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ACCULTURATION PROFILES OF IMMIGRANTS AND THEIR LEVEL OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC ADAPTATION

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This article presents the results of a study on the relationship of acculturation profiles of Russian-speaking immigrants in Belgium, the duration of their stay in the host country, and their level of socio-economic adaptation. The data obtained is the result of a socio-psychological survey of Russian-speaking immigrants in Belgium and was processed using latent profile analysis (LPA). It was obtained from three groups of immigrants with relevant acculturation profiles: integration, assimilation and separation. It was found that orientation toward the host society (assimilation and integration) has a positive association with a high level of socio-economic adaptation among immigrants, but the level of socio-economic adaptation for the group of immigrants with an assimilation profile is higher than that for the group of immigrants with an integration profile. Also, the level of socio-economic adaptation is higher for immigrants who have stayed in the host country for more than 5 years.

Keywords: socio-economic adaptation, acculturation profiles, acculturation of immigrants, ethnic identity, labour market.

JEL Classification: Z
Introduction

Contemporary research shows that the majority of immigrants leave for another country primarily for economic reasons, for example, Ward, Bochner, and Furnham (2001) have noted that, in spite of the sustained ambition of immigrants to gain financial security, they face serious obstacles, and that achieving economic success for them is more complicated than for natives. During the process of immigration to another country, a process which is often accompanied by considerable costs and risks, immigrants frequently become unemployed or have to work part-time. Particular difficulties are connected with obtaining recognition for educational qualifications and professional experience, especially there is a large cultural distance between the country of origin and the host country. Even when immigrants manage to find a job, they usually still are at a disadvantage compared with natives (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). In other words, socio-economic adaptation of immigrants to a new environment is the result of advances in acculturation toward socio-economic positions that allow immigrants to completely participate in the social and economic life of the host society (Grigoryev, 2015). But as Hayfron has noted (2006), economic studies on labour market outcomes for immigrants have not examined how the psychological problems immigrants face can impact their acculturation process, this is probably because most economists and sociologists consider this problem the domain of psychology, but the subject of socio-economic adaptation in general has been little studied by psychologists (see also Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2008) and the vast majority of cross-cultural psychology literature that exists, meanwhile, has focused only on assimilation as one mode of acculturation (Hayfron, 2006).

Some researchers consider the motivation which is connected with success in the labour market to be the main driver of the social behaviour of immigrants (Gans, 2007; Lambert & Taylor, 1988). It is assumed that immigrants behave in a certain way depending on what they value and what economic benefits they desire to obtain for themselves. In one study on this topic, economic needs and the potential acquisitions of immigrants were considered key motives for assimilation in the host country (Gans, 2007).

In this study we will consider other factors that might be connected with the economic success of immigrants besides the obvious factors of education and work experience.

Ethnic social capital and socio-economic adaptation

The cultural network, or ethnic social capital, of immigrants is usually presented as a very important for the integration process (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). The economic activity of immigrants is largely dependent on relations within the family and ethnic community
(Levanon, 2011). Newly arrived immigrants are often guided by the resources of their family or the resources their own ethnic group that belong to previous waves of immigration (Massey & Espinosa, 1997; Hirschman, 1982). For example, Light (1972) points to the moral character of kinship networks in communities of Asian immigrants. Immigrants who have already adapted to the host country may provide work, money and other assistance to relatives, even if they are obliged to reduce their own level of consumption in the process. Some studies show that when immigrants are able to use the support of both the family and their own ethnic group, they will use both (Nee & Sanders, 2001). Padilla et al. (1988) found that immigrants from Mexico and Central America often find employment in the US through family ties.

By itself, social capital is a psychological set of relationships based on identity within a particular group, as well as the relations of intra-group trust and reciprocity, which increase the material well-being of individuals and groups without harm to other actors in the broader economic system (Tatarko, 2009). In this context, the ethnic social capital of immigrants, or the social capital of immigrants in the framework of their own ethnic group, is a trust relationship inside the ethnic group which is regulated by certain informal norms, rules, and obligations that exist privately among immigrants.

Immigrants who have ethnic social capital at their disposal can obtain necessary information about work vacancies and some of the support needed for such work, which in the aggregate certainly eases socio-economic adaptation of immigrants in the host country (Allen, 2009; Portes, 1995; Gold, 1992). At the same time, for immigrants on the broader labour market, ethnic social capital can also be a limitation because of the mutual obligations and requirement to comply with social norms that accompany the use of any social capital (Bach & Carroll-Seguin, 1986; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993; Read, 2004). It might add that this statement is in agreement with the theory of ethnic enclaves (see Portes & Bach, 1985; Wilson & Portes, 1980), which states that, while cooperation with participants of within the ethnic group at first helps immigrants, in the long term this association offers diminishing benefits and can even become detrimental.

Studies conducted on different groups of adult refugees in the United States and Canada showed a number of contradictory results. For example, ethnic social capital has a small positive and statistically significant effect on employment status, but has no significant effect on income level (Potocky-Tripodi, 2004). Refugees who actively used their ethnic social capital to find a job were much more likely to enjoy higher quality of employment in comparison to refugees who relied solely on their own efforts to find a job (Lamba, 2003). On the other hand, the use of ethnic social capital has no effect on the initial income of women and men in refugee communities (Montgomery, 1996; The Allen, 2009), but eventually has a negative effect on
women’s earnings because of different expectations regarding the obligations of men and women and because of social norms that govern the behaviour of men and women differently (Menjivar, 2000; Allen, 2009). It should be noted, however, that there are differences between economic immigrants and displaced persons. Some studies have shown that the initial conditions faced by refugees are more difficult than those faced by economic immigrants, and that refugees need more time for socio-economic adaptation (Wooden, 1991).

Research conducted on a sample of illegal immigrants in the US has shown that the use of ethnic social capital is associated with lower hourly wages, and that the use of strong family ties in employment is associated with significantly lower earnings (Lebanon, 2011). This finding is consistent with other research, which has shown that the use of such ties entails a higher probability of employment in low-skilled jobs (Nee & Sanders, 2001). Thus immigrants that are using their own ethnic social capital can get only limited assistance, which may be useful only in the first years after immigration (Lancer, 2010; Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2008). The strong sense of belonging to one’s own ethnic group may be a buffer against the negative effects of acculturation stress and perceived discrimination, which may generate also has a positive effect on adaptation. However, in the long term, a strong attachment to an ethnic group may hinder adaptation, whereas using the resources of interethnic networks may provide new and varied forms of help, which may in turn be converted into economic benefits (Ryan et al. 2008; Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001; Besevegis & Pavlopoulos, 2008; Granovetter, 1973).

Thus prevalence of contacts within an ethnic group of immigrants or within the host society, as well as the length of these contacts, can largely determine the level of socio-economic adaptation of immigrants.

**Acculturation strategies and socio-economic adaptation**

In cross-cultural psychology literature, in contrast to sociology, economics, and political science, attention has been given to several different modes of acculturation which differ in the frequency of contacts within an ethnic group of immigrants and with the host society. These modes include acculturation attitudes (or acculturation strategies, which includes behaviour) of immigrants that are a combination of: (1) orientation of immigrants towards their own group, with contacts limited mainly to within the ingroup and aimed at preserving cultural heritage and identity; and (2) orientation to the outgroup, with a preference for contact with the broader society and a focus on adopting the culture and identity of the host country. The combination of positive and/or negative responses to these options gives four acculturation his or her own culture. Integration occurs when the immigrant identifies with both his or her own culture and the host culture. Separation is characterized by denial of the host culture and maintenance of
identity with the culture of the country of origin. In this case, immigrants prefer a greater or lesser degree of isolation from the culture of the host country. Marginalization describes the loss of identification with the culture of origin on the one hand, and a lack of identification with the culture of the host country on the other (see Berry, 1997).

In a study by Besevegis and Pavlopolous (2008) on a sample of immigrants in Greece, socio-economic adaptation was found to be positively associated with orientation toward the host group and negatively associated with orientation toward the immigrants’ own ethnic group, in keeping with the authors’ expectations. The integration and assimilation strategies had the most favorable results for socio-economic adaptation, while the separation strategy was associated with low levels of adaptation, regardless of the country of origin and the length of stay in the host country. Furthermore, the assimilation strategy and integration strategy, though differing in the frequency of contacts within the ethnic group, had equally positive results. Immigrants employing the integration strategy can access the resources of both their own ethnic group and the host society (Besevegis & Pavlopoulos, 2008). The assimilation strategy is also adopted because it facilitates contact with the dominant culture (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). The separation strategy has the worst effect on socio-economic adaptation because immigrants choosing separation face difficulties in trying to make contact with members of the host culture and to acquire basic social skills, such as learning the language of the country or getting a job (Nesdale & Mak, 2003).

Research conducted by the G-SOEP (German Socio-Economic Panel) on the influence of acculturation strategies on economic behaviour (including the probability of being employed, income, and ownership of housing) noted that the choice of acculturation strategy has statistically significant and economically important effects. Assimilation and integration have a positive effect on economic performance, while separation and marginalization have no positive effect (Constant & Zimmermann, 2008).

Another study applying a more detailed theoretical model of socio-economic adaptation to a sample of immigrants in Belgium found that (1) acculturation attitudes of immigrants are independently of their level of socio-economic adaptation, i.e. the attitudes do not depend on the length of stay in the host country or language skills; (2) a high level of socio-economic adaptation is positively associated with orientation toward the host society (integration attitude and assimilation attitude), and negatively associated with orientation toward the original ethnic group (separation attitude); (3) strong ethnic and religious identification may facilitate the orientation of immigrants to their ethnic group, and strong ethnic identification prevents

3 Constant and Zimmermann (2008) use a two-dimensional “ethnosizer” very similar to Berry's approach.
assimilation (Grigoryev, 2015).

Thus immigrants who have a greater level of contact with the host society, and who are resident in the host country for longer, are more likely to have a higher level of socio-economic adaptation. What remains to be studied are specific details — namely, whether there is a difference in socio-economic adaptation based on varying orientations toward the host society (integration or assimilation) and the specific periods of stay in the host country? According to Berry (1997), the integration strategy is the most adaptive strategy, the majority of studies on the relationship between acculturation strategies and adaptation have been carried out in multicultural societies, and have shown this strategy to be most effective. In other recent studies on “melting pot” societies that are more assimilative in general orientation, the integration strategy also remained the most adaptive strategy.

**The Belgian case: design and hypotheses of the present study**

In order to answer the question posed above, researchers have divided immigrants into populations according to certain acculturation profiles. In a number of studies, cluster analysis was used to place young immigrants in one of four “acculturation profiles” (for example, integration, national, ethnic and diffuse) based on their responses to questions related to their acculturation attitudes, cultural identity, language skills, family values, etc. (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006; Berry et al., 2011). Often, however, acculturation profiles have been given names similar to acculturation attitudes (see e.g. Ward & Kus, 2012; Fox, Merz, Solórzano & Roesch, 2013), and the choice of these names is not always uniform (see e.g. Fox, Merz, Solórzano & Roesch, 2013; Brown et al., 2013.; Inguglia & Musso, 2015), although usually there are no great differences in the content of acculturation profiles and acculturation attitudes (Berry et al., 2011).

The advantage of the acculturation profiles approach, according to some researchers (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006; Brown, Gibbons, & Hughes, 2013; Brown & Zagefka, 2011; Rudmin, 2009; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010), is that it allows researchers to adopt a person-oriented approach rather than a variable-oriented approach in order to understand better patterns of acculturation (see Bergman & Magnusson 1997; Bergman & Trost, 2006). From this point of view, the use of grouping methods, such as a cluster analysis or latent class analysis, can be regarded as the proper base for the analysis of empirical evidence, as a more integrated approach to acculturation that allows the identification of a greater degree of realistic characteristics of immigrants than does the standard approach for addressing acculturation attitudes (see e.g. Brown et al., 2013.; Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008; Inguglia & Musso, 2015).
The objective of this study is to investigate the main effects of acculturation profiles, the length of stay in the host country, and the interaction effect between acculturation profiles and the length of stay in the host country, on the level of socio-economic adaptation of immigrants.

Therefore, it proposes the following hypotheses:

**H1.** The group of immigrants with the assimilation and the integration profiles in the long term have a higher level of socio-economic adaptation than the group of immigrants with the separation profile.

**H2.** The group of immigrants with the integration profile at least initially have the highest level of socio-economic adaptation because they can use both the resources of their own ethnic group and the resources of the host society.

**H3.** Immigrants with the separation profile are expected to have the smallest growth in their level of socio-economic adaptation in response to an increase in their length of stay in the host country.

In order to test these hypotheses, it was conducted a social-psychological survey in several Belgian cities.

**Data and Methods**

In total, during the study in 2014, 132 Russian-speaking immigrants to Belgium were surveyed (64% were residents of Brussels; 86% had attained a higher education degree; 47% were women; 72% were Russian Orthodox Christians). The respondents ranged in age from 19 to 65 years \((M = 35.9; SD = 9.3)\), with the length of stay in Belgium ranging from 2 months to 18 years \((M = 7.1; SD = 5.0)\).

Russian-speaking immigrants in Belgium were invited to complete a questionnaire in Russian. First, respondents answered questions to determine their position along a scale of ethnic identification (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007), with sample items such as: "I consider myself a Russian," and "I feel like a part of Russian culture," \((5 = \text{Strongly agree}, 1 = \text{Strongly disagree}; \alpha\text{-Cronbach} = .81)\).

Secondly, respondents answered questions to their determine position along a scale of acculturation attitudes from the MIRIPS questionnaire (Tatarko & Lebedeva, 2011), with sample items such as: "It is important to me to be fluent in both Russian and the in languages that are represented in Belgium," "I prefer to have only Belgians friends," "I feel that Russians should maintain their own cultural traditions and not adapt to those of Belgians" \((5 = \text{Strongly agree}, 1 = \text{Strongly disagree}; \alpha\text{-Cronbach for integration subscale} = .70, \text{for assimilation subscale} = .83, \text{and for separation subscale} = .74)\).

Finally, respondents answered questions to determine their position along the scale of the
World Bank survey in Russian for index of socio-economic adaptation (indicators: professional status, full-time work at present, monthly savings, professional development, prospects for improving financial position, prospects for improving professional status) (Besevegis & Pavlopolous, 2008), with sample items such as: "Do you work at this time?", "Do you have a permanent job?", \(1 = \text{Yes}, 0 = \text{No}\); positive answers to the questions with negative content, such as decreased occupational status and loss of skills, produce an answer of -1, with answers aggregated.

The scale also contained questions about level of language skills (understand, speak, write, read) for languages in the host country (Dutch, French, German, English), as well as open-ended questions to measure the length of stay in Belgium.

**Results**

Mplus 7.1 was used to conduct a latent profile analysis (LPA) to group participants by acculturation profiles, using responses for questions of ethnic identification, acculturation attitudes, and language skills scales.

LPA is an empirically driven method that defines taxonomies or classes of people based on common characteristics. LPA is latent class analysis for continuous indicators. According to Williams and Kibowski (2016), latent class analysis is usually appropriate for samples of at least 100 participants, although there is evidence that Monte Carlo simulation could be used to model probable class solutions with data sets of smaller size and to thus extrapolate likely class numbers for hypothetical larger data sets (see Nylund, Asparouhov & Muthén, 2007).

Latent profile models containing 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 classes were fit to the data. The model fit indices for each LPA are available in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Fit Indices</th>
<th>Likelihood Ratio Tests</th>
<th>Entropy</th>
<th>Min. Class Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LL</td>
<td>BIC</td>
<td>SSBIC</td>
<td>AIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Class</td>
<td>-5985</td>
<td>12269</td>
<td>12073</td>
<td>12094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Classes</td>
<td>-5615</td>
<td>11684</td>
<td>11387</td>
<td>11418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Classes</td>
<td>-5398</td>
<td>11404</td>
<td>11005</td>
<td>11047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Classes</td>
<td>-5236</td>
<td>11235</td>
<td>10736</td>
<td>10789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Classes</td>
<td>-5125</td>
<td>11167</td>
<td>10566</td>
<td>10629</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** LL = loglikelihood; BIC = Bayesian information criterion; SSBIC = sample-size adjusted Bayesian information criterion; VLMR = Vuong-Lo-Mendell-Rubin likelihood ratio test for \(k – 1\) \(H_0\) vs. \(k\) Classes; Adj. LMR = Lo-Mendell-Rubin adjusted loglikelihood ratio test; BLRT = parametric bootstrapped likelihood ratio test for \(k – 1\) \(H_0\) vs. \(k\) Classes. 

*** — \(p < .001\)
It is often the case that model fit indices offer an ambiguous picture from which it is difficult to determine an appropriate number of classes. The adjusted LRT and VLMR indices were significant for the 2-Class model but not the 3-Class model. However, the majority of the other indices showed that the addition of each subsequent class produces a better fit for the data. This may be because of the large number of diverse items used, i.e. numerous arrangements by which participants can be grouped.

In this case, the appropriate solution for the number of classes was determined on the basis of theory, entropy values, and minimum class size. Entropy is an index that determines the accuracy of classifying participants into their respective profiles or classes, with higher values (i.e., closer to 1.0) indicating that a particular solution fits better (Williams & Kibowski, 2016). Furthermore, small classes (those that contain less than 5% of the sample) are typically considered spurious classes, a condition often associated with extracting too many classes or profiles, so class size was also considered when determining the optimal number of classes (Hipp & Bauer, 2006). A three-class solution appeared to be best, primarily because of theoretical considerations (a three-class solution corresponded to the items used for three of the acculturation attitudes), but also because of high entropy values (.992) and for pragmatic reasons (a class solution with fewer than 32 participants provided unsatisfactory information in subsequent analysis).

Next, it was considered three classes that are relevant to three acculturation profiles: integration, assimilation and separation. Means for ethnic identification, each of the acculturation attitudes, and language skill values for each of the three acculturation profiles are shown in Figure 1.

**Fig. 1 Means of used variables for acculturation profiles**
Respondents were further divided into three groups depending on the length of their stay in Belgium. The results of this grouping are shown in the mosaic plot in Figure 2.

**Fig. 2 Mosaic plot for sample composition**

By applying the Dunn test with the Bonferroni correction (Dunn, 1961) to each of the items on the ethnic identification and acculturation attitudes scales and to language skill and length of stay variables that were significantly different \( (p < .05) \), there was obtained: (1) members of the group of immigrants with an assimilation profile are characterized by the highest level of language skills, the highest degree of orientation toward the host society, and the lowest degree of shared ideas and beliefs with other Russians, and are less likely to want to participate in social activities which include only Russian members; (2) members of the group of immigrants with an integration profile are characterized by an average level of language skills and a degree of compromising, in some ways very significant, with the host society, while at the same time retaining contact with their own ethnic group; (3) members of the group of immigrants with a separation profile are characterized by the smallest length of stay in the host country, the highest degree of orientation toward their own ethnic group, by a preference to be fluent in Russian rather than in the languages of Belgium, by the lowest level of Belgian language skills, and by a preference for having only Russian friends.

A factorial ANOVA was conducted to compare the main effects of acculturation profiles
and the length of stay in the host country and of the interaction effect between acculturation profiles and the length of stay in the host country on the level of socio-economic adaptation of immigrants.

All effects were statistically significant at the .05 significance level with adjusted alpha and the sequential Bonferroni procedure (see Cramer et al., 2015), except for the interaction effect between acculturation profiles and the length of stay in the host country (see Table 2).

The main effect for acculturation profiles yielded an F ratio of $F(2, 123) = 17.53, p < .001, \eta^2 = .195$, indicating significant differences between the integration profile ($M = 2.35, SD = 2.01$), the assimilation profile ($M = 4.31, SD = 2.10$) and the separation profile ($M = .54, SD = 2.19$). The main effect for the length of stay in the host country yielded an F ratio of $F(2, 123) = 7.70, p < .001, \eta^2 = .086$, indicating a significant difference between durations of 0-5 years ($M = .77, SD = 1.87$), 6-10 years ($M = 2.83, SD = 2.55$) and 11+ years ($M = 3.29, SD = 2.51$). The interaction effect was not significant, with $F(4, 123) = 1.57, p = .185, \eta^2 = .035$.

A Bonferroni post hoc would provide information about which levels within each independent variable were significant. Confidence intervals were based on 1000 bootstrap samples. The pairwise comparison tests showed that there is a significant difference between the integration profile and the assimilation profile ($M_{diff} = -1.50, BC 95\% CI [-2.36, -0.65], p = .008$), the integration profile and the separation profile ($M_{diff} = 1.62, BC 95\% CI [.67, 2.66], p = .001$), the assimilation profile and the separation profile ($M_{diff} = 3.11, BC 95\% CI [1.87, 4.33], p < .001$), and also between durations of stay of 0-5 years and of 6-10 years ($M_{diff} = -1.53, BC 95\% CI [-2.43, -.60], p = .006$), 0-5 years and 11+ years ($M_{diff} = -1.87, BC 95\% CI [-3.08, -.76], p = .001$). The difference between stays of 6-10 years and 11+ years was not significant ($M_{diff} = -.34, BC 95\% CI [-.50, .76], p = 1.000$). The results of these tests are available in Table 2 and Table 3.

**Table 2. Results of factorial ANOVA test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>adj. seqB</th>
<th>$H_0 seqB$</th>
<th>$\eta^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acculturation Profiles</strong></td>
<td>141.66</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70.831</td>
<td>17.528</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>.195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length Stay in the Host Country</strong></td>
<td>62.22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31.109</td>
<td>7.698</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>rejected</td>
<td>.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acculturation Profiles × Length Stay in the Host Country</strong></td>
<td>25.44</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.361</td>
<td>1.574</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>retained</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residual</strong></td>
<td>497.05</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>4.041</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. Results of post hoc pairwise comparisons test with the Bonferroni correction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acculturation Profiles</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Bootstrap&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p-values&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bias</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>BC 95% CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>-1.495</td>
<td>-.014</td>
<td>[.645, 2.364]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>1.620</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>[.617, 2.659]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>3.114</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>[.589, 1.871]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length Stay in the Host Country</td>
<td>0-5 years</td>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>-1.530</td>
<td>-.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11+ years</td>
<td>-1.866</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>[.541, -3.084]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>-1.866</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11+ years</td>
<td>-1.866</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>[.541, -3.084]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples.

<sup>a</sup> p-values with Bonferroni correction.

The estimated marginal means for acculturation profiles and length of stay in the host country are shown on the Figure 3.
Thus members of the group of immigrants with the assimilation profile and the integration profile in the long term have a higher level of socio-economic adaptation than the group of immigrants with the separation profile (H1). However, counter to the expectation that members of the group of immigrants with the integration profile at least initially would have the highest level of socio-economic adaptation, the group of immigrants with assimilation profiles have the highest level of socio-economic adaptation across whole length of stay (H2). As was previously expected, members of the groups of immigrants with the separation profile have the smallest growth in their level of socio-economic adaptation in response to an increase in the length of stay in the host country (H3).

Discussion

In this study, a sample of Russian-speaking immigrants with various lengths of stay in Belgium was considered. Despite considerable difficulties connected with obtaining Belgian visas and work permits and high levels of unemployment among immigrants relative to other EU countries, Belgium remains one of the most popular destination countries for Russian-speaking immigrants. Belgium has a high living standards and a stable economy that attracts large numbers of immigrants each year, and few immigrants return to Russia from Belgium. Immigration to Belgium has been occurring throughout the post-Soviet period, and it is therefore possible to consider the effect of various lengths of stay on immigrant socio-economic adaptation. Therefore, this sample is very suitable for research on socio-economic adaptation.

As was expected, levels of orientation to the host society (i.e., immigrants fitting the
assimilation profile and the integration profile) were positively associated with high levels of immigrant socio-economic adaptation, but the group of Russian-speaking immigrants in Belgium with the assimilation profile displays a level of socio-economic adaptation that is significantly higher than that of the immigrants with the integration profile. This finding is counter to results produced by Berry (1997). Also, the level of socio-economic adaptation is higher among immigrants whose length of stay in the host country is greater than 5 years. Apparently, this time is required for immigrants to find a permanent job, acquire necessary skills and local work experience and improve language skills, etc. Nevertheless, the role of the length of stay in the adaptation of immigrants is not fully understood. Some studies suggest the effect is direct (Grigoryev, 2015), while others suggest there is only an indirect effect (Pavlopoulos & Besevegis, 2009).

In conclusion, it can once again confirm that the phenomenology of immigration and economic adaptation is likely to vary depending on a variety of cultural, social, political and historical factors (Ward, Bochner & Furnham, 2001). In this regard, it is important for future research to consider multilevel models in order to understand fully the mechanism of contextual factors, namely, in which cases an assimilation strategy and in which cases an integration strategy leads to more effective adaptation, and how the length of stay and conditions of the local labour market influence adaptation (see also Grigoryev, 2015).

It can be concluded that at all desire of immigrants fully to adjust their social and economic life in the host society, they do it is not always possible for several reasons, sometimes, depending on the specific context, one of these reasons is the reliance to their own ethnic group, or because of neglect or the lack of opportunity for orientation towards the host society.

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References


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