization of research on migration and integration, and attempts to escape the "nation-state- and ethnicity-centered epistemology" which naturalizes migration- and ethnicity-related differences (Dahinden, 2017). Consequently, applying the proposed model in research allows to gather data in an open manner, which doesn't require presupposing culture-based lines of differences and focusing on a concrete population segment.

Funding sources

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

References

- Abu-Lughod, L. (1991). Writing against culture. In R. C. Fox (Ed.), *Recapturing anthropology: Working in the present* (pp. 137–162). Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.
- Adler, P. (1977). Beyond cultural identity: Reflections on cultural and multicultural man. In *Culture learning: Concepts, application and research*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Alkemeyer, T., & Buschmann, N. (2017). Learning in and across practices. In A. Hui, T. Schatzki, & E. Shove (Eds.), *The nexus of practices: Connections, constellations and practitioners* (pp. 8–23). New York: Routledge.
- Anthias, F. (2001). New hybridities, old concepts: The limits of 'culture'. *Ethnic and racial studies*, 24(4), 619–641. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870120049815>
- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Arends-Tóth, J., & van de Vijver, F. J. (2004). Domains and dimensions in acculturation: Implicit theories of Turkish-Dutch. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 28(1), 19–35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2003.09.001>
- Aytug, Z. G., Rua, T., Barazeal, D. V., Almaraz, J. A., & González, C. B. (2018). A socio-cultural approach to multicultural experience: Why interactions matter for creative thinking but exposure don't. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 64, 29–42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2018.03.004>
- Barnett, H. (1954). Acculturation: An Exploratory Formulation The Social Science Research Council Summer Seminar on Acculturation, 1953: Comment. *American Anthropologist*, 56(6), new series, 1000–1002. Retrieved from www.jstor.org/stable/664756.
- Barth, F. (1969). Introduction. In F. Barth (Ed.), *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference* (pp. 1–38). London: Allen & Unwin.
- Barth, F. (1994). Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity. In H. Vermeulen, & C. Govers (Eds.), *The anthropology of ethnicity: Beyond ethnic groups and boundaries* (pp. 11–32). Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis.
- Bauman, Z. (1999). *Culture as praxis* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446218433>.
- Benet-Martínez, V., & Haritatos, J. (2005). Bicultural Identity Integration (BII): Components and socio-personality antecedents. *Journal of Personality*, 73(4), 1015–1049. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2005.00337.x>
- Benkirane, S., & Doucerain, M. M. (2022). Considering intersectionality in acculturation: Bringing theory to practice. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 91, 150–157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.10.002>
- Bennett, J. (1993). Cultural marginality: Identity issues in intercultural training. In R. M. Paige (Ed.), *Education for the intercultural experience* (pp. 109–1135). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press.

- Berry, J. W. (1974). Psychological aspects of cultural pluralism: Unity and identity reconsidered. *Topics in Culture Learning*, 2, 17–22.
- Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 46(1), 5–68. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1997.tb01087.x>
- Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 697–712. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.07.013>
- Berry, J. W. (2012). Integration as a mode of immigrant acculturation. In E. Grigorenko (Ed.), *Handbook of US immigration and education* (pp. 41–57). New York: Springer.
- Berry, J. W., Kim, U., Power, S., Young, M., & Bujaki, M. (1989). Acculturation attitudes in plural societies. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 38(2), 185–206. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1989.tb01208.x>
- Berry, J., & Sam, D. (2016). Theoretical perspectives. In D. Sam & J. Berry (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology* (Cambridge Handbooks in Psychology, pp. 11–29). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9781316219218.003.
- Birman, D., Persky, I., & Chan, W. Y. (2010). Multiple identities of Jewish immigrant adolescents from the former Soviet Union: An exploration of salience and impact of ethnic identity. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 34(3), 193–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0165025409350948>
- Bourhis, R. Y., Moïse, L. C., Perreault, S., & Senécal, S. (1997). Towards an interactive acculturation model: A social psychological approach. *International Journal of Psychology*, 32(6), 369–386. <https://doi.org/10.1080/002075997400629>
- Brubaker, R. (2002). Ethnicity without groups. *European Journal of Sociology/ Archives Européennes De Sociologie*, 43(2), 163–189. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003975602001066>
- Burke, P. (2009). *Cultural hybridity*. UK: Polity Press.
- Canclini, N. G. (2015). Hybridity. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 448–452). Elsevier. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.12091-4>.
- Chang, J.-H., Hsu, C.-C., Shih, N.-H., & Chen, H.-C. (2014). Multicultural families and creative children. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 45(8), 1288–1296. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022114537556>
- Cheah, C. S., Leung, C. Y., & Zhou, N. (2013). Understanding "Tiger Parenting" through the perceptions of Chinese Immigrant Mothers: Can Chinese and U.S. parenting coexist? *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, 4(1), 30–40. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031217>
- Chirkov, V. (2023). Alfred Schutz's 'stranger', the theory of sociocultural models, and the mechanisms of acculturation. *Culture & Psychology*, 29(1), 116–138. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135406722110399>
- Clifford, J. (1988). *The predicament of culture*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Coleman, H. L. K. (1995). Strategies for coping with cultural diversity. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 23(4), 722–740. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000095234011>
- Dahinden, J. (2017). Transnationalism reloaded: the historical trajectory of a concept. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(9), 1474–1485. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1300298>
- Douceraïn, M., Dere, J., & Ryder, A. G. (2013). Travels in hyper-diversity: Multiculturalism and the contextual assessment of acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37(6), 686–699. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2013.09.007>
- Falavarjani, & Yeh, C. J. (2018). The impact of acculturation identification and acculturative stress on creativity among Iranian immigrants living in Malaysia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(13), 2219–2239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2017.1366301>
- Ferguson, G. M., Bornstein, M. H., & Pottinger, A. M. (2012). Tridimensional acculturation and adaptation among Jamaican adolescent-mother dyads in the United States. *Child Development*, 83(5), 1486–1493. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2012.01787.x>
- Ferguson, G. M., Iturbide, M. I., & Gordon, B. P. (2014). Tridimensional (3D) acculturation: Ethnic identity and psychological functioning of tricultural Jamaican immigrants. *International Perspectives in Psychology: Research, Practice, Consultation*, 3(4), 238–251. <https://doi.org/10.1037/ipp0000019>
- Flannery, W. P., Reise, S. P., & Yu, J. (2001). An empirical comparison of acculturation models. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(8), 1035–1045. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167201278010>
- Gamsakhurdia, V. L. (2019). Proculturation: Self-reconstruction by making "fusion cocktails" of alien and familiar meanings. *Culture & Psychology*, 25(2), 161–177. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354067219829020>
- Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American life. The role of race, religion and national origin*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Greenholtz, J., & Kim, J. (2009). The cultural hybridity of Lena: a multi-method case study of a third culture kid. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33, 391–398.
- Hannerz, U. (1996). *Transnational connections: Culture, people, places*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hörning, K. H. (2004). Soziale Praxis zwischen Beharrung und Neuschöpfung. Ein Erkenntnis- und Theorieproblem. In K. H. Hörning, & J. Reuter (Eds.), *Doing culture. Neue Positionen zum Verhältnis von Kultur und sozialer Praxis* (pp. 19–39). Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.
- Hörning, K. H., & Reuter, J. (2004). Doing culture Kultur als Praxis. In K. H. Hörning, & J. Reuter (Eds.), *Doing culture. Neue Positionen zum Verhältnis von Kultur und sozialer Praxis* (pp. 1–15). Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.
- Hui, A. (2017). Variation and the intersection of practices. In A. Hui, T. Schatzki, & E. Shove (Eds.), *The nexus of practices: connections, constellations and practitioners* (pp. 8–23). New York: Routledge.
- Hutnyk, J. (2005). Hybridity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28(1), 79–102. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0141987042000280021>
- Kim, S. Y., & Hou, Y. (2016). Intergenerational transmission of tridimensional cultural orientations in Chinese American Families: The role of bicultural socialization. *J Youth Adolesc*, 45(7), 1452–1465. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-016-0423-4>
- Kim, S. Y., Wang, Y., Orozco-Lapray, D., Shen, Y., & Murtuza, M. (2013). Does "Tiger Parenting" Exist? parenting profiles of Chinese Americans and adolescent developmental outcomes. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, 4(1), 7–18. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0030612>
- Kim, Y. Y. (2015). Finding a "home" beyond culture: The emergence of intercultural personhood in the globalizing world. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 46, 3–12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2015.03.018>
- LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H., & Gerton, J. (1993). Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 114(3), 395–412. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.114.3.395>
- Lee, H., & Kim, K. H. (2011). Can speaking more languages enhance your creativity? Relationship between bilingualism and creative potential among Korean American students with multicultural link. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 50(8), 1189–1190. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2011.01.039>
- Leung, A. K.-y., Maddux, W. W., Galinsky, A. D., & Chiu, C.-y. (2008). Multicultural experience enhances creativity: The when and how. *American Psychologist*, 63(3), 169–181. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.63.3.169>
- Maddux, W. W., Adam, H., & Galinsky, A. D. (2010). When in Rome. Learn why the Romans do what they do: How multicultural learning experiences facilitate creativity. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(6), 731–741. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167210367786>
- Maller, C., & Strengers, Y. (2013). The global migration of everyday life: Investigating the practice memories of Australian migrants. *Geoforum*, 44, 243–252. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2012.09.002>
- Navas, M., García, M. C., Sánchez, J., Rojas, A. J., Pumares, P., & Fernández, J. S. (2005). Relative acculturation extended model (RAEM). *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(1), 21–37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.04.001>
- Park, R. E. (1928). Human migration and the marginal man. *American Journal of Sociology*, 33(6), 881–893.
- Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1993). The new second generation: segmented assimilation and its variants. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530(1), 74–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716293530001006>
- Reckwitz, A. (2002). Toward a theory of social practices: A development in culturalist theorizing. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5(2), 243–263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13684310222225432>
- Reckwitz, A. (2003) Grundelemente einer Theorie sozialer Praktiken: Eine sozialtheoretische Perspektive, *Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 34(4), 282–301. Retrieved from <http://www.zfs-online.org/index.php/zfs/article/view/1137/>.
- Reckwitz, A. (2010). *Unscharfe Grenzen: Perspektiven der Kultursoziologie* (2nd ed.). Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

- Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M. (1936). Memorandum on the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist*, 38, 149–152.
- Reuter, J. (2004). Postkoloniales doing culture. Oder: Kultur als translokale Praxis. In K. H. Hörning, & J. Reuter (Eds.), *Doing culture. Neue Positionen zum Verhältnis von Kultur und sozialer Praxis* (pp. 19–39). Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.
- Romney, A. K., Weller, S. C., & Batchelder, W. H. (1986). Culture as Consensus: A Theory of Culture and Informant Accuracy. *American Anthropologist*, 88(2), 313–338. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/677564>.
- Rudmin, F. W. (2009). Constructs, measurements and models of acculturation and acculturative stress. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(2), 106–123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2008.12.001>
- Ryder, A. G., Alden, L. E., & Paulhus, D. L. (2000). Is acculturation unidimensional or bidimensional? A head-to-head comparison in the prediction of personality, self-identity, and adjustment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79(1), 49–65.
- Saad, C. S., Damian, R. I., Benet-Martínez, V., Moons, W. G., & Robins, R. W. (2012). Multiculturalism and creativity: Effects of cultural context, bicultural identity, and ideational fluency. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 4(3), 369–375. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.79.1.49>
- Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2010). Acculturation: When individuals and groups of different cultural backgrounds meet. *Perspectives on psychological Science*, 5(4), 472–481. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610373075>
- Schatzki, T. R. (2001a). Introduction: Practice theory. In T. R. Schatzki, C. Knorr, & E. von Savigny (Eds.), *The practice turn in contemporary theory* (pp. 10–23). London, New York: Routledge.
- Schatzki, T. R. (2001b). Practice mind-ed orders. In T. R. Schatzki, C. Knorr, & E. von Savigny (Eds.), *The practice turn in contemporary theory* (pp. 50–63). London, New York: Routledge.
- Schwartz, S. J., Birman, D., Benet-Martínez, V., & Unger, J. (2016). Biculturalism: Negotiating multiple cultural streams. In S. J. Schwartz, & J. Unger (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Acculturation and Health*. Oxford University Press.
- Schwartz, S. J., Meca, A., Ward, C., Szabó, Á., Benet-Martínez, V., Lorenzo-Blanco, E. I., & Zamboanga, B. L. (2019). Biculturalism dynamics: A daily diary study of bicultural identity and psychosocial functioning. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 62, 26–37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2018.12.007>
- Schwartz, S. J., Unger, J. B., Zamboanga, B. L., & Szapocznik, J. (2010). Rethinking the concept of acculturation: Implications for theory and research. *American Psychologist*, 65(4), 237–251. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019330>
- Shove, E., Pantzar, M., & Watson, M. (2012). The dynamics of social practice: Everyday life and how it changes. Sage Publications.
- Simonton, D. K. (1997). Foreign influence and national achievement: The impact of open milieus on Japanese civilization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72(1), 86–94. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.72.1.86>
- Simonton, D. K. (1999). Origins of genius: Darwinian perspectives on creativity. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190215217.013.3>
- Stonequist, E. V. (1935). The problem of marginal man. *American Journal of Sociology*, 41(1), 1–12.
- Stuart, J., & Ward, C. (2011). A question of balance: Exploring the acculturation, integration and adaptation of Muslim immigrant youth. *Psychosocial Intervention*, 20(3), 255–267. <https://doi.org/10.5093/in2011v20n3a3>
- Swidler, A. (2001). What anchors cultural practices. In T. R. Schatzki, C. Knorr, & E. von Savigny (Eds.), *The practice turn in contemporary theory* (pp. 83–101). London, New York: Routledge.
- Tadmor, C. T., Galinsky, A. D., & Maddux, W. W. (2012). Getting the most out of living abroad: Biculturalism and integrative complexity as key drivers of creative and professional success. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 103(3), 520–542. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029360>
- Tausová, J., Bender, M., Dimitrova, R., & van de Vijver, F. (2019). The role of perceived cultural distance, personal growth initiative, language proficiencies, and tridimensional acculturation orientations for psychological adjustment among international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 69, 11–23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2018.11.004>
- van der Zee, K., & van Oudenhoven, J. P. (2022). Towards a dynamic approach to acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 88, 119–124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2022.04.004>
- Vertovec, S. (2007). Super-diversity and its implications. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6), 1024–1054. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870701599465>
- Vietze, J., Juang, L., Schachner, M. K., & Werneke, H. (2018). Feeling Half-Half? Exploring relational variation of Turkish-Heritage Young Adults' cultural identity compatibility and conflict in Austria. *Identity*, 18(1), 60–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2017.1410159>
- Waldram, J. B. (2009). Is there a future for "Culture: In acculturation research? An anthropologist's perspective. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33, 173–176. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.03.004>
- Ward, C., & Kus, L. (2012). Back to and beyond Berry's basics: The conceptualization, operationalization and classification of acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36(4), 472–485. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2012.02.002>
- Ward, C., & Rana-Deuba, R. (1999). Acculturation and adaptation revisited. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 30(4), 422–442. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022199030004003>
- Ward, C., Tseung-Wong, C. N., Szabo, A., Qumsey, T., & Bhowon, U. (2018). Hybrid and alternating identity styles as strategies for managing multicultural identities. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 49(9), 1402–1439. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022118782641>
- Ward, T. B., Smith, S. M., & Finke, R. A. (1999). Creative cognition. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Handbook of creativity* (pp. 189–212). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Warde, A. (2005). Consumption and theories of practice. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 5(2), 131–153. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540505053090>
- Weisberg, R. (2010). The study of creativity: From genius to cognitive science. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 16(3), 235–253. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286630903111639>
- Werbner, P., & Modood, T. (Eds.). (1997). *Debating cultural hybridity*. London & New Jersey: Zed Books.
- West, A. L., Zhang, R., Yampolsky, M., & Sasaki, J. Y. (2017). More than the sum of its parts: A transformative theory of biculturalism. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 48(7), 963–990. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022117709533>
- West, A. L., Zhang, R., Yampolsky, M., & Sasaki, J. Y. (2017). More than the sum of its parts: A transformative theory of biculturalism. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 48(7), 963–990. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022117709533>
- Wilson, J. L. (2018). Transcendent marginality. *Humanity & Society*, 42(3), 380–384. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0160597618762489>
- Wimmer, A. (2009). Herder's heritage and the boundary-making approach: Studying ethnicity in immigrant societies. *Sociological Theory*, 27(3), 244–270. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2009.01347.x>
- Yampolsky, M. A., Amiot, C. E., & de la Sablonnière, R. (2013). Multicultural identity integration and well-being: A qualitative exploration of variations in narrative coherence and multicultural identification. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4(126), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00126>
- Yoshikawa, M. J. (1987). The double swing model of intercultural communication between the East and the West. In D. L. Kincaid (Ed.), *Communication theory: Eastern and Western perspectives* (pp. 319–329). Academic Press.

The role of perceived cultural distance in the acculturation of Polish immigrants in Vienna

Ina Teresa Wilczewska

Abstract

So far, the role of perceived cultural distance (PCD) for acculturation has been examined predominantly in studies comparing immigrants from different ethnic groups. However, since the contemporary understanding of culture stresses the heterogeneous and idiosyncratic character of cultural knowledge it seems reasonable to expect also immigrants from the same ethnic group and living in the same place to differ regarding PCD between home and host country. The present study examines the links between PCD and acculturation of first-generation Polish immigrants living in Vienna (N=286) using the tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model (Wilczewska, 2023). Acculturation was measured through changes in behavioural practices and values. Changes in value importance were examined using SSVS with a modified rating scale. PCD was measured for each practice and each value. Findings showed that PCD varied strongly between participants as well as within participants regarding different practices and different values. PCD had a different effect on acculturative change in different domains of practice. In some domains larger PCD was associated with more adoption (especially leisure activities, communication style, work relations) in others with more maintenance (hospitality, family life). In general, larger PCD was associated with more changes in value importance. However, the direction of those changes differed for different values. For some values the change was towards greater similarity with the host society, for others change was diverging towards greater similarity to host or home society depending on where the value was perceived to be more important. Findings show the importance of PCD for individual acculturation. The effect of PCD on acculturative change interacts with the measured behavioural domains and values, suggesting the importance of detailed analysis on item level.

Introduction

Cultural distance (CD) and perceived cultural distance (PCD), meaning to what extent individuals perceive the home and host cultural environment to be different, has been analysed as a factor in cross-cultural adaptation (Bierwiazek & Waldzus, 2016). It has been most frequently investigated for expatriates and international students, and much less for first-generation migrants (Bierwiazek & Waldzus, 2016). Studies focusing on CD usually refer to broad classifications of cultures or countries on cultural dimensions such as proposed by Hofstede (2001), or objective measures such as GNP (e.g. Polek et al., 2009), which can be used on a group level. It is assumed that those measures reflect the amount of differences with which participants have to deal while adjusting to a new place of settlement. PCD, on the other hand, brings the focus to individual and subjective perception of differences and has a different value for each participant. Interestingly, it has been shown that such “objective” measures of CD and PCD do not necessarily correlate with each other (Bierwiazek & Waldzus, 2016; Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009). Furthermore, PCD is a unifactorial construct in contrast to most country-level CD measures, which are typically multifactorial (Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009), and is related to personality measures such as emotional stability, suggesting fundamental differences between those two constructs.

Although PCD is an individual-level variable, studies applying measures of PCD still tend to focus on comparing different ethnic groups, and to the best of my knowledge, no study so far has investigated associations between adaptation and PCD in an ethnically homogeneous immigrant group. Apart from the established subjective character of PCD, which suggests the possibility of meaningful differences in PCD also between members of one ethnic group, another argument for this line of thought provides the contemporary understanding of culture. Since the 1980s it has been increasingly recognized that cultural boundaries can be blurry, and that people belonging to the same ethno-cultural group can substantially differ regarding their cultural knowledge and cultural practices (e.g. Abu-Lughod, 1991; Barth, 1969; Clifford, 1988). These individual differences result from the way culture is reproduced. The cultural made up of a given person is a function of his or her unique experiences and life circumstances, rendering her/his cultural knowledge idiosyncratic (Barth, 1994). This is why it seems reasonable to expect that people belonging to the same ethnic group and moving to the same new place can nonetheless differ regarding cultural differences they perceive. Furthermore, immigrants not only come with different cultural “baggage”, but in the new place they are exposed to, diverse cultural experiences, dependent on such factors as, for example, the position they occupy in the new social field they enter, age, gender or the society segment they are most in contact with (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Romney et al., 1986).

The present study examines the links between PCD and acculturation in an ethnically homogeneous first-generation immigrant group living in one city. It aims at contributing to the scarce research on first-generation migrants in this field and to further deepen the understanding of PCD for acculturation by focusing on different acculturation domains. The focus lies on acculturative change regarding different behavioural practices and values. Furthermore, PCD is considered to be a precondition to study acculturation, and therefore applied as a filter for the measurement of acculturative change.

Perceived cultural distance and acculturation

Acculturation can be defined as the process of cultural and psychological change, resulting from contact between groups and individuals of different cultural backgrounds (Berry and Sam, 2016, p.11). Change is considered to be the key component of the acculturation concept, and individual change constitutes the core interest of an acculturation measurement (cf. Graves, 1967; Guo, Suarez-Morales, Schwartz, & Szapocznik, 2009; Miller, 2007; Stephenson, 2000.) The other crucial acculturation component is the specific and necessary trigger of this change, namely continuous contact with a new culture. In the case of immigrants, it means that the host culture with which they come into contact needs to be perceived as different from the home culture in order to trigger change in a person, because only then adaptation will be required (Demes & Geeraert, 2014). If a person does not see any cultural differences between her or his home and host culture or places of settlement then any change in practices or values will necessarily be a result of a different process than acculturation (Wilczewska, 2023). It is also reasonable to expect that the larger the cultural differences individuals perceive/experience, the more they can potentially change in a response to them, and in an effort to adapt to the new place of living (Demes & Geeraert, 2014). This is why PCD and acculturation are interrelated. Furthermore, research proves that PCD is an important antecedent variable in immigrant adaptation (Bierwiazzonek & Waldzus, 2016; Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009). However, based on the above reasoning, perception of cultural differences can be

considered not only an antecedent, but also a precondition for acculturative change, and should therefore be included in acculturation measurement.

PCD has been predominantly examined as a broad construct enclosing a large set of cultural differences. For example, (Galchenko & van de Vijver, 2007) used 22 items, and (Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009) used 16 items referring to various aspects of life. In those studies participants indicated how similar or different a given two countries are, regarding those aspects. (Cheng & Leung, 2012) adopted items (14 in total) from the acculturation index of (Ward & Kennedy, 1994) to measure PCD. In all those studies item scores were summarized into one general score, indicating PCD without differentiating between specific aspects of culture. Because of this, although the perceived differences encompass typically diverse domains such as language, social contacts, food preferences, religion, and values, it is unclear what the importance of PCD is in those specific domains for acculturation. A more fine approach was used by (Albada et al., 2021) regarding PCD in different values. They demonstrated that considering attitudes towards migrants, only PCD in some values and not others was a relevant predictor. (Demes & Geeraert, 2013, p. 93) argued that scales measuring PCD and adaptation should include matching dimensions and items in order for researchers to be able to better understand the relationship between those constructs. Such an approach allows for a detailed analysis on an item level, and may bring further insights into the role of PCD for acculturation.

Previous studies demonstrated that, in general, larger PCD is associated with poorer adaptation. Adaptation can be understood as a consequence, often a long-term outcome, of the acculturation process (Sam & Berry, 2010). Changes in behavioural practices, and in values occurring as a response to contact with a new culture, can be understood as a means of adapting to a new place of settlement. Few studies analysed PCD and adaptation relating to behavioural practices. (Suanet & Van de Vijver, 2009) examined the association between PCD and behaviours in home and host domain, such as asking for advice from other students from their home or host country, use of home and host language, or food preferences. They found that larger PCD was associated with more behaviour in home domain and less behaviour in host domain. Similarly, (Nesdale & Mak, 2003) found that larger cultural distance was associated with stronger ethnic identity, which was measured by preferences for ethnic practices such as raising children in a traditionally ethnic way. (Demes & Geeraert, 2013) developed a brief scale measuring sociocultural adaptation, referring to practices in several domains, and used matching items to measure PCD. They asked participants how easy or difficult it is to adapt in those different domains. The results showed that larger PCD was associated with more difficult adaptation. It is noteworthy that none of those studies measured how much people changed their behavioural practices in an effort to adapt, but focused mainly on cultural preferences or on the extent of difficulties in adaptation.

Values and acculturation

Values as properties of individuals and societies have been extensively utilised to compare countries and analyse cross-cultural differences. Schwartz's theory of the content and structure of personal values (Schwartz, 1992) is currently the most widely applied in cross-cultural research (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022). Schwartz distinguished ten basic values, defined as beliefs about desirable goals, forming a circular structure. The more compatible any two values are, the closer they are going around the circle, whereas the more in conflict, the further away they are. The ten values can be

grouped according to two dimensions. The first dimension captures the conflict between openness to change versus conservation, expressed by self-direction, stimulation and hedonism values versus conformity, tradition and security values. The second dimension captures the conflict between self-enhancement versus self-transcendence, expressed by power and achievement values versus, universalism and benevolence values. Values are generally regarded as stable personality characteristics, however, major life events may cause significant changes in people's values (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022). Migration can be considered such an event. So far there has been just a handful of studies analysing value change in relation to migration and acculturation. (Rudnev, 2014) demonstrated that migrants' values were associated stronger with their country of residence than with their country of birth, suggesting assimilative change in value importance following migration. (Bardi et al., 2014) used longitudinal data to analyse changes in value importance of Polish migrants in Britain. The findings showed that the importance of two values have changed significantly. Specifically, the importance of self-direction and power value significantly increased during 1,5 years of living in Britain. Similarly, a longitudinal study analysing value change in Ingrain-Finnish migrants (Lönnqvist et al., 2011) found out that 19 months after migration, the importance of several values for participants had changed compared to before migration. Furthermore, the importance of both universalism and security values increased, whereas the importance of achievement and power values decreased after migration. However, in a follow up study (Lönnqvist et al., 2013) conducted one year later, the importance of the values, which had previously changed, appeared to be returning to their baseline level, suggesting lack of a permanent change in value importance. To the best of my knowledge, no studies have so far analysed the relationship between PCD and value change. Since research findings suggest that the greater the life change, the more people's value change (Bardi et al., 2014), it seems reasonable to expect that the greater the PCD, the greater the change in value importance. However, because of the scarce research and heterogeneous findings, it is not possible to formulate a more precise hypothesis as to how the value importance of different values will change.

The current research

The present research investigates the role of PCD for acculturation. It is the first study to consider PCD among members of a homogeneous immigrant group living in one place, and to focus on the extent of acculturative change in everyday practices and not on cultural preferences or adjustment difficulties. The research applies the tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model (TDPOM) proposed by Wilczewska (2023). The model is grounded in the constructivist understanding of culture. It stresses the idiosyncratic nature of cultural knowledge, and resulting from it, the subjectivity of acculturation experiences. It postulates that the examination of perceived cultural differences between places of settlement in different acculturation domains should constitute the first step in measuring acculturation, and that any further analysis of the acculturation process should be restricted to those domains in which differences are perceived, since acculturative change can be triggered only by contact with new/different culture. Therefore, PCD can be considered as a precondition of any acculturative change. The model further specifies three dimensions of acculturative change: maintenance of heritage-familiar practices, adoption of host-unfamiliar practices and creation of novel practices.

In order to gain more precise understanding of the relationship between PCD and acculturation, the present research analyses the relationship between acculturative change in different cultural

domains, such as different practices and different values, and PCD in those domains. Referring to TDOPM (Wilczewska, 2023) changes in practices were examined regarding three acculturation dimensions: adoption of host practices, maintenance of home practices and creation of novel practices. Change in value importance have been considered to be unidimensional, ranging from becoming much more similar to the home culture to becoming much more similar to the host culture. The reasoning was that all places of settlement/locations can be placed on one dimension according to the level of importance of a given value in such place. This further means that, if a person perceives differences regarding the importance of a given value between place “a” and “b”, it implies that in one place, the value is more important than in the other. Therefore, she or he can move on the importance dimension either towards becoming more similar to the place “a” or place “b”. As per logic, it would not be possible to become simultaneously more (or also less) similar to both places.

The current research utilises a city scale instead of country scale for measuring perceived cultural distance and acculturation. This approach allows to depart from methodological nationalism, for which migration studies have been strongly criticized (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002) and to take into account regional cultural differences. Furthermore, scaling down to a city scale also allows to test the hypothesis about individual differences in PCD derived from contemporary understanding of culture in an even more conservative way.

Austria is comprised of nine federal states with diverse historical, cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Vocelka, 2011) The city of Vienna constitutes one such federal state. It is the largest and most culturally diverse city in Austria, along with having its own dialect. At the beginning of 2020, foreign born individuals accounted for 36,7% of the city’s population (Statistik Austria, 2020). First generation Polish immigrants living permanently in the city of Vienna, Austria (as opposed to circular or seasonal immigrants) participated in the study. People born in Poland constitute the fourth largest immigrant group in the city with 49,152 persons. As EU citizens, they can freely reside and work in Austria, and are entitled to social security benefits. They are also some of the best educated immigrants among the large immigrant groups in Austria (OECD, 2008).

Because the research focuses on acculturative change in practices and values, and not, for example, on preferences or identification with home and host country, such design requires participants who had migrated after their practices and values have been, at least to some degree, learned or internalized, so that an actual change can take place. Therefore, following (Rudnev, 2014) and the formative period hypothesis, those participants who were born in Poland, and lived there during their childhood and adolescence (until the age of 15 at least), were selected for the study.

Method

Sample and procedure

This cross-sectional study targeted first generation Polish immigrants living in Vienna, who lived in Poland until at least the age of 15. As immigrants can be considered a ‘hidden’ or ‘hard-to-reach’ population (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997), it was not possible to base the sampling on any official register, nor any readily-available database. Therefore, the participants were recruited in diverse ways in order to increase the likelihood of gaining access to the widest range possible. These

included recruiting through online forums and Facebook groups, Polish formal and informal associations in Vienna, institutions such as the Polish Culture Institute in Vienna, during events for Polish immigrants, as well as through informal contacts and snow-ball sampling.

A total of 286 were included in the analysis. Approximately 69% of the participants identified as female, and 31% as male. The mean sample age was 41.72 (SD = 14.09), the youngest participant was 18 and the oldest 92 years old. The average length of stay in Austria was 15.46 years (SD = 12.02) and in Vienna 15.23 years (SD = 12.01). The mean age at migration was 26.33 (SD = 7.74). The questionnaire was available in the Polish language, both in an online, as well as paper and pencil version. The majority of participants completed the questionnaire online (72%). The participants needed approximately 40 minutes to complete it.

Measures

Acculturation was measured through changes in behavioural practices and changes in value importance. Matching items were used to measure acculturation and PCD. Nine domains of behavioural practice were used in the measurement. They are listed in the following tables. Firstly, the PCD in a given domain was measured. PCD was measured by the question: *Have you noticed any differences between the place where you come from and Vienna, regarding* [here the given behavioural domain was inserted]. The expression “place where you come from” was chosen because more specific reference to a city or region in Poland was not possible, since the participants came from diverse cities, as well as rural areas in Poland. The answers were given on a 7-point scale ranging from 0 - *no differences at all* to 6 - *tremendous differences*. Secondly, participants who selected a number other than 0 were asked 3 questions referring to acculturation dimensions. The first referred to the dimension of adopting: *To what extent have you adopted the [...] observed in Vienna in your current life?* The second question to the dimension of maintaining: *To what extent have you remained by the [...] from the place where you come from?* Finally, the third question referred to the dimension of creating: *To what extent have you developed your own different [...] inspired by the places where you lived, including Vienna?* The answers were given on a 7-point scale ranging from *not at all* to *entirely*.

Changes in value importance were examined applying the Short Schwartz’s Value Survey (SSVS) with a modified rating scale. Following the German version of SSVS, the definitions of the values as provided by Schwartz were used, rather than the keywords in brackets as is the case in the original SSVS. The validation of German SSVS provided evidence for validity and reliability of such an approach (Boer, 2014). The Polish translation of value definitions was obtained by the use of the back-translation method, and compared with translations already available in the Polish academic literature on this topic (e.g. Cieciuch, 2013). Furthermore, the obtained translations were cognitively tested for their understanding. As a result, a change was made regarding the definition of hedonism, and the keywords from the original SSV were used instead of the definition due to being more informative and easier to understand. Firstly, a name of a given value and its definition was provided in a bold font. Subsequently, three questions regarding a given value were asked. As with behavioural practices, the first question referred to PCD in each value, and was formulated as follows: *Have you noticed any differences between the place where you come from and Vienna, regarding the importance of [name of the value] for people?* The same rating scale as with practices

was used. Only participants who selected a number other than 0 were asked the next two questions. The second question referred to where participants perceive a given value to be more important, in Vienna or where they come from. The third question measured the acculturative change. Participants were asked: *To what extent has the importance of [...] for you personally changed as a result of your time spent in Vienna, and in what direction?* Following that, only after the first value additional explanation was provided: *Have you become, to some extent, more similar to other people living in Vienna in this regard, or maybe more similar to people where you come from? Or maybe you haven't changed at all while living in Vienna, or the change happened in a different direction?* The answer was given on a 13-point scale, with the middle point (0) marked as *no change*, and two opposite poles signifying increasing change either to Vienna (1 to 6), with 6 on the right, and marked as *much more similar to Vienna*, or to place of origin (1 to 6), with 6 on the left, and marked as *much more similar to where I come from*. Additionally, the option *change in different direction* was provided laterally.

Results

Individual differences in PCD were examined through descriptive statistics, particularly measures of variation. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. The PCD in practices and values varies strongly between participants. For each practice, domain, as well as for each value, the range of participants' answers amounted to the maximum, meaning that for each practice, as well as each value, some participants indicated that they don't see any differences at all, and some indicated that they see tremendous differences. The highest variability in PCD, measured by standard deviation from the mean, was found in the relational domains, such as work relations, friendship and family life, and in values such as security and power. The lowest variability was found in the domain of eating habits and the universalism value.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for PCD in measured domains*

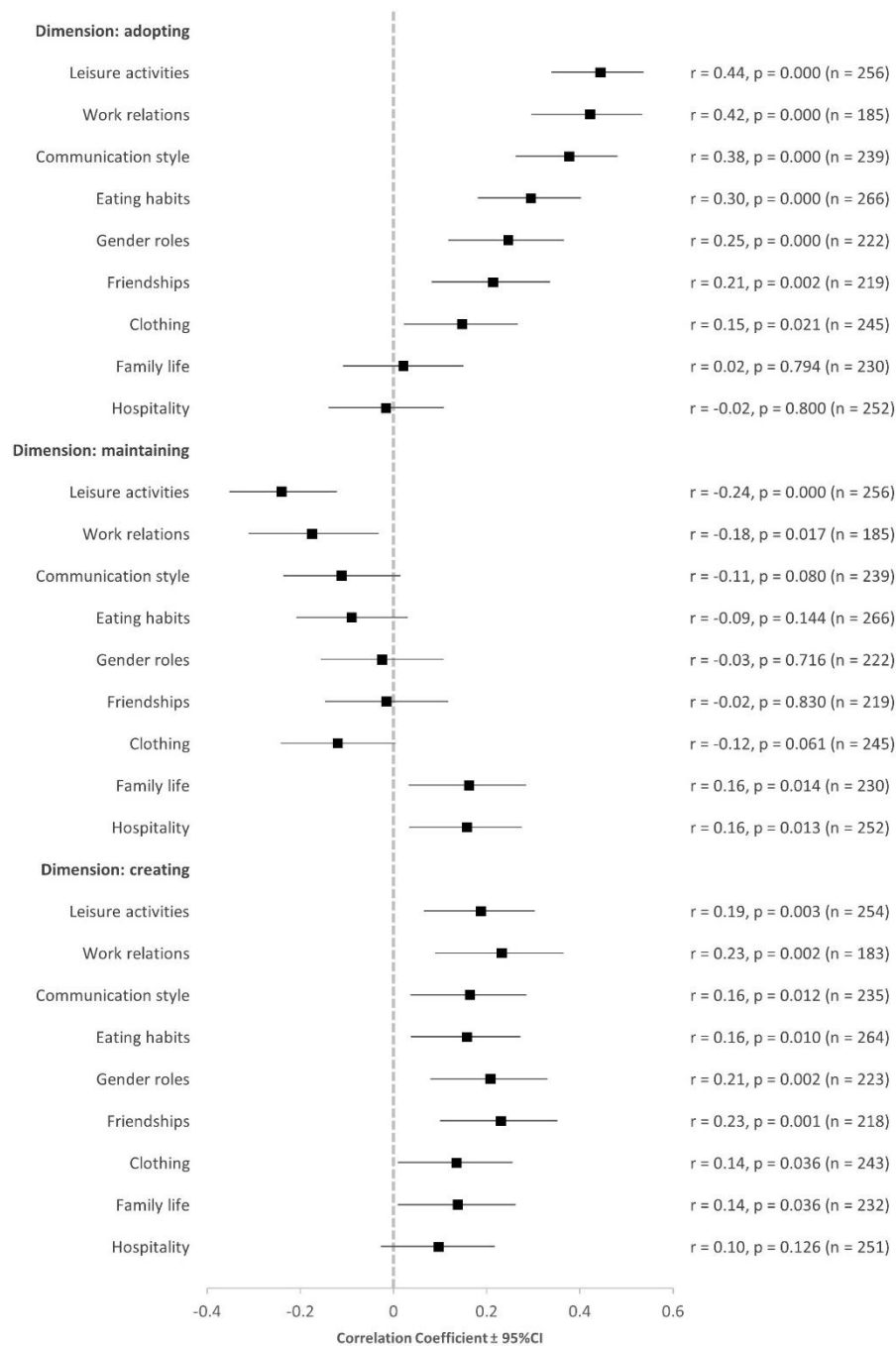
Perceived cultural distance in:	Mean	SD	Range	% no difference	% tremendous differences
Hospitality	4,61	1,633	7	5,3%	11,6%
Eating habits	4,88	1,593	7	4,2%	17,2%
Clothing	4,54	1,869	7	11,2%	14,4%
Leisure activities	5,22	1,788	7	8,1%	25,6%
Communication style	4,66	1,829	7	10,2%	14,4%
Family life	4,93	1,993	7	11,9%	23,5%
Friendships	4,27	1,977	7	15,8%	11,2%
Work relations	4,56	2,120	7	13,7%	16,5%
Gender roles	4,58	1,955	7	12,6%	15,4%
Power	4,04	2,044	7	19,3%	9,5%
Achievement	4,44	1,928	7	13,3%	13,0%
Hedonism	4,94	1,967	7	13,0%	24,9%
Stimulation	4,65	1,859	7	10,9%	14,0%
Self-direction	4,52	2,027	7	15,8%	15,1%
Universalism	5,27	1,726	7	6,0%	29,5%
Benevolence	4,43	1,938	7	12,3%	15,8%
Tradition	5,11	1,857	7	8,8%	27,4%
Conformity	3,89	2,407	7	12,6%	15,1%
Security	4,21	2,161	7	21,1%	15,1%

Note. N = 286

To assess the variation in perception of each individual, regarding PCD across domains, the range for PCD scores on the 9 practice domains, as well as the range for PCD scores on the 10 values, has been calculated for each person. Since the 7-point scale was used for PCD measurement, the range could vary from 0 to 6, with 0 meaning that the PCD was consistent across all domains, and 6 meaning that PCD regarding at least one domain amounted to 6 (tremendous differences). In most cases (25%) the range amounted to 3 points, and in 21% of cases the range amounted to maximum. Regarding values, in most cases the range amounted to maximum (24%), 3 points was the second most frequent range value (20%). For only 1% and 3% of participants the PCD was consistent across practices, domains and values respectively (with the range amounting to 0).

The relationship between PCD and the acculturative change in practices was analysed by means of correlations. In accordance with the assumptions of the TDPOM, participants who indicated that they don't see any cultural differences were excluded from the analysis. The correlation coefficients between perceived cultural distance in a given domain and changes in behavioural practices in a matching domain on three acculturation dimensions are presented in Figure 1. Regarding the adoption dimension, for all but two domains, the relationship is positive and statistically significant, meaning that the larger the PCD, the more people in this domain adopt the behaviour observed in Vienna. However, the strength of this relationship varies for different domains. Only for the domains of family life and hospitality does there appear to be no relationship between adoption and PCD. Regarding the maintenance dimension, for all but two domains, the relationship between PCD and the acculturative change is either negative, meaning that the larger the PCD, the less people maintain the behaviour from the place where they come from, or close to zero. Only for the domains of family life and hospitality is the relationship positive, meaning that, in these two domains, the larger the PCD, the more people maintain the behaviour from their place of origin. Regarding the cultural creation dimension for all domains, there is a positive association between PCD and developing new behaviours. In the case of one domain, this relationship does not reach statistical significance.

Figure 1. Relationship between the perception of cultural differences and acculturation processes by domain on three acculturation dimensions

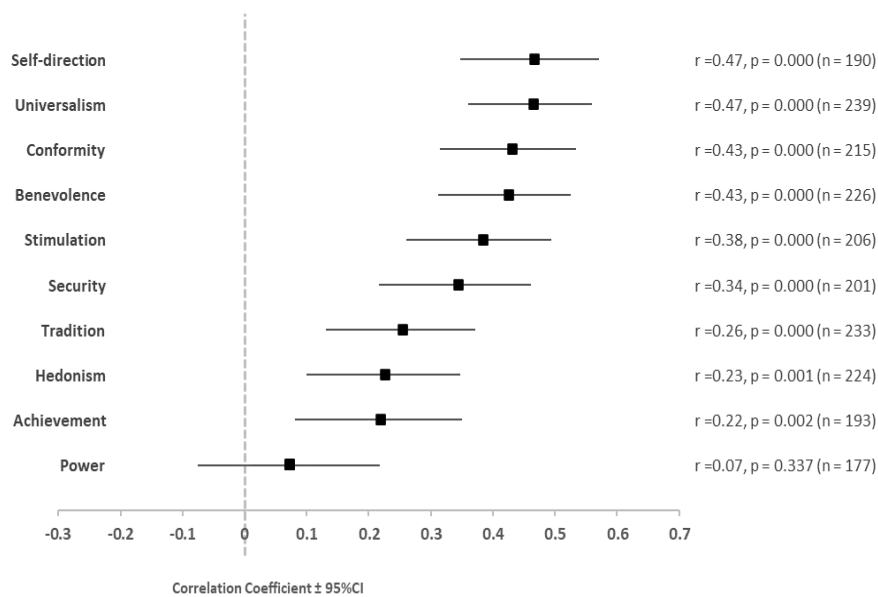


Note: The figure depicts correlation coefficients with error bars of 95% confidence intervals. The domains are sorted according to the size of the corr. coefficient on the adoption dimension.

In order to analyse the relationship between PCD and the amount of change in values by means of correlation, the answers on the 13-point scale regarding changes in the value importance had been recoded, so that the scale had only 7 points, with 0 coding no change and values 1 to 6 coding increasing change regardless of whether the change was in the direction of Vienna or place where participants came from. Participants who indicated change in a different direction than these two, as

well as participants who indicated that they don't see any differences in the importance of a given value between the two places, were excluded from the analysis. For all but one value a significant correlation between PCD in a given value and the amount of change in the importance of this value was found (Figure 2). The one value where no significant correlation was found, that being power value, was also the value with the highest percentage of participants indicating no change. It is noteworthy that for each value, the most prevalent answer was no change (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Relationship between PCD and changes in value importance by value



Note. The figure depicts correlation coefficients with error bars of 95% confidence intervals. The domains are sorted according to the size of the corr. coefficient.

The one value where no significant correlation was found, that being power value, was also the value with the highest percentage of participants indicating no change. It is noteworthy that for each value, the most prevalent answer was no change (Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage of answers “no change” regarding changes in value importance

Values	% “no change” answers	N
Self-direction	23,5	190
Universalism	21,8	239
Conformity	35,9	215
Benevolence	36,2	226
Stimulation	21,3	206
Security	31,6	201
Tradition	37,6	233
Hedonism	20,2	224
Achievement	31	193
Power	46	177

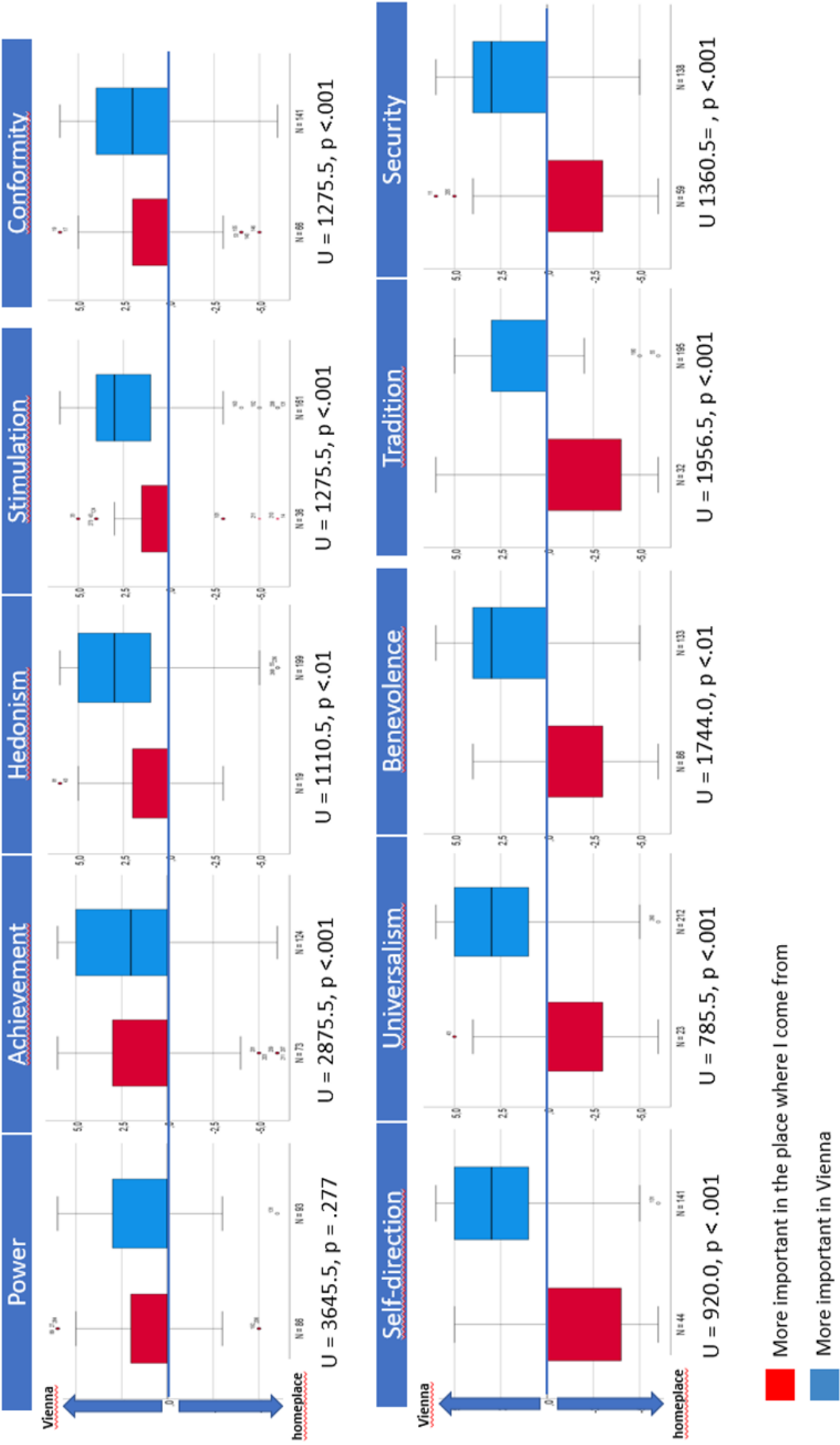
To determine whether participants who perceive a given value to be more important in Vienna differ from those who perceive a given value to be more important in the place where they come from, regarding changes in value importance, a series of tests for group comparisons were performed, and a series of box-plots was analysed. Because of a non-normal distribution of the variables, as well as large differences in the size of the compared groups, a non-parametrical Mann-Whitney U Test was utilized. The test revealed significant differences between groups regarding all but one value (Table 3). The results indicated that the scores of participants who perceived the values to be more important in Vienna were significantly higher than the scores of participants who perceived the values to be more important in their place of origin. However, because of the bipolar nature of the utilized scale, it doesn't necessarily mean that the second group changed less than the first one, but it could also mean that the groups changed in disparate directions. To determine the nature of the group differences, a visual analysis of box plots pairs showing the amount of changes for each value per group was performed (Figure 3.). To facilitate the visual analysis, variables measuring the amount of change in value importance have been recoded, with 0 coding no change, values -1 to -6 coding increasing change in the direction of participants' place of origin. and values 1 to 6 coding increasing change in the direction of Vienna. The analysis revealed that, in the case of some values, group differences resulted from the different extent of change, but in the case of other values, the differences were due to a different direction of change. In the case of the values: power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation and conformity, the box plot analysis indicated that, in majority, both groups have changed in the direction of Vienna or not at all. Whereas for participants who perceived these values to be more important in Vienna, the change was even greater, with the exception of power value, where the difference wasn't statistically significant. In the case of values: self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition and security, the box plot analysis indicated that the majority of groups changed in disparate directions. The majority of those who perceived these values to be more important in Vienna also changed in this direction or not at all, and the majority of

those who perceived these values to be more important in the place where they came from changed in this direction or not at all.

Table 3. *Results of group comparisons regarding changes in value importance per value*

	Value more important in the place of origin		Value more important in the place of settlement						
	Md	N	Md	N	U	z	p	Cohen's r	Power
Power	0	86	0	93	3645.5	-1.087	.277	.081	.18
Achievement	0	73	2	124	2875.5	-4.375	.000	.312	.99
Hedonism	3	19	3	199	1110.5	-3.002	.003	.203	.39
Stimulation	0	36	3	161	1275.5	-5.312	.000	.379	.99
Self-direction	0	44	3	141	920.0	-7.124	.000	.524	.99
Universalism	0	23	3	212	785.5	-5.404	.000	.352	.92
Benevolence	0	86	3	133	1744.0	-8.938	.000	.604	1.00
Tradition	0	195	0	32	1956.5	-3.499	.000	.233	.68
Conformity	0	66	2	141	3070.0	-4.058	.000	.282	.97
Security	0	59	3	138	1360.5	-7.556	.000	.539	1.00

Figure 3. Direction and extent of change in value importance for two groups, depending on where the value is perceived to be more important



Discussion

This research investigated the role of PCD for immigrants' acculturation, and focused on acculturative change in behavioural practices and values. Extending findings from the previous research, the results of the study show that PCD is also associated with acculturation when considering a single ethnic group living in one place. The findings confirmed that, even within a single immigrant group, a significant variation in the PCD regarding different domain of practice and different values exists. Moreover, this variation occurs not only when comparing different participants, but also when comparing PCD by a single participant in different domains of practices and in different values. These findings corroborate the understanding of culture as heterogeneous, and cultural knowledge as idiosyncratic.

For most of the practice domains, larger PCD was associated with more adoption, suggesting that the more differences participants perceive, the more they adopt practices from the new place of settlement. Fewer statistically significant associations with maintenance were found, and for most domains, they tended to be negative, suggesting that the more differences participants perceive, the less they maintain practices from the place where they come from. However, in the case of two domains, hospitality and family life, the relationship was different. Larger PCD was not associated with adoption, and was associated with more maintenance. This means that the larger the differences participants perceived in these domains, the more they wanted to preserve the practices from their place of origin. This may be related to the high value attributed to strong family ties and hospitality in Polish society, as it can be considered more traditional and collectivistic than Austrian society (Inglehart, 2023; Piurko et al., 2011). It is possible that, because of this valuation, participants consider practices in these domains as worth preserving also in a new place of settlement, and that larger PCD further reinforces the need to do so. Furthermore, in all but one practice domain larger PCD was associated with more creation. Suggesting that, the larger the PCD, the more people tend to develop their own ways of doing things, and that developing new practices may be another way, apart from adopting host practices, of adjusting and coping with those perceived differences (c.f. Wilczewska, 2023). This finding further corresponds to studies demonstrating that multicultural experiences, particularly perception and consideration of cultural differences, facilitates creativity (Maddux, Adam, & Galinsky, 2010; Cheng, Leung, 2013).

In general, and as predicted, larger PCD was associated with more changes in value importance. However, among participants who indicated perceiving cultural difference, the most prevalent answer was still no change, which corresponds to the assumption that values are a relatively stable personality aspect (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022). Furthermore, the strength and/or direction of changes in value importance depended on where the given value was perceived to be more important. In the case of half of the measured values (universalism, benevolence, self-direction, security and tradition), the direction of the change differed depending on where the value was perceived to be more important. The majority of participants became more similar to the place where they perceived these values to be more important. For the other half of the values (stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power and conformity), the dominant direction of change was towards becoming more similar to people living in Vienna, with the difference that people who perceived these values to be more important in Vienna changed even more in this direction than the ones who perceived these values to be more important in the homeplace. These findings suggest that the values belonging to

the second group are more prone to environmental cues than the values belonging to the first group. A possible explanation of these differences can be related to the general level of importance of the ten values for people across the globe, and to the changes in value importance due to age.

Considering all ten values, benevolence, self-direction, universalism and security are the top 4 most important values in societies across the globe, including European societies (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001; Borg, 2021). This indicates that they are almost universally strongly desirable, and may explain why, if the importance of these values has changed for the participants, it has changed for the majority of them towards becoming more and not less important. This may be because, even if a person perceives differences regarding these values' importance between the place where they come from and Vienna, people in both places consider them desirable, and they are being promoted in both societies. Furthermore, this means that even those participants who indicated changing towards the place where they come from, and not Vienna, due to this being where they perceive these values to be more important, they may still expect to be appraised for their values, and not rejected by the host society. It is realistic to imagine that immigrants who are, on average, more benevolent or universalistic than those native to the country, are still going to be welcomed by them. Tradition is another value belonging to the group of values which predominantly became more important. However, tradition does not occupy such a high place in the value hierarchy across the globe. It is but a value where the importance increases very strongly with age, in contrast to the other four values where the importance changes very little, or not at all with age (Borg, 2021). Therefore, it is possible that, as participants in the time between migration and survey necessarily grew older (and the average length of stay for this sample was over 15 years), they become more traditional due to age.

Stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power and conformity are values which are considered less important in societies across the globe (Schwartz and Bardi, 2001). Furthermore, in the case of the first four values, their importance significantly diminishes with age (Borg, 2021), with a sharp decline in their importance already being indicated in the 20s. (Borg, 2021). It is noteworthy that the average age of participants in this study was over 40 years. The lower general desirability of these values, and their lessening importance with age, can possibly render them less central aspects of the self, and therefore more prone to environmental cues and cultural priming (Bardi & Goodwin, 2011). It also appears that, in the case of these values, the acculturation effect is stronger than the effect of ageing, since the majority of participants who perceived these values to be more important in Vienna changed as to these values becoming more important to them.

This research has used a subjective indicator of acculturation and assimilation by asking participants if they have changed at all, and in which place they perceive a given value to be more important. This information offered the opportunity to compare the direction of a participant's change in value importance with their own (subjective) assimilation standard. The findings revealed that assimilation and separation strategies, understood as conceptualized in Berry's acculturation model (Berry, 2005), when judged by the subjective standard, can be related to different, but also the same type of changes. For some participants, becoming more similar to people living in Vienna (direction of change corresponding to the assimilation strategy by Berry), meant that a given value became more important to them, but for some participants it meant that a given value became less important to them, depending on where they perceived a given value to be more important in the first place.

Analogically, for some participants becoming more similar to people from the place where they come from (direction of change corresponding to the separation strategy by Berry), could also mean both, that a given value become more, but also less important to them, depending on where they perceived a given value to be more important.

Study limitations

There are several limitations of the current study that should be considered. The most important is its cross-sectional design, and use of exclusively subjective measures. Because the data on the amount of change were based on participants' subjective perception of this change, they are more prone to bias. The data regarding the changes in value importance could suggest a potential bias in participants' responses. Taken altogether, it appears that in the case of all values, the tendency was that, if their importance has changed at all, then they tend to become more important for the majority of participants, suggesting that it was somehow easier for participants to endorse values than to reject them. These results contradict the theoretical assumption and research findings of compatibility and conflict between values, posing that, when some values become more important, other (opposite values) should become less important (e.g. Bardi et al., 2009). One possible explanation could refer to the social desirability bias. However, this would imply that participants consider all values as socially desirable, and researchers suggest that especially the self-enhancement values (power, achievement, hedonism) but also other values are generally not considered desirable from societal perspective (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). Longitudinal design would allow to gather data on acculturative change regarding value importance based on score differences instead of subjective perception, which would be a more objective and less bias prone measure. However, the use of subjective measures corresponds better with the constructivist understanding of culture, and takes into consideration the idiosyncratic nature of cultural knowledge and experiences, as well as that people can assimilate to different segments of society (c.f. Portes & Zhou, 1993).

Further, to the best of my knowledge, as discussed earlier, this study is unique in its focus. Due to this uniqueness, all conclusions are necessarily tentative. Future studies can explore the generalizability of the obtained findings to other migrant groups and different places of settlement. Also, the use of perception of differences as a filter for measuring acculturation, while supported through theoretical considerations and the applied acculturation model, poses restrictions on possible statistical analysis through generation of non-random missing data.

Conclusions

To conclude, to the best of my knowledge, it was the first study to examine the role of PCD for acculturation within single migrant groups. Therefore, the presented analysis had largely explorative character. The findings suggest that PCD plays an important role for acculturative change, even when considering ethnically homogeneous group. Overall, the study results support the assumption that larger PCD leads to more acculturative changes. This appears to be true regarding behavioural practices as well as values. Furthermore, the nature of this relationship is not uniform across different practice domains and different values. In some practice domains, PCD was associated with more adoption of host practices, and in others, with more maintenance of home practices. For some values, change was predominantly assimilative, and for others, diverging towards greater similarity

with the home or host society, depending on where the value was perceived to be more important. These findings suggest the relevance of fine analysis for better understanding the relationship between PCD and acculturation. Therefore, future studies could benefit from using matching items for measuring PCD and acculturation, and considering not only associations between overall scores on the measurement instruments, but also looking separately on different domains.

Significant differences between participants in the perception of cultural differences can further suggest the benefits of using subjective acculturation indicators and subjective acculturation standards in future studies, referring to what participants perceive to be the common practices or values in a given place, instead of more objective standards such as derived from testing the native population.

References

- Abu-Lughod, L. (1991). Writing against culture. In R. G. Fox (Ed.), *Recapturing anthropology : working in the present* (pp. 137-162). School of American Research Press.
<https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC00408273>
- Albada, K., Hansen, N., & Otten, S. (2021). When cultures clash: Links between perceived cultural distance in values and attitudes towards migrants. *Br J Soc Psychol*, 60(4), 1350-1378.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12455>
- Bardi, A., Buchanan, K. E., Goodwin, R., Slabu, L., & Robinson, M. (2014). Value stability and change during self-chosen life transitions: self-selection versus socialization effects. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 106(1), 131-147. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034818>
- Bardi, A., & Goodwin, R. (2011). The Dual Route to Value Change: Individual Processes and Cultural Moderators. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 42(2), 271-287.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022110396916>
- Bardi, A., Lee, J. A., Hofmann-Towfigh, N., & Soutar, G. (2009). The structure of intraindividual value change. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 97(5), 913-929. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016617>
- Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries : the social organization of culture difference*. Univ.-Forl. [u.a.]. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC06751773>
- Barth, F. (1994). Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity. In H. Vermeulen (Ed.), *The anthropology of ethnicity : beyond "ethnic groups and boundaries"* (pp. 11-32). Het Spinhuis.
- Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 697-712.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.07.013>
- Bierwiazek, K., & Waldzus, S. (2016). Socio-Cultural Factors as Antecedents of Cross-Cultural Adaptation in Expatriates, International Students, and Migrants. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 47(6), 767-817. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022116644526>
- Boer, D. (2014). SSVS-G. Deutsche Kurzskaala des Wertefragebogens von S.H. Schwartz (Short Schwartz's Value Survey) In J. K. Christoph, B. Elmar, & Z. Markus (Eds.), *Psychologische und sozialwissenschaftliche Kurzskaalen : Standardisierte Erhebungsinstrumente für Wissenschaft und Praxis*. MWV Medizinisch Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft.
- Cheng, C.-Y., & Leung, A. K. y. (2012). Revisiting the Multicultural Experience—Creativity Link. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 4(4), 475-482.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550612462413>
- Cieciuch, J. (2013). Pomiar wartości w zmodyfikowanym modelu Shaloma Schwartza *Psychologia Społeczna*, 8(24), 22-41.
- Clifford, J. (1988). *The predicament of culture : twentieth-century ethnography, literature, and art*. Harvard Univ. Press. <https://ubdata.univie.ac.at/AC00441241>
- Demes, K. A., & Geeraert, N. (2013). Measures Matter. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 45(1), 91-109. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022113487590>
- Faugier, J., & Sargeant, M. (1997). Sampling hard to reach populations. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 26(4), 790-797. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1997.00371.x>
- Galchenko, I., & van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2007). The role of perceived cultural distance in the acculturation of exchange students in Russia. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 31(2), 181-197. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2006.03.004>
- Hofstede, G. H., & Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*. SAGE Publications.
https://books.google.at/books?id=w6z18LJ_1VsC
- Inglehart, R., Welzel, C. (2023). The Inglehart-Welzel World Cultural Map -World Values Survey 7. In.
- Lönnqvist, J.-E., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., & Verkasalo, M. (2011). Personal Values Before and After Migration. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2(6), 584-591.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611402362>

- Lönnqvist, J.-E., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., & Verkasalo, M. (2013). Rebound Effect in Personal Values. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 44(7), 1122-1126.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022113480040>
- Nesdale, D., & Mak, A. S. (2003). Ethnic identification, self-esteem and immigrant psychological health. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27(1), 23-40.
[https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767\(02\)00062-7](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(02)00062-7)
- Piurko, Y., Schwartz, S. H., & Davidov, E. (2011). Basic Personal Values and the Meaning of Left-Right Political Orientations in 20 Countries. *Political Psychology*, 32(4), 537-561.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2011.00828.x>
- Polek, E., Wöhrle, J., & Pieter van Oudenhoven, J. (2009). The Role of Attachment Styles, Perceived Discrimination, and Cultural Distance in Adjustment of German and Eastern European Immigrants in the Netherlands. *Cross-Cultural Research*, 44(1), 60-88.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1069397109352779>
- Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1993). The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 530(1), 74-96.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716293530001006>
- Romney, A. K., Weller, S. C., & Batchelder, W. H. (1986). Culture as Consensus: A Theory of Culture and Informant Accuracy. *American Anthropologist*, 88, 313-338.
- Rudnev, M. (2014). Value Adaptation Among Intra-European Migrants. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 45(10), 1626-1642. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022114548482>
- Sagiv, L., & Schwartz, S. H. (2022). Personal Values Across Cultures. *Annu Rev Psychol*, 73, 517-546.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-020821-125100>
- Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2010). Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet. *Perspect Psychol Sci*, 5(4), 472-481.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610373075>
- Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 25, pp. 1-65). Academic Press.
[https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60281-6](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60281-6)
- Schwartz, S. H., & Bardi, A. (2001). Value Hierarchies Across Cultures: Taking a Similarities Perspective. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 32(3), 268-290.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022101032003002>
- Suanet, I., & Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2009). Perceived cultural distance and acculturation among exchange students in Russia. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 19(3), 182-197. <https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.989>
- Vocelka, K. (2011). *Österreichische Geschichte*. C.H.Beck.
https://books.google.at/books?id=m5GbqVaXT_gC
- Ward, C., & Kennedy, A. (1994). Acculturation strategies, psychological adjustment, and sociocultural competence during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 18(3), 329-343. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767\(94\)90036-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(94)90036-1)
- Wilczewska, I. T. (2023). Breaking the chains of two dimensions: The tridimensional process-oriented acculturation model TDPOM. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 95, 101810.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2023.101810>
- Wimmer, A., & Glick Schiller, N. (2002). Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation–state building, migration and the social sciences. *Global Networks*, 2(4), 301-334.
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0374.00043>



Examining the Relationship Between Acculturation and Socioeconomic Status and Their Role for the First Generation Polish Immigrants' Well-Being

Ina Teresa Wilczewska¹ 

Accepted: 30 December 2022 / Published online: 14 January 2023
© The Author(s) 2023

Abstract

Studies investigating the relationship between acculturation, socioeconomic status (SES), and well-being in migrant populations have brought discrepant results. This paper offers a possible explanation of such discrepancies by focusing on the relationship between different indicators of acculturation and SES, in addition to their effects on well-being. Language proficiency, length of stay, social contacts, and sense of belonging were the acculturation indicators included in the analysis. SES was measured through subjective financial situation. A proposed path model specified a pattern of direct and indirect relationships between variables. The data was collected from first generation Polish immigrants living in the city of Vienna ($N=307$). Both fitted models, of life satisfaction and happiness, achieved a good fit to the data ($\chi^2(7)=6.02$, $p=.537$, $\text{SRMR}=.022$; $\chi^2(7)=7.45$, $p=.384$, $\text{SRMR}=.026$, respectively). The results demonstrated that SES, measured as subjective economic situation, is at least partially predicted by the two most popular indicators of acculturation: language proficiency and length of stay. Furthermore, both belonging and subjective financial situation were directly and positively associated with immigrants' well-being. Acculturation, therefore, can be associated with immigrant's well-being directly as well as indirectly through SES. These findings suggest that distinguishing between different indicators of acculturation is crucial for understanding the complex relationship between acculturation and SES, and that it can be beneficial for future studies to include their mutual relationships in the tested models rather than juxtaposing SES and acculturation while trying to predict well-being.

Keywords Acculturation · Belonging · Subjective economic situation · Well-being · Structural equation models (SEM) · International migration

✉ Ina Teresa Wilczewska
ina.wilczewska@univie.ac.at

¹ Department of Sociology, University of Vienna, Rooseveltplatz 2, 1090 Vienna, Austria

Introduction

Acculturation refers to the process of change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members (Berry, 2005, p. 698). At the individual level, it involves changes experienced by a given person as a result of this contact, also called psychological acculturation (Graves, 1967). The term acculturation, in relation to immigrants, is currently used predominantly in psychological studies, with sociologists and other social scientists preferring the term integration. The concept of and subsequent research on acculturation and integration have been criticized on numerous grounds, such as for masking power asymmetries and strengthening the image of the ill-fitting immigrant (Meissner & Heil, 2021). Although the present study employs the term acculturation as one of its main concepts, it still recognizes its disputed nature and shortcomings.

Migrants' health in general, and mental health in particular (including well-being considered as a form of mental health) have often been studied in relation to acculturation (Broesch & Hadley, 2012). However, several reviews have concluded that the findings of such studies brought, in general, inconclusive and contradicting results (e.g., Koneru et al., 2007; Lopez-Class et al., 2011; Sam et al., 2016).

Failure to include or control for relevant variables which can influence the relationship between mental health and acculturation such as socio-economic status (SES) has been named as one potential source of these inconsistent findings (Rudmin, 2009; Shen & Takeuchi, 2001). Research has shown that low SES is a crucial predictor of low health among minorities, often stronger than acculturation variables (Rudmin, 2009). However, when SES is not measured, its effect can be confounded with the effects of acculturation on variables of interest (Moyerman & Forman, 1992).

In the last decade, more studies have examined multivariate models including both SES as well as acculturation measures as predictors of immigrants' well-being. However, the results are still equivocal. Whereas some studies demonstrated that both SES and acculturation variables are significantly associated with immigrants' well-being (Angelini et al., 2015; Wiking et al., 2004), in others, only acculturation (Bak-Klimek et al., 2018) or only SES variables (Bak-Klimek et al., 2015; Lönnqvist et al., 2015) had a significant effect on well-being.

The variations in how acculturation is measured, as well as inadequate measurement, have been named as other potential reasons for the discrepancies in research findings on acculturation consequences. The majority of the numerous acculturation scales include multiple items and cover multiple domains of acculturation. Nevertheless, a substantial variation exists regarding the areas covered by the different scales, with some of them having no content overlap at all, which raises questions regarding the content validity (Schumann et al., 2020; Zane & Mak, 2003). In a systematic review of the measurement of acculturation in epidemiological research, Schumann et al. (2020) recommended the use of single migration-specific items as opposed to multi-item acculturation scales for studying relations between acculturation and health. They also questioned the credibility of using a single acculturation score for research analysis, calculated as a function of the answers to scale items as overly reductionistic.

In the present paper, I would like to bring attention to one further possible explanation for the discrepant results. Due to acculturation being a broad concept, with multiple possible indicators, it is possible that a pattern of relationships between some indicators of acculturation and indicators of SES exist in addition to their associations with well-being. In that case, not including such relationships in tested models could confound the results of analysis. Therefore, I propose that, in addition to including both constructs in empirical studies, their mutual relationship should also be considered.

The aforementioned studies with multivariate models mostly used regression models for their analysis, where a measure of well-being was regressed on indicators of acculturation and SES. This method prevents the specification of patterns of more complex relationships between predictors and between predictors and criterion. However, some studies utilizing structural equation modeling and including both constructs similarly did not take such patterns into consideration (e.g., Raijman & Geffen, 2018; Shen & Takeuchi, 2001). A few studies exist that included direct and indirect relationships between acculturation and SES, and between different indicators of acculturation in its models (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2012; Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2007).

The objective of the present paper is to further examine the association between acculturation, SES, and immigrant well-being by specifying and testing a pattern of direct and indirect relationships between indicators of acculturation, SES, and well-being. Furthermore, following the recommendations of Schumann et al. (2020), the paper focuses on several single indicators of acculturation, in order to clearly distinguish the unique effects of different aspects of acculturation on well-being, as well as their mutual relationships, and its associations with SES. Language proficiency, length of stay, social contacts, and sense of belonging are the acculturation variables included in the analysis. The first three variables are considered to refer to the structural and social aspects of immigrants' life, and the latter variable to feelings, as will be discussed further in the text. A path model is proposed. Polish migrants living in Vienna are used as a case study. It is hypothesized that the structural and social acculturation indicators can be simultaneously associated with both SES indicators and sense of belonging. Furthermore, belonging and SES can be simultaneously but independently associated with immigrant's well-being.

Sense of Belonging and the Well-Being of Immigrants

Many acculturation studies have focused on ethnic identity of immigrants as an aspect of acculturation, which can be defined as a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group (Liebkind et al., 2016). However, some recent studies have turned their attention to the concept of sense of belonging as such, instead of the notion of identity (e.g., Amit, 2012; Hou et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2012). Feelings of belonging to the home country and the country of immigration have also been identified as one of the proxies used in empirical research on health and acculturation (Schumann et al., 2020). In this paper, sense of belonging constitutes the central, subjective measure of acculturation.

Belonging can be defined as a “personal, intimate feeling of being “at home” in a place” (Antonsich, 2010, p. 645). In this context, “home” stands for a “symbolic place of familiarity, comfort, security, and emotional attachment” (Antonsich, 2010: 646). Belonging has also been defined as a sense of ease with oneself and one’s surroundings (May, 2011) and as a dynamic emotional attachment possible at a range of different spatial scales and forms (based, for example, on ethnicity, religious affiliation, gender, and sexual orientation) (Wood & Waite, 2011). People’s need to belong is so strong that it is considered to be a fundamental human motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). A lack of belongingness is associated with a negative effect, and considered a severe deprivation which might cause a variety of ill effects (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p. 497). In the case of immigrants, upon moving to a new place, belonging becomes uncertain (Lewin, 1997). Therefore, it seems likely that whether immigrants will be able to gain sense of belonging or not, and to what degree in the context of a new settlement, would have consequences for their subjective well-being.

Empirical studies focusing on immigrants found evidence of the relationship between sense of belonging and well-being (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015; Kitchen et al., 2015; Raijman & Geffen, 2018). However, they differed regarding the postulated causality. In their study, Amit and Bar-Lev (2015) showed a strong positive association between these two constructs when testing a model where life satisfaction was a predictor of sense of belonging to the country of immigration. Later, Raijman et al. (2018), aiming to unpack the relationship between belonging and life satisfaction, provided evidence that sense of belonging is, in fact, a predictor of life satisfaction, and not the opposite. The results indicate the crucial role of sense of belonging to the host society for immigrants’ life satisfaction.

Although acculturation in general and also belonging more specifically have been most often analyzed at a countrywide scale, from a theoretical as well as empirical perspective, it is very well possible to utilize a city or neighborhood scale for the analysis (comp. Antonsich, 2010; Askins, 2015; Hernández et al., 2007). The present study focuses on a city scale and analyzes immigrants’ sense of belonging to Vienna. This approach allows a departure from methodological nationalism, for which migration studies have been strongly criticized (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). A city scale seems adequate for measuring place-belongingness, for it avoids the abstractness and often assumed synonymy of sense of belonging with national identity, often associated with the country scale. Scholars argued that migrants’ adaptation trajectories are both shaped by, and contribute, to the way of life in, and development of, differently positioned cities (Schiller & Çağlar, 2009). Hernández et al. (2007) demonstrated that a city is a relevant scale of analysis of belonging for immigrants and that it can be charged with a symbolic meaning, making it possible for immigrants to form a strong attachment to it.

In light of these findings, the following hypothesis was tested: sense of belonging to Vienna will be positively associated with immigrants’ well-being (H1).

Social Contacts, Language Proficiency, and Years Since Migration and Their Relation to the Sense of Belonging

Based on literature review, Antonsich (2010) distinguished factors that can contribute to generating feelings of belonging to a place. Among them are personal and social ties, language, and length of residence in a given place. Empirical research specifically focused on immigrants further corroborates these findings. Several qualitative, as well as quantitative studies, demonstrated the importance of social contacts with the native population for sense of belonging to the country of settlement and to mainstream society (Chow, 2007; George & Selimos, 2019; Valenta, 2009).

For example, in a study on the social integration of first-generation immigrants in Norway, Valenta (2009) found that having Norwegian friends and acquaintances was central in achieving a sense of recognition and belonging to mainstream society. Relations with native Norwegians was interpreted by immigrants as concrete evidence of belonging and acceptance (p.186) even in cases involving rather weak ties and not a deep friendship. In contrast, this symbolic meaning of acceptance and belonging was not attributed to the relationships with compatriots and immigrants from other ethnic groups. Another qualitative study (Askins, 2015) demonstrated how new immigrants fulfill the desire to belong to their new place of settlement by engaging in the local community and forming friendships with locals, stressing the importance of social ties on a local level for a feeling of belonging.

In a quantitative study of first-generation Hong Kong immigrants in Canada, Chow (2007) found that a positive experience in making friends with Canadians was one of the strongest predictors of sense of belonging to Canada, as well as life satisfaction of immigrants.

Language proficiency and/or language use has been the most often included indicator of acculturation in acculturation scales (Rudmin, 2009) and one of the most popular proxies of acculturation used as a single indicator (Schumann et al., 2020). Furthermore, it has been shown that immigrants themselves also perceive the ability to speak the language of the immigration country as a very important factor in settling in (Grzymala-Kazłowska, 2018; Kutor et al., 2021). Grzymala-Kazłowska (2018) interviewed Polish immigrants living in the UK and concluded that having learnt English was very important in anchoring, a concept developed by her and akin to belonging, and finding their place in Britain. Furthermore, both prior mentioned studies (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015; Raijman & Geffen, 2018) analyzing several predictors of belonging found a positive relationship between proficiency in the immigration country language and sense of belonging to the immigration country. Furthermore, language proficiency was also positively related to life satisfaction in these studies.

Length of stay in the host country has been another often utilized proxy of acculturation (Schumann et al., 2020). It is assumed that the more time immigrants spend in the new place, the more they become familiar with and adjust to it, and therefore, the more they change. Studies have also shown that immigrants' sense of belonging to the country of settlement and to the local community in the country of settlement can increase with time lived there (Hou et al., 2018; Kitchen et al., 2015). However, the effect sizes are rather small, especially when controlling for other acculturation indicators, and sometimes, do not reach statistical significance (e.g., Amit & Bar-Lev, 2015).

Based on these findings, it is expected that sense of belonging will be stronger for immigrants who have more social contacts with natives (H2). Furthermore, it is expected that sense of belonging will increase with the level of German language proficiency (H3) and length of stay (years since migration) in Vienna (H4).

Socioeconomic Status and the Well-Being of Immigrants

“SES represents individuals’ possession of normatively valued social and economic resources” (Antonoplis, 2022, p. 5) and can be further conceptualized as “set of structural features that guide the decisions and behaviors people take” (p. 10), with education and income being the features most commonly studied in empirical research (Antonoplis, 2022). Multiple studies have demonstrated the importance of SES for the health and well-being of immigrants. For example, a study focusing on Turkish immigrant mothers in Germany (Fassbender & Leyendecker, 2018) found that mothers’ higher SES, measured by the household income and education level, was associated with higher life satisfaction, fewer daily hassles and less depression. This relationship was further confirmed as stable in a 1-year follow-up study. Goodwin et al. (2012) conducted a longitudinal study on factors which influence perceived changes in health among Polish immigrants in the UK. They tested a pathway model integrating socio-demographic and acculturation variables in the examination of health outcomes. Their findings highlight the importance of SES obtained in the receiving country, since it was the only variable directly predicting perceived mental health. Raijman and Geffen (2018) showed that immigrants’ SES, measured by household income per capita, was positively correlated with life satisfaction, but not with sense of belonging to the immigration country, when both were assessed simultaneously. Therefore, although some studies found no relation between SES and well-being, as previously mentioned (e.g., Bak-Klimek et al., 2018), the majority of studies on non-migrant (see Clark et al., 2008; Dolan et al., 2008; Simandan, 2018 for review) as well as migrant population (see Bak-Klimek et al., 2015 for review) provide evidence in favor of hypothesizing a positive relationship between these two constructs. Therefore, it is expected that SES will be positively associated with immigrants’ well-being (H5).

Social Contacts, Language Proficiency, and Years Since Migration and Their Relation to SES

Empirical literature provides evidence that all three acculturation indicators, social contacts, language proficiency, and years since migration described earlier as predictors of sense of belonging, are also associated with SES. In the case of social contacts, previous studies have indicated that contact with natives can be more beneficial for immigrants’ SES than co-ethnic contacts, by providing practical knowledge relevant to the place of immigration’s labor market, as well as better access to it and culturally competent assistance in the process of searching for a job. Kanas et al. (2012) used longitudinal data from the German Socio-Economic Panel to test the causal effect of social contacts on immigrants’ occupational

status and income. The results confirmed that having more contact with Germans increased the occupational status and income of immigrants. This effect was valid even after controlling for numerous other variables. Likewise, research has shown that better proficiency in the country of immigration's language significantly improves economic opportunities and income of immigrants (Chiswick & Miller, 2002; Shields & Price, 2002) and that length of stay is positively associated with immigrants' SES (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2007). Based on these findings, it is expected that immigrants' SES will be positively associated with having social contact with natives (H6), with German language proficiency (H7) and with length of stay (years since migration) in Vienna (H8).

Discrimination

Numerous studies have shown that perceived discrimination can have a profound impact on immigrants' well-being, often stronger than acculturation (Sam et al., 2016). Therefore, in the proposed model, perceived discrimination is included as a control variable.

The Context of the Study

Within migration studies, many of the analyses concerning acculturation, belonging, and settlement tend to focus on the experiences of refugees and third country nationals, as well as "guest workers." In contrast, less is known about the acculturation and its consequences for people migrating within the EU (Collett, 2013; Ryan, 2018). The proposed model was tested among first generation Polish immigrants (i.e., born in Poland) living in the city of Vienna. Vienna, as the capital and largest city of Austria, has by far the highest rate of foreign born population in the country. At the beginning of 2020, foreign born individuals accounted for 36.7% of the city's population (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, 2020). People born in Poland constitute the fourth largest immigrant group in the city with 49,152 persons, and apart from German immigrants, who have the benefit of the same language, they form the largest immigrant group from within the European Union. As EU citizens, they can freely reside and work in Austria and are entitled to social security benefits. However, it is important to note that many Poles came to Austria before Poland joined the EU, during the 1980s as refugees fleeing from the communist regime (estimated 46,000) (Potkansky, 2011). In many European immigration countries, Poles form the largest workers' group among immigrants originating from the new EU member states (Frelak, 2009). Polish immigrants appear to be fairly well integrated in Austrian society. A large study analyzing the integration of immigrants from former Yugoslavia, Turkey, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Russia, and Poland found that Polish migrants rate their subjective feeling of integration the highest among all the prior mentioned groups (Ullram, 2009). They are also some of the best educated immigrants among the large immigrant groups in Austria (OECD, 2008). Regarding the economic integration of Polish immigrants, the 2019 unemployment rate for Polish citizens in Vienna amounted to 13.4%, which is lower than the average

for foreigners in general (16.8%) but still higher than that of Austrian citizens (11.7%) and German citizens (6.7%) (Österreichischer Integrationsfonds, 2020).

Method

Sample and Procedure

This cross-sectional study targeted first generation Polish immigrants (i.e., born in Poland) living permanently in the city of Vienna (as opposed to circular or seasonal immigrants). As Polish immigrants can be considered a “hidden” or “hard-to-reach” population (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997), it was not possible to apply a random sampling, because no official register, nor any other broad database for generating random samples was available. Therefore, a convenience sample was recruited through diverse methods. These included recruiting through online forums and Facebook groups, Polish formal and informal associations in Vienna, institutions such as the Polish Culture Institute in Vienna, during events for Polish immigrants, as well as through informal contacts and snow-ball sampling. A total of 307 persons completed a questionnaire for this study and were subsequently included in the analysis. Approximately 68% of the participants identified as women and 32% as man. The mean sample age was 41.39 ($SD = 13.89$). Information about participants’ education level and length of stay in Austria are provided in Table 1. The questionnaire was available in the Polish language, in an online, as well as paper and pencil version. The majority of participants completed the questionnaire online (72%). The participants needed approximately 40 min to complete it.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of study variables

Variables	%	Min	Max	<i>M</i>	SD	Skew	Kurtosis
Belonging to Vienna		1	7	5.01	1.60	−0.59	−0.33
Social contacts with natives		1	7	3.75	1.90	0.17	−1.02
German language proficiency		1	7	5.56	1.50	−0.86	0.05
Length of stay in Austria		0.5	56	15.26	12.08	0.77	−0.42
Length of stay in Vienna		0.5	56	15.05	12.06	0.77	−0.37
Education							
Elementary	0.7						
Vocational	7.5						
General secondary	24.1						
Post-secondary	9.1						
Bachelor degree	10.4						
Master or higher degree	47.9						
Subjective economic situation		1	7	4.74	1.28	−0.19	−0.05
Life satisfaction		1	7	4.70	1.28	−0.50	−0.20
Happiness		1.5	7	5.113	1.08	−0.69	0.40
Perceived discrimination		1	5	2.20	0.97	0.47	−0.35

Measures

Sense of belonging to Vienna was measured by the question: Do you feel rather alien or rather home in Vienna? The answer was rated on a 7-point scale from *I feel very alien* to *I feel really at home*.

Social contacts were measured regarding three groups: native Austrians, compatriots, and immigrants from other ethnic groups and two dimensions: social contacts in leisure time and work related social contacts. In summary, six questions were asked regarding how many people from each of the three groups the respondents spend their leisure and work-related time with. Regarding their social contacts in leisure time, participants were asked: How many people you spend your leisure time with originally come from ... or have ... background? Furthermore, the three groups were listed next to a rating scale. An analog question was posed regarding work related time. The answers were given on a 7-point scale ranging from *almost no one* to *really a lot*. Again, as indicated in the hypotheses, based on findings from previous studies, only social contacts with natives in leisure time were included in the model. Length of stay in Austria and length of stay in Vienna were measured in years. Due to the choice of city scale for this study, length of stay in Vienna was included in the estimated model and not the length of stay in Austria. However, statistical characteristics of these two variables are almost identical (Table 1). Only 7% of the sample have not lived in the city of Vienna from the beginning of their stay in Austria. For this group, the average time between migrating to Austria and moving to Vienna amounts to 3 years ($SD=2.3$). German language proficiency was measured by the question: How well do you speak German? The answer was rated on a 7-point scale from *not at all* to *fluent*.

SES was assessed by measuring the education level and financial situation of participants. Education was measured in six categories, ranging from *primary school* through to *Master or higher degree*. Previous studies indicated that subjective measures of the financial situation have stronger predictive power for well-being than actual income (see Dolan et al., 2008 for a review). Therefore, income was measured by a subjective assessment of one's current economic situation. The answer was given on a 7-point scale from *very bad* to *very good*. For the estimated model, only subjective economic situation and not education was included as a measure of SES. Subjective economic situation was chosen because of a stronger empirical base for predicting its association with well-being than in the case of education (Bak-Klimek et al., 2015), as well as due to a low variation in the level of participants' education.

As a measure of well-being, two previously established scales concerning life satisfaction and happiness were used. Satisfaction with life was assessed using a measure developed by Diener et al. (1985) consisting of five items. It measures the judgmental component of subjective well-being and assesses satisfaction with the respondent's life as a whole. One example item is "In most ways my life is close to my ideal". A 7-point answer scale was applied, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Cronbach's alpha, as well as McDonald's Omega, for this measure in the present study was 0.87. Happiness was assessed using the Subjective Happiness Scale developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) which measures the emotional component of subjective well-being. It consists of four items which are answered on

a 7-point scale. The poles of the rating scale are labeled differently for each item as to correspond to its content. An example item is 'In general, I consider myself:' with the rating scale ranging from *not a very happy person* to *a happy person*. Cronbach's alpha for this measure in the present study was 0.78, and McDonald's Omega was 0.57. Both measures were translated to Polish language by professional translators and Polish native speakers using the backtranslation method.

Perceived discrimination was measured by asking how often a person has experienced discrimination as a foreigner since living in Vienna. The 5-point answer scale ranged from *never* to *very often*.

Results

The descriptive statistics of the study variables are shown in Table 1. The Pearson's correlations among variables used in the models are presented in Table 2.

Path analysis was conducted to test the hypotheses that the structural and social acculturation indicators (language proficiency, social contacts with natives, and length of stay) will simultaneously predict immigrants' SES as well as their sense of belonging to Vienna. Furthermore, SES and sense of belonging to Vienna will directly predict the immigrants' level of well-being. These associations were tested in a single path model. The model was estimated with AMOS 28, the maximum likelihood estimator. All variables were screened for normality prior to analysis (Table 1). In order to test the robustness of the proposed model, two models were fitted, one in which well-being was measured as life satisfaction and a second in which well-being was measured as happiness. The multivariate kurtosis for the present sample for variables included in the first model equals 4.220 and in the second model equals 2.609 and does not exceed the suggested cut off value of 10.0 (Kline, 2016). The first fitted model is depicted in Fig. 1. The global fit statistics for the present model show that the path model (Fig. 1) fits the data very well, χ^2 ($df=7$; $N=307$) = 6.02; $p=0.537$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = 0.000, 90% CI [0.000, 0.064], SRMR = 0.022.

Table 2 Zero-order correlations among variables in the path models

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Belonging to Vienna								
2. Social contacts with natives	0.44**							
3. German language proficiency	0.37**	0.42**						
4. Length of stay in Vienna	0.26**	0.20**	0.39**					
5. Economic situation	0.18**	0.14*	0.24**	0.19**				
6. Life satisfaction	0.31**	0.24**	0.22**	0.12*	0.53**			
7. Happiness	0.24**	0.15*	0.15*	0.01	0.36**	0.63**		
8. Perceived discrimination	-0.32**	-0.04	0.03	0.04	-0.09	-0.19**	-0.23**	

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

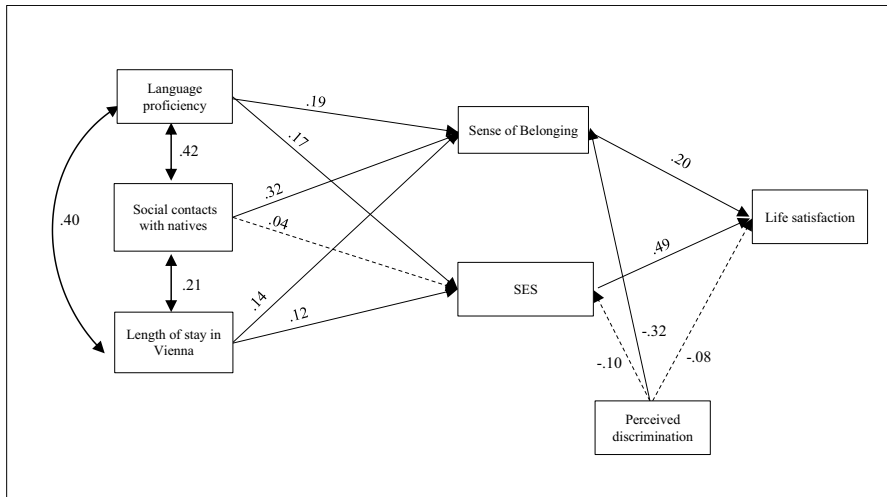


Fig. 1 Estimated path-analytic model of relationships between acculturation, SES, and well-being measured as life satisfaction for immigrants. The parameter values shown are standardized regression weights. The dashed arrow depicts nonsignificant pathways

As predicted (H1), the stronger the sense of belonging to Vienna, the higher the life satisfaction of immigrants. Furthermore, consistent with previous research findings and posed hypotheses (H2, H3, and H4), social contacts with natives, language proficiency, as well as length of stay predicted sense of belonging to Vienna. Social contacts with natives seemed to be the strongest predictor, followed by the knowledge of German language and the length of stay.

Immigrants' SES, measured by subjective economic situation, significantly predicted the level of life satisfaction as assumed (H5). It has been hypothesized that the same set of acculturation indicators which predicts immigrants' sense of belonging will also predict their SES. This appears to be true for language proficiency (H7) and length of stay (H8), but not for social contacts with natives (H6). The last association was very weak and did not reach statistical significance. The controlled variable included in the model, perceived discrimination, and seemed to be significantly associated with one endogenous variable, sense of belonging to Vienna.

A second fitted model, where the endogenous variable life satisfaction was substituted by the measure of happiness, is depicted in the Fig. 2. This path model fits the data almost equally well, χ^2 ($df=7$; $N=307$) = 7.45, $p=0.384$, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.015, 90% CI [0.000, 0.073], SRMR = 0.026. Both, sense of belonging and SES, significantly predicted the level of happiness. However, the associations were weaker than in the case of life satisfaction. Table 3 presents the unstandardized estimates for all estimated parameters.

Due to the imbalance of the obtained sample in terms of participants' gender, both models were additionally tested while controlling for gender. Inclusion of the gender variable did not alter the pattern nor the strength of relationships between other variables (Online Resource 1).

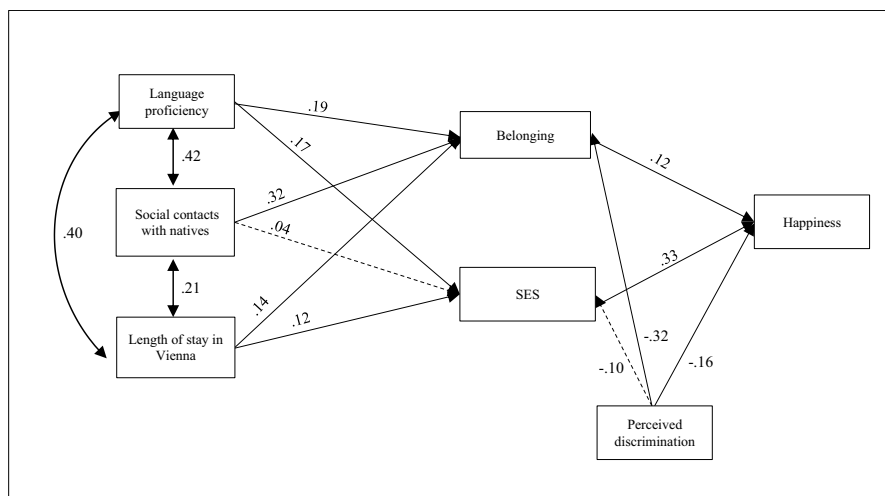


Fig. 2 Estimated path-analytic model of relationships between acculturation, SES, and well-being measured as happiness for immigrants. The parameter values shown are standardized regression weights. The dashed arrow depicts nonsignificant pathways

Discussion

The objective of this study was to investigate the association between acculturation, SES, and immigrant well-being, including a pattern of direct and indirect relationships between variables.

Acculturation, understood as changes at the individual level following contact with a new culture (Berry et al., 2016), was operationalized through several indicators. A model was proposed in which social contact with natives, proficiency in the language of the immigration country, and length of stay would predict immigrants' sense of belonging, as well as their SES, which in turn would predict immigrants' well-being. SES was assessed through subjective financial situation. This feature of SES was selected as the most relevant for the proposed model (comp. Antonoplis, 2022). Perceived discrimination was included as a control variable in the model. Results provide support for all but one of the hypothesized associations between these variables and in the predicted direction.

It was important to examine the associations between several single indicators of acculturation, SES, and well-being in order to better understand the complex nature of this relationship. It was found that two out of three acculturation indicators, referring to structural and social aspects, namely, proficiency in the language of the immigration country and length of stay, were positively associated with both SES and sense of belonging. Contrastingly, social contact with natives was positively associated only with sense of belonging. No association was found between this variable and the SES. These results indicate that sense of belonging to a new place of settlement, in this case, to the city where immigrants live, which can be considered a subjective indicator of acculturation, is at least partially derived from changes

Table 3 Unstandardized regression weights, standard errors (in brackets), and *p* values for direct effects as well as unstandardized regression weights (first) and *p* values and standardized regression weights (second) for indirect effects of estimated parameters for both fitted models

Paths	Direct effects	Indirect effects
Models 1 and 2		
Fluency in German → belonging	0.203 (0.058); <i>p</i> = 0.000	
Social contacts → belonging	0.268 (0.043); <i>p</i> = 0.000	
Length of stay → belonging	0.018 (0.007); <i>p</i> = 0.007	
Perceived discrimination → belonging	-0.533 (0.076); <i>p</i> = 0.000	
Fluency in German → SES	0.149 (0.055); <i>p</i> = 0.007	
Social contacts → SES	0.025 (0.041); <i>p</i> = 0.541	
Length of stay → SES	0.013 (0.006); <i>p</i> = 0.046	
Perceived discrimination → SES	-0.130 (0.072); <i>p</i> = 0.072	
Model 1 (life satisfaction)		
Belonging → life satisfaction	0.155 (0.039); <i>p</i> = 0.000	
SES → life satisfaction	0.474 (0.046); <i>p</i> = 0.000	
Perceived discrimination → life satisfaction	-0.105 (0.064); <i>p</i> = 0.099	-0.144; <i>p</i> = 0.004; -0.112
Fluency in German → life satisfaction		0.102; <i>p</i> = 0.003; 0.123
Social contacts → life satisfaction		0.053; <i>p</i> = 0.012; 0.081
Length of stay → life satisfaction		0.009; <i>p</i> = 0.005; 0.085
Model 2 (happiness)		
Belonging → happiness	0.083 (0.037); <i>p</i> = 0.025	
SES → happiness	0.273 (0.044); <i>p</i> = 0.000	
Perceived discrimination → happiness	-0.183 (0.061); <i>p</i> = 0.003	-0.080; <i>p</i> = 0.005; -0.072
Fluency in German → happiness		0.058; <i>p</i> = 0.004; 0.080
Social contacts → happiness		0.029; <i>p</i> = 0.038; 0.051
Length of stay → happiness		0.005; <i>p</i> = 0.004; 0.056

p values for indirect effects were obtained by using Bootstrap; a total of 500 bootstrap samples were generated in Amos

in other acculturative domains referring to structural and social aspects of immigrants' adaptation. The strongest predictor of belonging appears to derive from the social affiliation domain. This result provides further evidence for the importance of contact with the native population for immigrants' feelings of being at home within their new place of residence. It is well may be that, as previously suggested (Valenta, 2009), having native friends or acquaintances gives the assurance of acceptance by the people who originally belong to the country in question. However, such contact does not appear to be associated with the economic situation of immigrants. It may be the case that, due to the study participants being generally well educated, they did not require as much assistance on the labor market as may be the case for less educated immigrants (comp. Drever & Hoffmeister, 2008). The second most important predictor of belonging was fluency in the German language. It also predicted, with similar strength, the SES of immigrants. This suggests that the ability to communicate freely in the language of the immigration country can help foster a feeling of

belonging, as well as facilitate the economic success of immigrants. Furthermore, the mere length of residence in a place strengthens the sense of belonging to it, as already suggested in the literature. Length of stay in the new place of settlement is also similarly strongly associated with immigrants' SES. It seems possible that, as immigrants gain more experience in the immigration country's labor market, they can move up the ladder and improve their financial situation.

The results of the study also support H1 and H5. Significant associations were found between a stronger sense of belonging and better well-being of immigrants, as well as between higher SES and better well-being. Both belonging and SES are significantly predicting the level of immigrants' well-being. However, the strength of these associations is more than twice as high for SES than belonging in cases where well-being is operationalized as life satisfaction, as well as when it is operationalized as happiness. These results show that both aspects, subjective acculturation and SES, are important for immigrants' well-being. However, SES is still more important. Furthermore, both SES and belonging, when controlling for their common predictors, can be seen as independently associated with well-being.

It is noteworthy that, although both fitted models (for life satisfaction and for happiness) confirmed the postulated structure of associations, there were some differences in the strength of these associations. The findings indicate that life satisfaction is more dependent on SES and acculturation levels than happiness, and in turn, level of happiness is more sensitive to the experiences of discrimination. This observation further corroborates the notion that, although life satisfaction and happiness are both considered the constituting and correlated components of subjective well-being, they can nevertheless be considered as distinct (Selim, 2008; Tsou & Liu, 2001).

There are several limitations of the current study that should be considered. A larger sample than the one obtained for this study would have improved the statistical power of the model fit tests, so one must be cautious when interpreting the results. Secondly, the obtained sample is a convenience sample and imbalanced in terms of participants' gender and education level, which again suggests caution when interpreting study estimates. However, a very similar educational profile has been found in previous studies sampling first generation Polish immigrants in Austria (Czakov, 2014). It corresponds with the generally high percentage of people with higher education among the general population in Poland (Eurostat, 2022). Furthermore, neither the additionally conducted statistical analysis nor the previous research suggest that the obtained results may be gender specific. Future studies can explore the generalizability of these findings to other migrant groups, including some who are characterized by lower education level. When pondering whether results would generalize, one should also consider the geographical setting of the study, in this case in Vienna and among Polish immigrants. Although the proposed model includes a set of popular acculturation and SES indicators, which have been investigated in studies conducted in diverse settings (with different immigrant groups and in different locations) the proposed structure of relationships between variables should be further tested in other contexts in order to determine its generalizability. Thirdly, the cross-sectional design of the study diminishes the capacity to draw causal inferences from the obtained results. In order to make such inferences, a longitudinal study would be needed. Furthermore, in order to test the

postulated pattern of relationships between acculturation, SES, and well-being, the study necessarily relied on quantitative data. However, to gain deeper understanding of immigrants' experiences in relation to their well-being, as well as better contextualize the findings, future studies may consider applying a mixed-methods design, thereby combining quantitative with qualitative data.

Conclusions

Generally, the findings of this study support those previous studies, which found that both acculturation and SES are significant predictors of immigrants' well-being (Angelini et al., 2015; e.g., Wiking et al., 2004). However, due to the use of structural equation modeling and breaking the broad concept of acculturation into several distinct indicators, it was possible to analyze the relationships between acculturation, SES, and well-being in more detail. The results demonstrate that SES, measured as subjective economic situation, is at least partially predicted by the two most popular indicators of acculturation: language proficiency and length of stay. Acculturation, therefore, can be associated with immigrants' well-being directly as well as indirectly through SES. Based on these findings, it can be beneficial for future studies to, rather than juxtaposing SES and acculturation when trying to predict well-being, include their mutual relationships in the tested models.

Several practical conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study, as they indicate the conditions of immigrants achieving high levels of well-being. Firstly, the possibility to build their material wealth appears to be a crucial condition. This possibility can be fostered directly by providing immigrants free access to the labor market, assuring fair wages in the immigration country and by recognizing school certificates and work experience from the emigration country. The results also suggest an indirect way for helping immigrants improve their financial situation, namely, through facilitating better knowledge of the language of the immigration country. In this case, easily accessible and free language courses for immigrants appears to be of high value. It seems plausible that immigrants with higher language competences would have better chances for finding better paid employment. This could be especially true for the Austrian labor market where good German knowledge is a common condition for most skilled jobs. Secondly, in order to develop a sense of belonging that impacts well-being, again, good knowledge of the language of the immigration country appears to be important, but even more so social contact with the native population. Therefore, creating opportunities for immigrants to come into more intense and frequent contact with the native population could help them feel more at home in the new place of settlement. This suggests that such initiatives as volunteers' programs and networks where locals can support new immigrants, such as, for example, the befriending scheme (comp. Askins, 2015) or events promoting intercultural encounters and community building could significantly contribute to immigrants' well-being. Thirdly, the absence of discrimination against foreigners is another important condition. The relationship between discrimination and well-being is well-established in the empirical literature (Rudmin, 2009). A hostile and discriminating host environment can make it impossible for immigrants to thrive in the new place of settlement (Kutor et al., 2021).

And although discrimination was measured only as a control variable in this study, its direct and indirect association with well-being and sense of belonging to the new place of settlement is still visible in the model and further corroborates previous findings. These findings assert the importance of promoting an atmosphere of openness and a welcoming attitude towards immigrants, as well as anti-discriminatory practices.

Supplementary Information The online version contains supplementary material available at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-023-01006-y>.

Funding Open access funding provided by University of Vienna.

Data Availability The dataset generated and analysed during the current study is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Declarations

Competing Interests The author declares no competing interests.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

- Amit, K. (2012). Social integration and identity of immigrants from western countries, the FSU and Ethiopia in Israel. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 35(7), 1287–1310. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2011.602091>
- Amit, K., & Bar-Lev, S. (2015). Immigrants' sense of belonging to the host country: The role of life satisfaction, language proficiency, and religious motives. *Social Indicators Research*, 124(3), 947–961. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-014-0823-3>
- Angelini, V., Casi, L., & Corazzini, L. (2015). Life satisfaction of immigrants: Does cultural assimilation matter? *Journal of Population Economics*, 28(3), 817–844. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00148-015-0552-1>
- Antonoplis, S. (2022). Studying socioeconomic status: conceptual problems and an alternative path forward. *Perspect Psychol Sci*, 17456916221093615. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916221093615>
- Antonsich, M. (2010). Searching for belonging – an analytical framework. *Geography Compass*, 4(6), 644–659. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2009.00317.x>
- Askins, K. (2015). Being together: everyday geographies and the quiet politics of belonging. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, 14(2), 470–478. <https://acme-journal.org/index.php/acme/article/view/1175>
- Bak-Klimek, A., Karatzias, T., Elliott, L., & Maclean, R. (2015). The determinants of well-being among international economic immigrants: A systematic literature review and meta-analysis. *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, 10(1), 161–188. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11482-013-9297-8>
- Bak-Klimek, A., Karatzias, T., Elliott, L., & MacLean, R. (2018). The determinants of well-being among polish economic immigrants. Testing the sustainable happiness model in migrant population. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 19(6), 1565–1588. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-017-9877-7>

- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), 497–529. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497>
- Berry, J. W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 697–712. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.07.013>
- Berry, J. W., Sam, D. L., Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2016). Theoretical perspectives. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology*, 11–29. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781316219218.003>
- Broesch, J., & Hadley, C. (2012). Putting culture back into acculturation: Identifying and overcoming gaps in the definition and measurement of acculturation. *The Social Science Journal*, 49(3), 376–385. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2012.02.004>
- Chiswick, B. R., & Miller, P. W. (2002). Immigrant earnings: language skills, linguistic concentrations and the business cycle. *Journal of Population Economics*, 15(1), 31–57. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20007799>
- Chow, H. P. H. (2007). Sense of belonging and life satisfaction among Hong Kong adolescent immigrants in Canada. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 33(3), 511–520. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830701234830>
- Clark, A. E., Frijters, P., & Shields, M. A. (2008). Relative income, happiness, and utility: an explanation for the Easterlin paradox and other puzzles. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 46(1), 95–144. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor-org.uaccess.univie.ac.at/stable/27646948>
- Collett, E. (2013). *The integration needs of mobile EU citizens: impediments and opportunities*. Retrieved from Brussels:
- Czakon, D. (2014). Indywidualny bilans korzyści i strat na przykładzie sytuacji zawodowej emigrantów polskich w Austrii. *Studia Migracyjne - Przegląd Polonijny*, 40(2), 83–104.
- Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49(1), 71–75. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13
- Dolan, P., Peasegood, T., & White, M. (2008). Do we really know what makes us happy? A review of the economic literature on the factors associated with subjective well-being. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 29(1), 94–122. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2007.09.001>
- Drever, A. I., & Hoffmeister, O. (2008). Immigrants and social networks in a job-scarce environment: The case of Germany. *International Migration Review*, 42(2), 425–448. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2008.00130.x>
- Eurostat. (2022). *Population by educational attainment level, sex, age, and country of birth (%)*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/edat_lfs_9912/default/table?lang=en
- Fassbender, I., & Leyendecker, B. (2018). Socio-economic status and psychological well-being in a sample of Turkish immigrant mothers in Germany. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1586. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01586>
- Faugier, J., & Sargeant, M. (1997). Sampling hard to reach populations. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 26(4), 790–797. <https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.1997.00371.x>
- Frelak, J. (2009). Polnische Emigration nach dem 1. Mai 2004 In A. Frelak, A. Łada, K. Schwarz, & R. Parkes (Eds.), *Polska migracja zarobkowa do Niemiec – fakty i mity. Polnische Arbeitsmigration nach Deutschland – Fakten und Mythen* (pp. 107–137). Warszawa: Fundacja Instytut Spraw Publicznych/ Stiftung Institut für Öffentliche Angelegenheiten.
- George, G., & Selimos, E. D. (2019). Searching for belonging and confronting exclusion: A person-centred approach to immigrant settlement experiences in Canada. *Social Identities*, 25(2), 125–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504630.2017.1381834>
- Goodwin, R., Polek, E., & Goodwin, K. (2012). Perceived changes in health and interactions with “the paracetamol force.” *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 7(2), 152–172. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689812463782>
- Graves, T. D. (1967). Psychological acculturation in a tri-ethnic community. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 23(4), 337–350. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor-org.uaccess.univie.ac.at/stable/3629450>
- Grzymala-Kazłowska, A. (2018). From connecting to social anchoring: adaptation and ‘settlement’ of Polish migrants in the UK. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(2), 252–269. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2017.1341713>
- Hernández, B., Carmen Hidalgo, M., Salazar-Laplace, M. E., & Hess, S. (2007). Place attachment and place identity in natives and non-natives. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 27(4), 310–319. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2007.06.003>

- Hou, F., Schellenberg, G., & Berry, J. (2018). Patterns and determinants of immigrants' sense of belonging to Canada and their source country. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 41(9), 1612–1631. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1295162>
- Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., & Liebkind, K. (2007). A structural model of acculturation and well-being among immigrants from the former USSR in Finland. *European Psychologist*, 12(2), 80–92. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040.12.2.80>
- Kanas, A., Chiswick, B. R., van der Lippe, T., & van Tubergen, F. (2012). Social contacts and the economic performance of immigrants: A panel study of immigrants in Germany. *International Migration Review*, 46(3), 680–709. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2012.00901.x>
- Kitchen, P., Williams, A. M., & Gallina, M. (2015). Sense of belonging to local community in small-to-medium sized Canadian urban areas: A comparison of immigrant and Canadian-born residents. *BMC Psychology*, 3, 28. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-015-0085-0>
- Kline, R. B. (2016). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling* (4th ed.). The Guilford Press.
- Koneru, V. K., Weisman de Mamani, A. G., Flynn, P. M., & Betancourt, H. (2007). Acculturation and mental health: Current findings and recommendations for future research. *Applied and Preventive Psychology*, 12(2), 76–96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appsy.2007.07.016>
- Kutor, S. K., Raileanu, A., & Simandan, D. (2021). International migration, cross-cultural interaction, and the development of personal wisdom. *Migration Studies*, 9(3), 490–513. <https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnz049>
- Lewin, K. (1997). Resolving social conflicts and field theory in social science. American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10269-000>
- Liebkind, K., Mähönen, T. A., Varjonen, S., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2016). Acculturation and identity. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology*, 30–49.
- Lönnqvist, J.-E., Leikas, S., Mähönen, T. A., & Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. (2015). The mixed blessings of migration: Life satisfaction and self-esteem over the course of migration. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 45(4), 496–514. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2105>
- Lopez-Class, M., Castro, F. G., & Ramirez, A. G. (2011). Conceptions of acculturation: A review and statement of critical issues. *Social Science and Medicine*, 72(9), 1555–1562. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2011.03.011>
- Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. S. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46(2), 137–155. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006824100041>
- May, V. (2011). Self, belonging and social change. *Sociology*, 45(3), 363–378. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038511399624>
- Meissner, F., & Heil, T. (2021). Deromanticising integration: On the importance of convivial disintegration. *Migration Studies*, 9(3), 740–758. <https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnz056>
- Moyerman, D. R., & Forman, B. D. (1992). Acculturation and adjustment: A meta-analytic study. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 14(2), 163–200. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07399863920142001>
- OECD. (2008). A profile of immigrant populations in the 21st century: data from OECD countries. In *Education of the Immigrant Population*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Österreichischer Integrationsfonds. (2020). *Wien. Zahlen, Daten und Fakten zu Migration & Integration 2020*. https://www.integrationsfonds.at/fileadmin/content/AT/Downloads/Publikationen/Wien_2020_Migration_Integration.pdf
- Potkansky, M. (2011). *Polnische Migrant/innen in Österreich: Zahlen. Fakten. Einstellungen*. Retrieved from
- Raijman, R., & Geffen, R. (2018). Sense of belonging and life satisfaction among post-1990 immigrants in Israel. *International Migration*, 56(3), 142–157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12386>
- Rudmin, F. (2009). Constructs, measurements and models of acculturation and acculturative stress. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 33(2), 106–123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2008.12.001>
- Ryan, L. (2018). Differentiated embedding: Polish migrants in London negotiating belonging over time. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 44(2), 233–251. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2017.1341710>
- Sam, D. L., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Ryder, A. G., Hassan, G., Sam, D. L., & Berry, J. W. (2016). Health. In *The Cambridge Handbook of Acculturation Psychology* (pp. 504–524).

- Schiller, N. G., & Çağlar, A. (2009). Towards a comparative theory of locality in migration studies: Migrant incorporation and city scale. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(2), 177–202. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830802586179>
- Schumann, M., Bug, M., Kajikhina, K., Koschollek, C., Bartig, S., Lampert, T., & Santos-Hovener, C. (2020). The concept of acculturation in epidemiological research among migrant populations: a systematic review. *SSM Popul Health*, 10, 100539. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2020.100539>
- Selim, S. (2008). Life satisfaction and happiness in Turkey. *Social Indicators Research*, 88(3), 531–562. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-007-9218-z>
- Shen, B.-J., & Takeuchi, D. T. (2001). A structural model of acculturation and mental health status among Chinese Americans. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 29(3), 387–418. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1010338413293>
- Shields, M. A., & Price, S. W. (2002). The English language fluency and occupational success of ethnic minority immigrant men living in English metropolitan areas. *Journal of Population Economics*, 15(1), 137–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/PL00003836>
- Simandan, D. (2018). Rethinking the health consequences of social class and social mobility. *Social Science and Medicine*, 200, 258–261. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.11.037>
- Tsou, M.-W., & Liu, J.-T. (2001). Happiness and domain satisfaction in Taiwan. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 2(3), 269–288. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1011816429264>
- Ullrich, P. (2009). *Integration in Österreich. Einstellungen, Orientierungen und Erfahrungen von MigrantenInnen und Angehörigen der Mehrheitsbevölkerung*. Retrieved from Wien:
- Valenta, M. (2009). Selective networking as identity project: The social integration of first generation immigrants in Norway. *Journal of International Migration and Integration / Revue De L'integration Et De La Migration Internationale*, 10(2), 177–195. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-009-0100-5>
- Wiking, E., Johansson, S. E., & Sundquist, J. (2004). Ethnicity, acculturation, and self reported health. A population based study among immigrants from Poland, Turkey, and Iran in Sweden. *J Epidemiol Community Health*, 58(7), 574–582. <https://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2003.011387>
- Wimmer, A., & Glick Schiller, N. (2002). Methodological nationalism and beyond: Nation–state building, migration and the social sciences. *Global Networks*, 2(4), 301–334. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0374.00043>
- Wood, N., & Waite, L. (2011). Editorial: Scales of belonging. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 4(4), 201–202. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2011.06.005>
- Wu, Z., Schimmele, C. M., & Hou, F. (2012). Self-perceived integration of Immigrants and their Children. *The Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers canadiens de sociologie*, 37(4), 381–408. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/canajsocicahican.37.4.381>
- Zane, N., & Mak, W. (2003). Major approaches to the measurement of acculturation among ethnic minority populations: a content analysis and an alternative empirical strategy. In K. M. Chun, P. Balls Organista, & G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement, and applied research* (pp. 39–60): American Psychological Association.

Appendix

Abstract (English)

This dissertation is centred around the concept of acculturation. Considering the ongoing use of this concept in research regarding migration, together with its disputed nature and disciplinary divisions regarding its understanding and application, this dissertation aims to reexamine the concept of acculturation by reconsidering its understanding, boundary conditions, and relationship with other related concepts. The dissertation comprises conceptual as well as empirical contributions in the form of three papers. The first paper includes a review and discussion of existing conceptualizations and models of acculturation. It focuses on the ways in which the acculturation process can unfold as well as on the understanding of culture in relation to acculturation. Further, a new model extending John Berry's acculturation model is proposed: the Tridimensional Process-Oriented Acculturation Model TDPOM. It includes a third dimension which refers to the process of creating new cultural practices. Familiarity, unfamiliarity and novelty are proposed as reference points for the model's dimensions, enabling the model to move away from the systemic conception of culture implicit in Berry's model. The second and third papers are based on empirical data, collected for the purpose of this dissertation from the first-generation Polish immigrants living in Vienna (N = 307). The second paper focuses on the role of perceived cultural distance for acculturation. It applies the newly developed acculturation model. The third paper examines the relationship between acculturation, socioeconomic status and immigrants' well-being by using path modelling to test a pattern of direct and indirect relations between the constructs. The dissertation is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on knowledge from several academic disciplines concerned with immigrant research and the acculturation concept such as sociology, psychology and social and cultural anthropology.

Kurzfassung (Deutsch)

Im Mittelpunkt dieser Dissertation steht das Konzept der Akkulturation. Angesichts der anhaltenden Verwendung dieses Konzepts in der Migrationsforschung sowie seiner umstrittenen Natur und disziplinären Unterschiede hinsichtlich seines Verständnisses und seiner Anwendung, zielt diese Dissertation darauf ab, das Konzept der Akkulturation erneut zu untersuchen, indem die Konzeptualisierung, die Randbedingungen und die Beziehung zu anderen verwandten Konzepten neu überdacht werden. Die Dissertation umfasst konzeptuelle sowie empirische Beiträge in Form von drei Artikeln. Der erste Beitrag beinhaltet einen Überblick und eine Diskussion bestehender Konzeptualisierungen und Modelle der Akkulturation. Er konzentriert sich auf die Art und Weise, wie sich der Akkulturationsprozess entfalten kann, sowie auf das Verständnis von Kultur in Bezug auf Akkulturation. Darüber hinaus wird ein neues Modell vorgeschlagen, welches das Akkulturationsmodell von John Berry erweitert: das dreidimensionale prozessorientierte Akkulturationsmodell TDPOM. Es umfasst eine dritte Dimension, die sich auf den Prozess der Kreation neuer kultureller Praktiken bezieht. Bekanntheit, Unbekanntheit und Neuheit werden als Bezugspunkte für die Dimensionen des Modells vorgeschlagen und ermöglichen es dem Modell, die systemische Konzeption der Kultur zu überwinden, die in Berrys Modell implizit ist. Die zweite und dritte Arbeit basieren auf empirischen Daten, die für die Zwecke dieser Dissertation von in Wien lebenden polnischen Einwanderern der ersten Generation (N = 307) gesammelt wurden. Der zweite Artikel konzentriert sich auf die Rolle der wahrgenommenen kulturellen Distanz für die Akkulturation. Dabei wird das neu entwickelte Akkulturationsmodell angewandt. Der dritte Artikel untersucht die Beziehung zwischen Akkulturation, sozioökonomischem Status und dem Wohlbefinden von Einwanderern, indem er mit Hilfe der Pfadmodellierung ein Muster direkter und indirekter Beziehungen zwischen den Konstrukten testet. Die Dissertation zeichnet sich durch einen interdisziplinären Ansatz aus und stützt sich auf Erkenntnisse aus mehreren sich mit Einwanderungsforschung und dem Akkulturationskonzept befassenden Disziplinen, nämlich Soziologie, Psychologie sowie Sozial- und Kulturanthropologie.

Supplementary file for paper 2

The two models presented in the main article text, have been supplemented by the gender variable. These additional models are presented in figure 1 and 2.

The models' fit statistics and parameter values are presented below.

Inclusion of the gender variable did not change the pattern of relationships between other variables. The strength of the relationships between other variables changed marginally and only for few variable pairs.

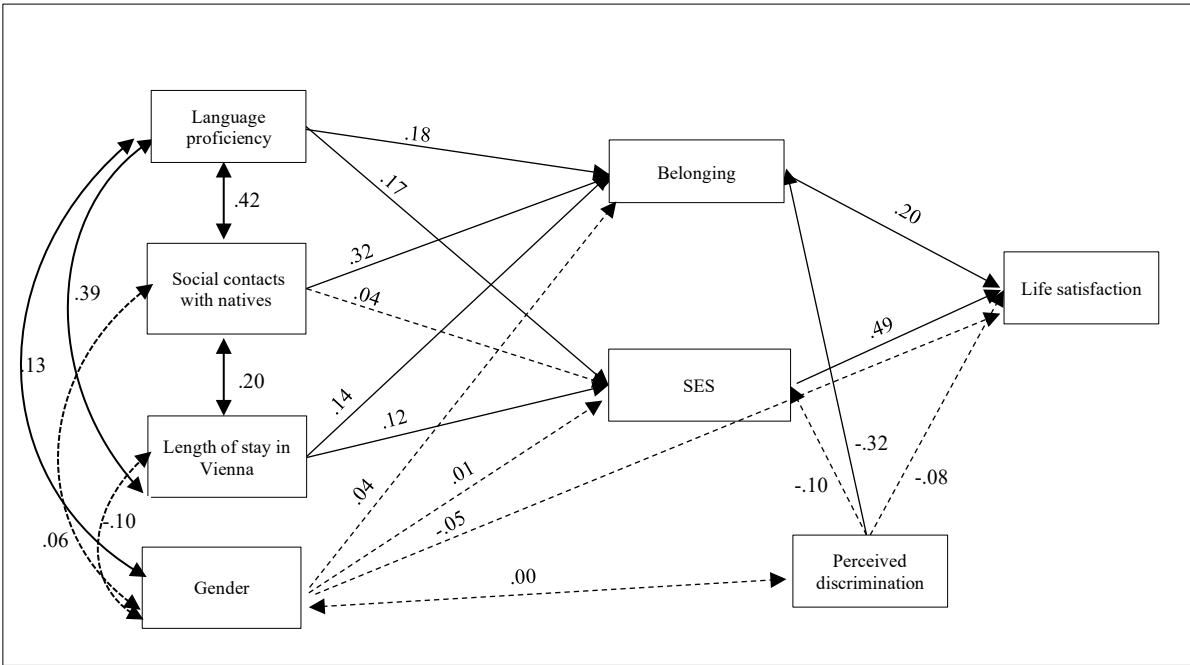


Figure 1. Estimated path-analytic model of relationships between acculturation, SES and well-being measured as life satisfaction for immigrants with included gender variable. The parameter values shown are standardized regression weights. The dashed arrow depicts nonsignificant pathways.

The global fit statistics for model (Figure 1): χ^2 ($df=7$; $N=307$) = 6.37, $p=.497$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000, 90% CI [.000, .066], SRMR = .020.

Table 2. Unstandardized regression weights, standard errors (in brackets) and p-values for direct effects as well as covariances, standard errors (in brackets) and p-values for life satisfaction model depicted in Figure 1.

Paths		Direct effects and covariances
Fluency in German	→ Belonging	.196 (.059) p = .000
Social contacts	→ Belonging	.268 (.043) p = .000
Length of stay	→ Belonging	.019 (.007) p = .005
Perceived discrimination	→ Belonging	-.533 (.076) p = .000
Fluency in German	→ SES	.149 (.056) p = .007
Social contacts	→ SES	.025 (.041) p = .535
Length of stay	→ SES	.013 (.006) p = .049
Perceived discrimination	→ SES	-.130 (.072) p = .072
Belonging satisfaction	→ Life	.158(.039) p = .000
SES satisfaction	→ Life	.475 (.046) p = .000
Perceived discrimination	→ Life satisfaction	-.104 (.063) p = .102
Gender	→ Belonging	.133 (.164) p = .418
Gender	→ SES	.027 (.156) p = .861
Gender satisfaction	→ Life	-.125 (.127) p = .324
Gender ↔ Fluency in German		.089 (.040) p = .025
Gender ↔ Social contacts		.052 (.050) p = .300
Gender ↔ Length of stay		-.548 (.317) p = .084
Gender ↔ Perceived discrimination		.000 (.025) p = .991

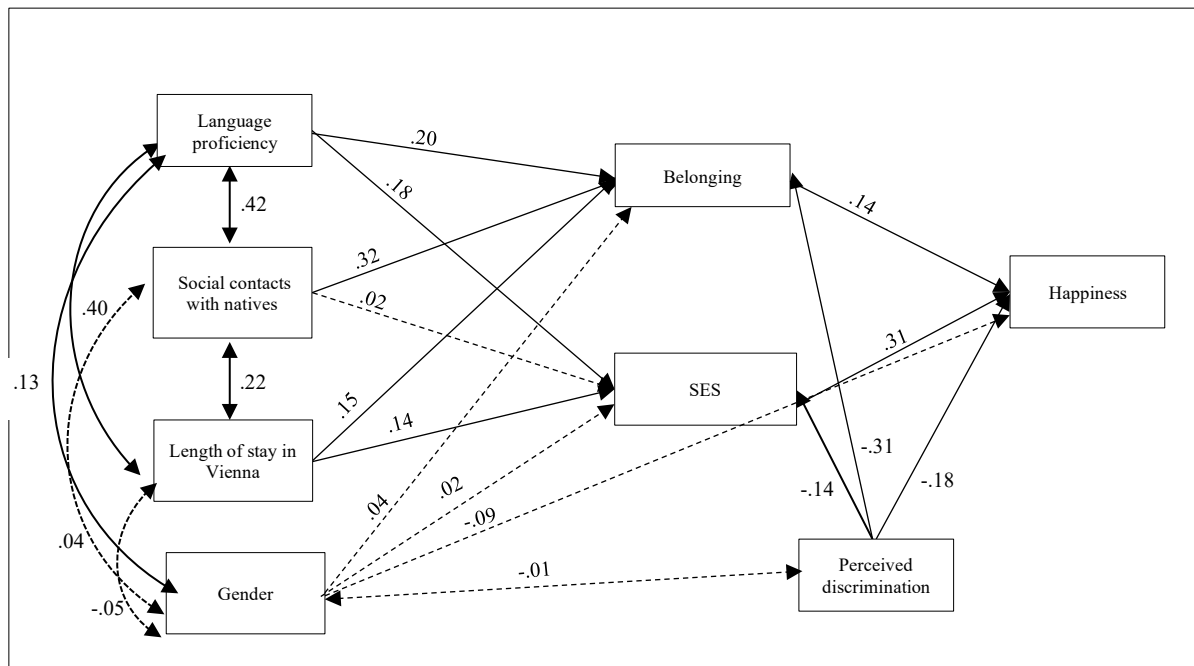


Figure 2. Estimated path-analytic model of relationships between acculturation, SES and well-being measured as happiness for immigrants. The parameter values shown are standardized regression weights. The dashed arrow depicts nonsignificant pathways.

The global fit statistics for the model (Figure 2): χ^2 ($df = 7$; $N = 307$) = 6,82, $p = .448$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .000, 90% CI [.000, .072], SRMR = .022.

Table 2. Unstandardized regression weights, standard errors (in brackets) and p-values for direct effects as well as covariances, standard errors (in brackets) and p-values for happiness model depicted in Figure 2.

Paths		Direct effects and covariances
Fluency in German	→ Belonging	.203 (.061) $p = .000$
Social contacts	→ Belonging	.272 (.045) $p = .000$
Length of stay	→ Belonging	.020 (.007) $p = .005$
Perceived discrimination	→ Belonging	-.516 (.080) $p = .000$
Fluency in German	→ SES	.151 (.058) $p = .009$
Social contacts	→ SES	.012 (.042) $p = .775$
Length of stay	→ SES	.015 (.007) $p = .026$
Perceived discrimination	→ SES	-.181 (.075) $p = .016$

Belonging	→ Happiness	.094 (.038) p = .013
SES	→ Happiness	.262 (.045) p = .000
Perceived discrimination	→ Happiness	-.200 (.063) p = .001
Gender	→ Belonging	.145 (.174) p = .404
Gender	→ SES	.047 (.164) p = .777
Gender	→ Happiness	-.218 (.128) p = .089
Gender ↔ Fluency in German		.088 (.040) p = .029
Gender ↔ Social contacts		.034 (.050) p = .500
Gender ↔ Length of stay		-.288 (.319) p = .367
Gender ↔ Perceived discrimination		-.003 (.025) p = .899
