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BEING OF CRIMEAN TATARS**

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## **THE ROLE OF MULTIPLE IDENTITIES AND ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF CRIMEAN TATARS**

Recent geopolitical changes in Crimea initiated the process of massive identity transformation among ethnic majority and minority groups. Current study was aimed at examining the role of multiple identities and acculturation strategies in the psychological well-being of Crimean Tatar minority (N=80). The study revealed high motivation for ethno-cultural continuity among Crimean Tatars. The combination of ethnic, religious and place identities positively predicts both life-satisfaction and self-esteem. These combined identities also positively predict integration strategy and negatively assimilation strategy. Combined national and Russian ethno-linguistic identity positively predicts integration and assimilation strategies and negatively predicts separation strategy. The findings indicate the importance of taking historical, political, social context into account in the studies on minority issues.

JEL Classification: F22.

Keywords: multiple identities, acculturation strategies, ethnic minorities, subjective well-being, motivation for ethno-cultural continuity.

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## **Introduction**

Nowadays due to globalization and migration processes, many people find themselves in the position of minority group members enclosed in a larger society. Being a member of the ethnic minority group turns out to be quite challenging for the individual. Firstly, managing multiple identities like ethnicity, language, or religion that differ from those of the majority group may have a certain impact on the individual's psychological well-being (life satisfaction and self-esteem). Secondly, minority group members need to create relationships with the majority. The decision about the extent of their participation in a larger society is reflected in choosing one of the acculturation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation, marginalization (Berry, 1980; Berry, 1997). Thirdly, belonging to the minority group at some point requires a choice - which culture will be maintained and transmitted to future generations. The tendency of indigenous minorities to maintain majority culture across generations and disregard their minority identity threatens the world's cultural and linguistic diversity. Due to its potential negative consequences for the individual's well-being, as well as for society in general, this topic is thus of great importance and deserves more research attention.

The present study aims to examine the role of multiple identities and acculturation strategies for the psychological well-being of the Crimean Tatar minority. Additionally, we try to address the influence the motivation for ethno-cultural continuity on the psychological well-being of Crimean Tatars. Taking into account the massive social and political transformation in 2014 that potentially can have a great impact on the psychological well-being of all ethnic groups living in Crimea, the study in this socio-cultural context might help to better understand political, economic and social challenges that the Crimea has recently faced with.

### **Socio-cultural context of the study**

Crimea is a multicultural region of Russia. The ethnic majority of the Crimean population are Russians (about 68%), the first largest ethnic minority are Ukrainians (about 16%). Crimean Tatars are the indigenous people of Crimea and they constitute the second largest ethnic minority - about 10% of the population (Results of the population census in the Crimean Federal district, 2015).

Over the past hundred years, Crimean Tatars have faced numerous political, social and economic challenges that caused dramatic changes in their identity. The main challenge was the deportation to Central Asia in 1944. The decision of the Supreme Council in 1989 about repatriation caused the massive return of the Crimean Tatars to the Crimea. Finally, after the events of 2014 Crimean Tatars, as well as other residents of Crimea, became the citizens of the Russian Federation.

According to Kulpin, deportation to Central Asia in 1944 accelerated the process of Crimean Tatar identity transformation. Firstly, Crimean Tatars were forced to live as diaspora subjected to the influence of different culture. Secondly, in order to survive Crimean Tatars started to be involved in industry rather than agriculture and it motivated them to get higher education (especially in the technical field). Therefore, Russian language fluency became essential for the success (Kulpin, 2013).

Memories of the past and perception of the Crimea as “the only home” was an important factor of identity maintenance (Mukomel, Khaykin, 2016). According to Aydingün, the myth of homeland builds a connection between the ethnic group and particular land, therefore, it serves as an effective instrument in identity preservation in exile. Crimean Tatars transmitted their experience of deportation, memories and feelings about Crimea to younger generations. The myth of homeland was also one of the factors that mobilized Crimean Tatars to return to the Crimea as soon as it became possible, though they faced with difficult economic conditions during the transition period (Aydingün, Yildirim, 2010).

The events of 2014 also had a serious impact on the identity of Crimean Tatars. Although this geopolitical transformation did not change the relative status of the ethnic group (in contrast to Russians and Ukrainians), change of citizenship initiated the process of constructing a new Russian national (civic) identity. The process of national identity formation does not seem to go smoothly, the study in 2015 revealed weak identification with Russia among Crimean Tatars showing that they have not yet fully accepted the authority change (Mukomel, Khaykin, 2016). However, after becoming Russian citizens Crimean Tatars received some significant benefits - firstly, the official status of the ethnic group illegally repressed in 1944, secondly, official recognition of the Crimean Tatar language as one of the state languages of the Republic of Crimea together with Ukrainian and Russian.

### **Theoretical background of the study**

According to Social Identity Theory, suggested by Tajfel, social identity can be defined as “part of an individual’s self-concept that derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1978). Belonging to numerous social groups results in having multiple cultural identities. For instance, people can at the same time identify with their own culture (ethnic identity) and a larger society (national identity), and try to combine these identities (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Solheim, 2009; Verkuyten, Thijs, Stevens, 2012). Due to massive migration processes in the contemporary world, research interest in multiple identities (ethnic, national, place, language, religious) has recently increased.

Ethnic identity as a component of social identity refers to “a sense of belonging to an ethnic group, that is a group defined by one’s cultural heritage, including values, traditions, and language” (Phinney, 2007). Some researchers also highlight the importance of belonging as a key aspect of ethnic identity (Gong, 2007), and ethnic commitment - as an affective involvement with the ethnic group (Spiegler, Verkuyten, 2016).

National identity can be defined as “identification with a larger society – superordinate (national) in-group” (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009). Studies revealed that decreased national identity may threaten social stability - lower national identification predicts higher support for national autonomy (Livingstone, Manstead, Spears, Bowen, 2011), while strong feelings of incompatibility and identity threat lead to stronger separatist attitudes (Sindic, Reicher, 2009).

Religious identity has a complex structure and includes three components: belonging, behavior, and belief (Martinovich, Verkuyten, 2016). The level of religious identity increases in case of high perceived discrimination (Verkuyten, Yildiz, 2007; Martinovich, Verkuyten, 2012) and high perceived incompatibility between religious and national identification (Verkuyten, Martinovich, 2012).

Place identity can be defined as “sub-structure of the self-identity of the person consisting of, broadly conceived, cognitions about the physical world in which the individual lives” (Proshansky, Fabian, Kaminoff, 1983). Place identity is related to strong emotional attachment to a particular place, that provides a sense of security, connects people with others and contributes to the identity formation and maintenance. Collective social attachments to places are especially important during times of relocation (Riley, 1992).

Linguistic identity is an important component of the social identity, firstly, in terms of adaptation of minorities and immigrants in host society (Clément, Noels, Beneault, 2001), secondly, in terms of identity preservation (Kvernmo, 2004). For many ethnic minority groups, language is essential for identity maintenance, the danger of language loss is perceived as the danger of identity disappearance. According to studies, threats to minority language fluency can result in lower national identification (Livingstone et al., 2011).

Social identity is a multidimensional construct that is constantly changing due to the relationship between the ethnic minority and the majority. "The dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members” is known as acculturation (Berry, 2005). During this process, people may tend to maintain their own heritage culture and identity or participate in a larger society. This relative preference towards own or other group determines four possible strategies of acculturation: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 2005; Berry, Sabatier, 2010).

The integration strategy involves the interest in both interacting with members of the larger society and maintaining the original culture. The assimilation strategy means that individuals prefer to actively participate in the dominant society and disregard their ethnic culture. By choosing the separation strategy people tend to avoid contacts with members of the dominant culture and try to preserve their original heritage culture. People that adhere to the marginalization strategy have no interest in participation in the host culture, but at the same time, they fail to maintain their original culture.

Culture maintenance is closely related to the concept of ethno-cultural continuity. Ethno-cultural continuity means cultural connectedness which is maintained through families by passing traditions to next generations (Reading, Wien, 2009). Through ethno-cultural continuity ethnic groups retain their uniqueness, that is especially important for indigenous minorities. The motivation for ethno-cultural continuity is an active engagement of ethnocultural group members in maintaining cultural heritage (Gezentsvey Lamy, Ward, Liu, 2013). The motivation for ethno-cultural continuity also depends on ethnic identity, as the motivation to pass cultural heritage to the next generation requires initial identification with the ethnic group.

The studies focusing on immigrant and minority issues examined the relationships between social identities and acculturation strategies. The study conducted in Canada and France by Berry and Sabatier (2010) revealed that ethnic identity positively correlates with separation and negatively with integration, national identity positively correlates with integration and negatively with separation. The study conducted in the Netherlands by Verkuyten (2005) revealed the negative relationship between ethnic identity and assimilation strategy, it means that the more minority groups prefer assimilation strategy, the less likely they identify with their ethnic group. Regarding the other components of the social identity, the study in the North-Caucasian region of Russia showed that North-Caucasian regional identity promotes choosing the integration strategy among Russian ethnic minority members (Galyapina, Lebedeva, 2018).

In recent years there is an increased research attention to the psychological well-being. According to Diner, subjective well-being is the way a person evaluates his life both cognitively (life satisfaction) and affectively (positive and negative feelings) (Diner, 1984; Pavot, Diner, 1993). Self-esteem represents the perception of self, which makes it similar to the construct of subjective well-being. Self-esteem reflects a vision of own worth: people with high self-esteem demonstrate a positive attitude towards own personality, people with low self-esteem have a negative attitude towards “self” (Rosenberg, Schooler, Schoenbach, 1989).

According to studies, the strategy of integration proved to contribute to successful psychological and socio-cultural adaptation and to promote psychological well-being (Berry, Phinney, Sam, Vedder, 2006; Kasic, Mannetti, Sam, 2006; Nguyen, Benet-Martínez, 2013).

Assimilation strategy also turns out to be important for the psychological well-being (Greenman, Xie, 2008; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Horenczyk, Kinunen, 2011), however, the integration strategy has the relative greater benefits for people.

Studies focused on the relationship between multiple identities and well-being show that ethnic identity is positively related with self-esteem and life satisfaction (Umaña-Taylor, Diversi, Fine, 2002; Smith, Silva, 2011; Yap, Settles, Pratt-Hyatt, 2011). Religious identity also promotes psychological well-being (Dimitrova et al., 2017; Ajibade, Hook, Utsey, Davis, van Tongeren, 2016; Abu-Rayya, Abu-Rayya, 2009). Psychological well-being also depends on the relationship between identities - whether identities are in harmony because conflicting identities reduce the level of well-being (Brook, Garcia, Fleming, 2008).

The above studies of the relationship between multiple identities, acculturation strategies, and psychological well-being focus mainly on the problems of migrants. In this study, we plan to consider the role of multiple identities and acculturation strategies in the psychological well-being of indigenous minority group (Crimean Tatars in Crimea). On the one hand, Crimean Tatars have a certain history, collective memories, feeling of belongingness to the place they live in, on the other hand, they do not have resettlement intentions as migrants, and therefore they have different motivation for participation in a larger society, as well as for culture and identity maintenance.

It is necessary to take these features of indigenous minorities into account while answering the **research questions** that have been formulated:

1. What is the role of multiple identities, acculturation strategies, and motivation for ethno-cultural continuity for the psychological well-being of Crimean Tatars?
2. Do acculturation strategies mediate the relationship between multiple identities and subjective well-being?

## Method

**Participants.** Participants of the study - residents of Crimea who define their ethnic origin as Crimean Tatars. Sample includes 80 respondents, ranging in age from 17 to 50 years old ( $M=22.21$ ,  $SD=19.00$ ): 20 male (25%), 60 female (75%) respondents. Sample includes mostly young people, therefore, the majority - 63 respondents (78.8%) were born in the Crimea, others (17 respondents, 21.2%) were born outside of Crimea (Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan) during the deportation time. 62.5% of the participants live in the capital city - Simferopol ( $n=50$ ), 27.7% in smaller cities in different regions of Crimea ( $n=22$ ), 9.8% are from villages ( $n=8$ ). Majority of the participants are single ( $n=59$ ; 73.8%) and do not have children ( $n=65$ ; 81.3%). Also majority of the participants ( $n=72$ ; 90%) are high school graduates and are currently enrolled at the

university, 8 respondents (10%) have university degree. The participants are recruited by using snowball sampling technique.

**Data collection procedure.** Participants were recruited from students of the Crimean University of Engineering and Pedagogy. The study was introduced as investigating the cultural diversity of the Crimea and conducted among all ethnic groups of the Crimea. Participants were asked to fill out the written questionnaire during the lecture. The questionnaire was provided in Russian language.

### **Measures.**

*Multiple Identities.* To assess acculturation strategies, national and ethnic identity the study uses scales from the MIRIPS questionnaire (<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/cacr/research/mirips>), translated into Russian and adapted for use in Russia by Lebedeva and Tatarko (2009) using 5-point Likert scale ranging from "1" (= "Strongly disagree") to "5" (= "Strongly agree").

*Acculturation strategies.* Scale for each strategy includes 4 items: "It is important to me to be fluent in both Russian and in Crimean Tatar language" (integration), "I prefer social activities that involve Crimean Tatars only" (separation).

*National identity* is assessed with 9 items, for example, "I think of myself as a Russian citizen".

*Ethnic identity* is assessed with 6 items, for example, "I feel that I am part of Crimean Tatar culture".

*Place identity* is assessed with 7 items, for example, "I feel that Crimea is a part of me" (Droseltis, Vignoles, 2010).

*Religious identity* is assessed with 8 items, for example, "I am proud of being Muslim" (modified items from Verkuyten, Yildiz, 2007).

*Russian ethnolinguistic identity* is assessed with 7 items, for example, "I am proud to belong to the Russian speaking community" (Isavea, Van de Vijver, Adams, 2018).

*Self-esteem.* Self-esteem is assessed with Rosenberg Self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965), translated and adapted for Russian speakers by Laboratory of sociocultural research HSE. The scale includes 10 items, for example, "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself".

*Life satisfaction.* Satisfaction with life is assessed with 4 items, for example, "If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing" (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, Griffin, 1985; adopted by Osin and Leontiev, 2008).

*Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity* is assessed with the Motivation for Ethno-cultural Continuity scale (Gezentsvey Lamy, Ward, Liu, 2013), translated and adapted for Russian speakers (Ryabichenko, Lebedeva, Plotka, 2015). The scale includes 10 items, for example, "Long term, I would like my grandchildren and greatgrandchildren to continue our Crimean Tatar heritage".



*Sociodemographic data.* The questionnaire includes questions about the participant's gender, age, ethnicity, ethnicity of parents, education, citizenship, place of birth, place of living, marital status, ethnicity of spouse, citizenship of spouse, and number of children (if any).

**Data analysis.** The data has been processed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , correlation analysis, exploratory factor analysis, structural equation modeling with SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 22.0.

## Results

After the dataset has been screened for missing values we calculated Cronbach's Alpha coefficients to check the reliability and internal consistency of the measures. All scales reached satisfactory reliability level (Tab. 1).

**Tab. 1. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients and descriptive statistics for all variables**

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient	Mean	SD
1. Place identity	.91	4.28	.78
2. National identity	.95	2.05	1.04
3. Ethnic identity	.85	4.71	.63
4. Russian ethno-linguistic identity	.85	2.78	.96
5. Religious identity	.94	4.29	.95
6. Integration strategy	.67	3.97	.82
7. Assimilation strategy	.59	1.50	.61
8. Separation strategy	.81	3.24	1.06
9. Self-esteem	.76	3.92	.55
10. Life satisfaction	.84	3.85	.91
11. Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity	.94	4.64	.72

According to the descriptive statistics analysis (Table 1), ethnic, place and religious identities are relatively strong among Crimean Tatars, while national and Russian ethno-linguistic identities are extremely weak. The analysis also revealed a low level of assimilation strategy and a high level of integration strategy and separation strategy, as well as strong Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity and high level of life satisfaction and self-esteem.

We conducted One-Way ANOVA to compare means separately for the multiple identities (Tab. 2) and acculturation strategies (Tab. 3). The analysis revealed significant differences between ethnic, national, Russian ethno-linguistic identities ( $F(4, 395) = 132,751, p = 0,001$ ) and no differences between religious and place identity (Table 2).

**Tab. 2. Mean comparison of social identities**

Identities	M (SD)
Place identity	4.28(.78) <sup>a</sup>
National identity	2.05(1.04) <sup>b</sup>
Ethnic identity	4.71(.63) <sup>c</sup>
Religious identity	4.29(.95) <sup>a</sup>
Russian ethno-linguistic identity	2.78(.96) <sup>d</sup>

The analysis revealed significant differences between acculturation strategies ( $F(2, 237) = 178.388, p = .001$ ). The results are presented in Table 3.

**Tab. 3. Mean comparison of acculturation strategies**

Acculturation strategies	M (SD)
Integration strategy	3.97(.82) <sup>a</sup>
Assimilation strategy	1.50(.61) <sup>b</sup>
Separation strategy	3.24(1.06) <sup>c</sup>

The distribution has been checked for normality using Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the results showed no normal distribution at the level  $p < 0.05$  (except for Separation strategy, Self-esteem and Russian ethno-linguistic identity). Therefore, we conducted Spearman's correlation analysis for all variables (Tab. 4).

**Tab. 4. Spearman's correlations for all variables**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Ethnic id.	1									
2 Place id.	.410 <sup>***</sup>	1								
3 Religious id.	.419 <sup>***</sup>	.384 <sup>***</sup>	1							
4 National id. Russian	-.227 <sup>*</sup>	-.113	-.177	1						
5 ethno-ling. id. Integration	-.254 <sup>*</sup>	-.154	-.399 <sup>***</sup>	.637 <sup>***</sup>	1					
6 strategy Assimilation	-.020	-.236 <sup>*</sup>	-.213	.521 <sup>***</sup>	.501 <sup>***</sup>	1				
7 strategy Separation	-.379 <sup>**</sup>	-.122	-.334 <sup>**</sup>	.318 <sup>**</sup>	.289 <sup>**</sup>	.078	1			
8 strategy Motivation	.268 <sup>*</sup>	.434 <sup>***</sup>	.473 <sup>***</sup>	-.418 <sup>***</sup>	-.577 <sup>***</sup>	-.443 <sup>***</sup>	-.082	1		
9 for continuity Life	.623 <sup>***</sup>	.433 <sup>***</sup>	.437 <sup>***</sup>	-.226 <sup>*</sup>	-.189	-.042	-.397 <sup>***</sup>	.377 <sup>**</sup>	1	
10 satisfaction	.267 <sup>*</sup>	.233 <sup>*</sup>	.171	-.162	-.138	-.095	-.153	.369 <sup>**</sup>	.273 <sup>*</sup>	1
11 Self-esteem	.269 <sup>*</sup>	.164	.117	-.117	-.037	.019	-.176	.261 <sup>*</sup>	.239 <sup>*</sup>	.301 <sup>**</sup>

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

Correlation analysis demonstrated that there are significant positive correlations between identities: 1) ethnic, place and religious; 2) national and Russian ethno-linguistic. Both national and Russian ethno-linguistic identities correlate significantly with integration and assimilation

(positive), and separation (negative). There is a positive significant correlation between separation strategy and ethnic, place, religious identity. Same identities correlate positively with motivation for ethno-cultural continuity. Assimilation strategy correlates negatively with ethnic and religious identities, integration strategy correlates negatively with place identity.

Both components of well-being (life satisfaction and self-esteem) correlate positively with Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity and separation strategy. There is also positive significant correlation between place identity and life satisfaction. There are no significant correlations between the integration strategy and the components of psychological well-being.

Taking into account mean scores and significant correlations between the identities, we conducted the exploratory factor analysis in order to reduce their number. As a result, five social identities - ethnic, national, religious, place, and Russian ethno-linguistic - were combined into two factors (Tab. 5). The first factor is “Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity” included ethnic, religious and place identities (50% of variance explained). The second factor is “Russian national-linguistic identity” included national and Russian ethno-linguistic identities (28% of variance explained).

**Tab. 5. The results of the factor analysis for social identities**

	1 factor Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity	2 factor Russian national-linguistic identity
Place identity	.681	.494
National identity	-.413	.813
Russian ethno-linguistic identity	-.649	.622
Religious identity	.852	.278
Ethnic identity	.852	.197
% of the variance	50	28

Analysis of the relationship between multiple identities, strategies of acculturation, motivation for ethno-cultural continuity and subjective well-being was carried out using structural equation modelling. We tested four separate models for 3 acculturation strategies (integration, assimilation, separation) and motivation for ethno-cultural continuity. The strategy of marginalization in modern societies is rarely used, therefore, taking into account high motivation for ethno-cultural continuity among Crimean Tatars, this strategy has been excluded from the analysis.

The model for **integration strategy, two combined identities** (Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural and Russian national-linguistic identities), **life-satisfaction** and **self-esteem** has such characteristics:  $\chi^2/df = 1.152$ , CFI = .989, RMSEA = .044, and PCLOSE = .492 (Fig. 1).

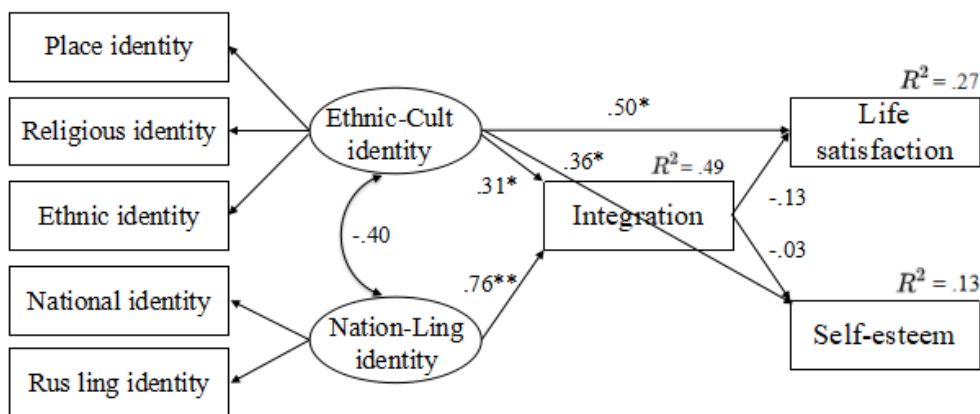


Fig. 1. Two identities, integration strategy, life-satisfaction and self-esteem (\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ )

Russian national-linguistic identity predicts integration ( $\beta = .76$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity also positively predicts integration ( $\beta = .31$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity is a significant positive predictor of life-satisfaction ( $\beta = .50$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and self-esteem ( $\beta = .36$ ,  $p < .05$ ). There were no significant indirect effects of multiple identities on self-esteem and life satisfaction through the integration strategy.

The model for **assimilation strategy, two combined identities** (Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural and Russian national-linguistic identities), **life-satisfaction** and **self-esteem** has such characteristics:  $\chi^2/df = .821$ , CFI = 1.000, RMSEA = .000, and PCLOSE = .806 (Fig. 2).

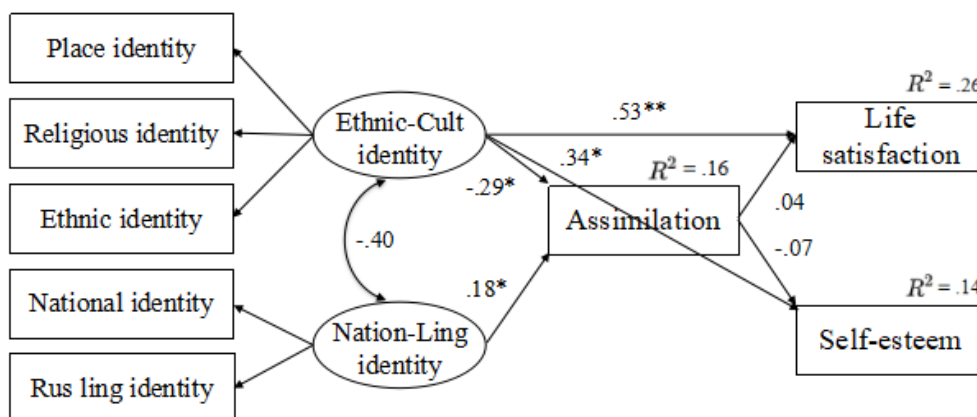


Fig. 2. Two identities, assimilation strategy, life-satisfaction and self-esteem (\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ )

Russian national-linguistic identity predicts assimilation ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity is a significant negative predictor of assimilation ( $\beta = -.29$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity is a significant positive predictor of life-satisfaction ( $\beta = .53$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and self-esteem ( $\beta = .34$ ,  $p < .05$ ). There were no significant indirect effects of multiple identities on self-esteem and life satisfaction through the assimilation strategy.

The model for **separation strategy, two combined identities** (Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural and Russian national-linguistic identity), **life-satisfaction** and **self-esteem** has such characteristics:  $\chi^2/df = 1.325$ , CFI = .978, RMSEA = .064, and PCLOSE = .344 (Fig. 3).

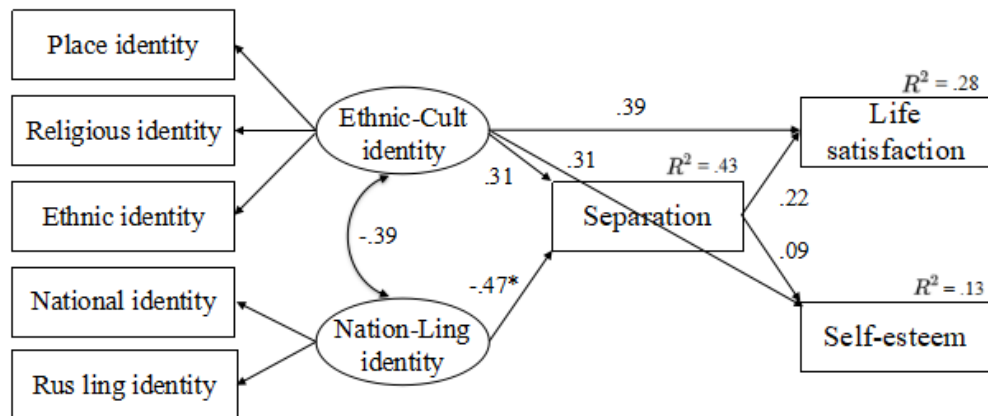


Fig. 3. Two identities, separation strategy, life-satisfaction and self-esteem (\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001)

Russian national-linguistic identity is a significant negative predictor of separation ( $\beta = -.47$ ,  $p < .05$ ). No other significant relationships for the separation strategy, multiple identities, and psychological well-being indicators were found in the model. In addition, the analysis did not reveal significant indirect effects of multiple identities on self-esteem and life satisfaction through the separation strategy.

The model for **2 factors** (Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural and Russian national-linguistic identity), **motivation for ethno-cultural continuity, life-satisfaction** and **self-esteem** has such characteristics:  $\chi^2/df = .844$ , CFI = 1.000, RMSEA = .000, and PCLOSE = .822 (Fig. 4).

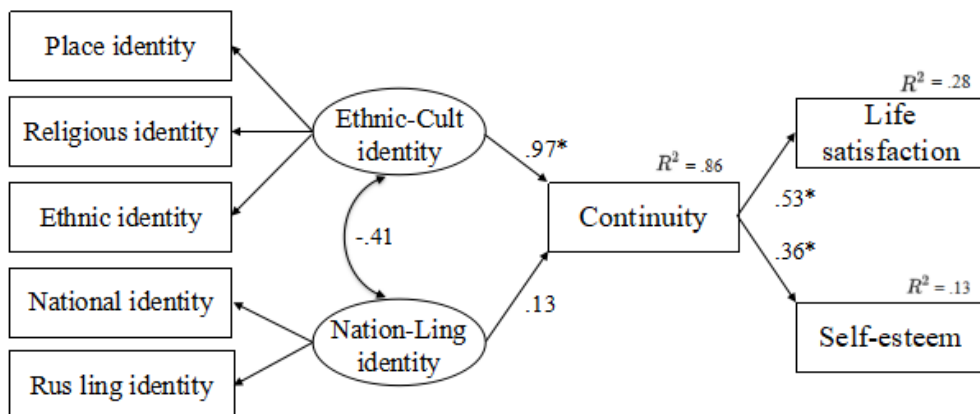


Fig. 4. Two identities, motivation for ethno-cultural continuity, life-satisfaction and self-esteem (\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01, \*\*\*p<0.001)

Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity predicts motivation for ethno-cultural continuity ( $\beta = .97$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity is a significant positive predictor of life-satisfaction ( $\beta = .53$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and self-esteem ( $\beta = .36$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The analysis also revealed

significant indirect effects on life satisfaction and self-esteem through motivation for ethno-cultural continuity (Tab. 6).

**Tab. 6. Standardized direct and indirect effects of Ethno-cultural identity and Russian national-linguistic identity, Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity, Life satisfaction and Self-esteem**

	Continuity	Life Satisfaction			Self-Esteem		
		Total	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect
Ethno-Cultural Identity	<b>.971*</b>	<b>.510*</b>	.000	<b>.510*</b>	<b>.348*</b>	.000	<b>.348*</b>
National-Linguistic Identity	.131	.069	.000	.069	<b>.047*</b>	.000	<b>.047*</b>
Continuity	-	<b>.525*</b>	<b>.525*</b>	.000	<b>.358*</b>	<b>.358*</b>	.000
R <sup>2</sup>	.86	.55	.28	.27	.25	.13	.12

Note: N= 80, \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$

There is significant indirect effect of Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity on life-satisfaction ( $\beta = .51$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and self-esteem ( $\beta = .35$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and weak significant indirect effect of Russian national-linguistic identity on self-esteem ( $\beta = .05$ ,  $p < .05$ ) through Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity.

**To summarize**, the analysis of the relationship between combined identities (Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural and Russian national-linguistic identity), three acculturation strategies, motivation for ethno-cultural continuity and subjective well-being shows that:

1. Russian national-linguistic identity positively predicts integration and assimilation, and negatively predicts separation strategy; it also has significant indirect effect on self-esteem through motivation for ethno-cultural continuity;
2. Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity positively predicts integration and negatively predicts assimilation strategy;
3. Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity is a significant positive predictor of both life-satisfaction and self-esteem;
4. Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity predicts motivation for ethno-cultural continuity; it also has significant indirect effect on self-esteem and life satisfaction through Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity;
5. Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity is a significant positive predictor of life-satisfaction and self-esteem.

## Discussion

The current study was aimed at examining the role of multiple identities and acculturation strategies in the psychological well-being of Crimean Tatar minority. The results revealed the interesting aspects of the interplay of the identities in relation with acculturation strategies, life satisfaction and self-esteem of the particular ethnic group facing the dramatic challenges of the transition period.

Our study revealed a significant positive relation between Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity (as a complex minority identity that includes ethnic, place and religious), life satisfaction and self-esteem. These results show that staying within the minority domain for Crimean Tatars, as an indigenous minority group of Crimea, corresponds with higher subjective well-being. Despite the deportation to Middle Asia in 1944, and probably even due to this event, Crimean Tatars managed to maintain their ethnicity and preserve their culture, language, and traditions. Not mixing with the local population and maintaining strong minority identity helped Crimean Tatars to survive as a unique ethnic group during almost 50 years of exile (Aydingün, Aydingün, 2007).

According to the results of our study, Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity predicts motivation for ethno-cultural continuity, that in turn enhances subjective well-being - life-satisfaction and self-esteem. For minority group members it is essential to realize that their ethnic will continue across generations and will not disappear in the future (Gezentsvey Lamy, Ward, Liu, 2013). It is especially applicable to the small indigenous minority groups in contrast to minority groups with immigration background. Immigrants have initial intention to relocate for certain reasons (economic conditions, the higher level of life, etc), and they see the integration as a way to more successful adaptation to the new environment. At the same time, members of indigenous ethnic minority groups do not have such intentions. They inhabit their native place and have certain feelings of attachment to it. For indigenous minorities, integration strategy includes a risk of shifting to assimilation in the long term. It potentially can threaten the undermine vitality of minority group, may lead to the loss of language and cultural uniqueness and, therefore, threaten the existence of the ethnic group in the future.

This might be the reason why our study did not reveal any significant relationship between integration strategy and well-being, though this strategy is known to contribute to successful psychological adaptation in general and to promote psychological well-being. Instead, the results demonstrate significant positive correlation between separation strategy and life satisfaction among Crimean Tatars. This effect can be related to collective memory. Crimean Tatars went through the traumatic experience of deportation that is still kept in collective memory, reflected

in artistic heritage and transmitted to the younger generation. The negative feelings, like anger and grief, that are related with traumatic experience in the past, may be activated, for example, during the yearly anniversary of the event (18th of May), and result in certain actions such as a demonstration in the city center. Such feelings may be directed towards people that are not actually guilty of some historical events but are perceived as being guilty (Mikitinets, 2016; Martinovic, Jetten, Smeekes, Verkuyten, 2017). The fact that Russia is seen as a heritage country of the USSR might prevent Crimean Tatars from choosing integration strategy and can partly explain weak national identity among Crimean Tatars in general. However, low level of national identity among Crimean Tatars can be also explained by the fact that the process of national identity formation is still ongoing (Mukomel, Khaykin, 2016). Four years period after the referendum is unlikely to be sufficient to construct strong and stable national identification.

In order to create a strong national identity, a person needs to go through a long socialization process within fundamental social institutions, for example, education system. Young people that constitute the majority of the sample for this study, were born in Ukraine and spent most of their school years within the Ukrainian school education system, they studied Ukrainian language and literature, had Ukrainian history lessons, therefore, were able to create a relatively stable identity as citizens of Ukraine. Crimean Tatars of the older generation were born outside of Crimea (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan), went through the Soviet education system and were raised as Soviet citizens. Anyway, both age groups of Crimean Tatars did not have any previous relations to Russia, apart from using Russian language in daily communication. They perceive Russia as more “stranger” to them, in contrast to the majority population of Crimea. Ethnically Russian residents of Crimea had closer relationships with Russia, while living in Ukraine that in turn made the process of Russian national identity formation for them more natural.

According to the results, Russian ethno-linguistic identity combined with national identity serve as a positive predictor of integration and assimilation. The Russian language has always been a language of interethnic communication in Crimea, both in Soviet and post-Soviet time. Russian linguistic identity emerged relatively earlier, in comparison with Russian national identity that Crimean Tatars and other residents of Crimea have recently acquired. Proficiency in Russian language was also essential for obtaining higher education, and therefore, economic survival during deportation period (Kulpin, 2013). Despite these facts, the strength of Russian linguistic identity was relatively low, according to the results.

Religious identity, in contrast, positively correlates with separation strategy and negatively with assimilation. Strong religious identity, especially among young Crimean Tatars, is not necessarily related with their true adherence to Islamic religious beliefs. Firstly, Islam is closely related to ethnicity and helps to feel like a member of the large Islamic world, that is especially



important for minority group members. It can also serve as a way to resist assimilation (Kouts, 2014; Muratova, 2015). Secondly, Islam manifests itself both in everyday life (pray of Namaz), in repetitive ceremonies during the year (fasting during Ramazan), as well as during important life events (circumcision, nikah, etc). Therefore, when speaking about Islamic groups it is important to note that it is hardly possible for them to distinguish religious (Muslim) aspect of their identity from the ethnic aspect. Additionally, there is also a general tendency in the contemporary Islamic world to shift to more extreme forms of religion (like fundamentalism and radicalization). For example, some Islamic organizations, like Hizb ut-Tahrir (Islamic Party of Liberation), are listed as extremist and illegal according to the Russian legislation (Supreme Court Decision on 14 February 2003), however, were not illegal in Ukraine and Ukrainian Crimea.

Apart from the religious identity, according to the results, separation strategy also positively correlates with place identity. Place identity is closely connected with the ethnic identity of Crimean Tatars. It is also included into ethnonym “Crimean Tatar”, this basically means that being Crimean Tatar is impossible without Crimea. Crimea also has a symbolic meaning for Crimean Tatars, that became stronger during the deportation period. Crimea was perceived as “home” even by those who were born outside of Crimea and had never been there before. The myth of Crimea was transmitted to younger generations and helped Crimean Tatars to keep the idea of “returning to the homeland” in their mind for years (Aydingün, Yildirim, 2010). After the USSR Supreme Soviet decision in 1989 Crimean Tatars returned to Crimea, despite difficult economic and political conditions in the 90s. Therefore, Crimea for Crimean Tatars does not have only “space” aspect (as territory), it has also temporal meaning - it is a place the ethnic group belongs to and where it will live across generations, it symbolizes the link between the past and the future that ensures the continuity of the Crimean Tatar people.

Political orientations of Crimean Tatars have always been pro-Ukrainian. Ukraine was perceived as a country that accepted Crimean Tatars after the deportation, despite the decision of their return to home was made by the USSR Supreme Soviet. So the challenges of repatriation for Crimean Tatars went together with the creation of the Ukrainian state after the USSR collapse. Crimean Tatars supported European plans of the Ukrainian government and were mostly against joining Russia. They tend to perceive negatively recent political changes, and they see the integration of Crimea to the Russian territory as highly undesirable (Guzenkova, Nemenskiy, Khizriyeva, 2016). This may partly explain the negative correlation between place identity and integration strategy among Crimean Tatars, and positive correlation with separation strategy revealed in our study.

With regard to the Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity and integration strategy, we obtained thought-provoking results. Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity positively predicts integration strategy among Crimean Tatars, though all three components of this complex identity correlate positively with separation. Attempting to explain this finding, we should take into account specific features of this particular context - historical background of Crimean Tatars, attachment to the place and shared feeling of historical “right” to live in this place, as well as ethnic identity strengthened during deportation period, etc. Crimean Tatars seem to have a different understanding of context they have to live in. Having “right” on a certain place and perceiving the place as “owned” (Brylka, Mähönen, Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2015) promotes the vision of the future of the ethnic group as closely related with the particular place. However, the revealed positive indirect effect for the relationship between the Russian national-linguistic identity and self-esteem through the Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity shows that there are implicit processes of self-identification still ongoing inside the ethnic identity of Crimean Tatars. Under the condition of sufficiently inclusive context in Crimea (general support for minority rights, state policies towards minority language and education, orientation towards multiculturalism among ethnic majority members), this may contribute to the eventual turn of Crimean Tatars towards integration. Therefore, the results highlight the importance of taking historical, political, social context into account in studies on minority issues.

## **Conclusion**

Events of 2014 became an example of massive geopolitical transformation. Such changes in society caused rapid shifts in the identity of different ethnic groups of Crimea, and initiated the process of national identity formation, that goes differently for the majority and minority members of society. Current study was aimed at examining the relationship between multiple identities, acculturation strategies and subjective well-being among Crimean Tatar minority. Our study revealed that:

1. Both components of subjective well-being - life satisfaction and self-esteem - are positively predicted by Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity and Motivation for ethno-cultural continuity.
2. Crimean Tatar ethno-cultural identity also positively predicts integration and negatively predicts assimilation strategy. Russian national-linguistic identity positively predicts integration and assimilation, and negatively predicts separation strategy.

Attempting to address the second research question, we did not find any significant mediation effect for the relationship between multiple identities and subjective well-being through acculturation strategies. The study also showed no relation between integration strategy and subjective well-being among Crimean Tatars. There was a mediation effect for the

relationship between the Russian national-linguistic identity and self-esteem through the motivation for ethno-cultural continuity.

Some **limitations**, however, need to be acknowledged. Firstly, apart from small sample size due to the obvious difficulties in accessing minority groups, the sample for the study was not balanced in terms of gender and age. Secondly, in terms of methodology, we used one version of the questionnaire for multiple identities and did not control the sequence of identity activation. Thirdly, in terms of the procedure, we did not take into account the interviewer effect, having collected the data from the Crimean Tatar respondents by the researcher with visibly Russian ethnic origin.

The current study has many opportunities for **further development** in various directions. Firstly, the future study will benefit from adding the component of comparison, for example, across generations. Crimean Tatars of different age groups differ in place of birth (in Crimea or Middle Asia), and also in socialization experience (within the Soviet Union for older people and independent Ukraine for the younger generation). Comparison with other indigenous minority groups in Muslim regions of Russia, especially with the ones with similar experience of involuntary relocation (deportation) in the past might also bring some thought-provoking results. Secondly, future research would benefit greatly from using mixed-method approach. Qualitative methods are particularly valuable in addressing sensitive topics and traumatic experiences of minority groups, they can also contribute to the understanding of historical and political context, as well as hidden meaning of certain historical events reflected in the collective memory. Thirdly, longitudinal design of the future research may shed light on the process of identity formation within the society in transition. Repetitive observations on the same sample might reveal the gradual strengthening of the Russian national identity in the future, especially among younger generation undergoing socialization through Russian educational institutions.

Current study contributes to the field of research on multiple identities and their distinct roles in psychological well-being and helps to better understand the process of identity transformation during the transition period. Joining Russia revealed some pre-existing tensions between different ethnic groups in Crimea. At the same time, it also provoked a serious escalation of tension in the relations with other countries. These factors threaten social stability in Crimea, prevent it from smooth integration into the Russian context and may potentially increase political and economic difficulties Russia is currently facing with. Further comprehensive study of interethnic relations in Crimea is therefore of great importance.

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