“Recognize yourself in he and she who are not like you and me.”

Carlos Fuentes, Mexican writer, 1928–2012
IMMIGRATION AND ACCULTURATION

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- Understand immigration as a major contributor to cultural diversity.
- Explain culture shock and reverse culture shock.
- Identify acculturation models and acculturation orientations.
- Analyse factors that influence cross-cultural adaptation.
- Design communication strategies to facilitate cross-cultural adaptation.
INTRODUCTION

It goes without saying that our society is becoming more culturally and ethnically diverse by the day. An important contributor to cultural diversity is immigration. Advances in technology, modern transportation facilities, telecommunications, and international business transactions make it much easier for people to travel, work, and live in another country. Globalization not only redefines the movements and mobility of people in contemporary societies, but also delineates new parameters for interpreting immigration. Historically, immigration was conceptualized as restricted cross-border movements of people, emphasizing permanent relocation and settlement of usually unskilled, often indentured or contracted labour, or people who were displaced by political turmoil and thus had little option other than resettlement in a new country. Today, growing affluence and the emergence of a new group of skilled or educated people have fuelled a new global movement of migrants who are in search of better economic opportunities, an enhanced quality of life, greater freedom, and higher expectations. Those people form an integral part of the immigrant population today – skilled migrants. Relocated into the legal and political institutions of the host culture, migrants aspire to a higher quality of life, good education for themselves or their children, the freedom to be their own boss, autonomy in their choice of work, and prosperity.

Although the reasons for migration vary, all immigrants face the same task of moving between their home culture and the mainstream culture of their new country. Acculturation, a process through which immigrants are integrated into the host cultural environment, is essential to being able to move between the two cultures effectively as circumstances and situations demand. This capability not only involves a mental reconciliation of sometimes incompatible pressures for both assimilation into the mainstream and differentiation from it, but also is important for immigrants’ economic survival in the host country. Ien Ang (2001: 34), a cultural studies scholar, argues that while migrants derive a sense of belonging from their identification with their homeland, they are also fully aware that ‘This very identification with an image [of] “where you’re from” is also a sign of, and surrender to, a condition of actual marginalization in the place “where you’re at”.’ Immigrants’ ability to achieve a sense of place in the host country, where they feel somewhat ‘out of place’, at least upon arrival, is crucial to their psychological well-being.

Living in a multicultural society is a long educational process, in which tensions between host and home cultures are constantly evident. In order to maximize the benefits of cultural diversity, a country that embraces a multicultural policy must still be aware of the potential threats such a policy poses to cultural uniqueness. Around the world, host nationals express concerns about the threat that incoming ethnic cultures pose to mainstream cultural values, the existing political and economic power structure, and the distribution of employment opportunities. Migrants everywhere, on the other hand, form associations to maintain their ethnic and cultural heritage and promote the survival of their languages within mainstream institutions. For example, in both Germany and France, there is growing anxiety about the withdrawal of immigrant groups into their home cultures and their increasing unwillingness to integrate into the host culture. Situations like this raise the question for all multicultural nations: Does multiculturalism pose a threat to cultural identity? Our understanding of what multiculturalism means influences our acculturation strategies.

This chapter concentrates on immigration and acculturation. We firstly define and explain the terms diaspora, migrancy, and transnationalism. Current practices in relation to transnationalism, migrancy, immigration, and identity are reviewed so as to explore the concepts and analyse their strengths and weaknesses. Next, we discuss the concept of multiculturalism and its differentiated benefits for host nationals and immigrants. We explain culture shock and reverse culture shock. The concept of acculturation is defined and key acculturation models are introduced. This chapter identifies a range of personal, social,
and political factors that shape acculturation outcomes. Finally, it concludes by a discussion on communication strategies for facilitating cross-cultural adjustment.

MIGRATION AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Human migration is more than 1 million years old and continues in response to complex human cultural and existential circumstances. The concept of migration contains emigration and immigration, both of which involve spatial and social transformations. In modern times, profound changes in the world political and economic order have generated large movements of people in almost every region. Viewed in a global context, the total world population of immigrants, that is, people living outside their country of birth or citizenship, is huge. Massey and Taylor (2004: 1) wrote that if these people, estimated at some 160 million, were united in a single country they would ‘create a nation of immigrants’.

Critical thinking...

Immigration can be voluntary and involuntary. Would the adjustment in the host country be easier for voluntary migrants – for example, skilled migrants who choose to live permanently in a new country where they believe their skills will be recognized? Or do you think the experience of adjusting to a new culture would be the same regardless of reasons for migration?

Trends of migration: past, present, and future

Geographical mobility has consistently characterized the lives of populations in all historical eras. For example, following the lifting of restrictions on race-based immigration in the 1950s and 1960s, Asians and Africans began to migrate in large numbers to North America, Australasia, and Europe. There has also been substantial migration from Latin America into the United States, and significant labour migration into newly industrialized nations such as Korea, Malaysia, and Singapore during the 1970s and 1980s (Brubaker, 2001). In Europe, the countries with the highest emigration rates until 1960 were Italy, Spain, Portugal, former Yugoslavia, and Greece (Vukeljic, 2008).

There is a widespread consensus among migration scholars that it was not until the 1980s that migration came to be one of the most important factors of global change (Castles, 2000). According to a report from the International Organization for Migration (2006), the number of international migrants is thought to have reached between 185 and 192 million in 2005, an upward trend that is likely to continue. Most countries are affected by a range of migratory phenomena, such as labour migration, refugees, and permanent settlement. A salient feature of the Asia Pacific system is the increasing scale and significance of female migration (Ehrenreich and Russell-Hochschild, 2002). For example, the massive economic development of Malaysia that began after the implementation of the New Economy Policy (NEP) in the 1970s provided wide opportunities for employment for local and foreign workers (Chin, 2003). The higher wage and status of industrial work attracted many Malaysian women to the workforce, which creates problems in household labour. To resolve this problem, Malaysians hire low-wage female domestic workers from other countries, such as the Philippines and Indonesia. Consequently, the number of foreign maids increased from a few hundred in the 1970s to around 228,000 by 2010 (Asrul Hadi, 2011). Migration affects not only the migrants themselves, but also the receiving societies.
Diaspora, migrancy, and transnationalism

The term diaspora is based on the Greek terms speiro, meaning ‘to sow’, and the preposition dia, meaning ‘over’. The Greeks used diaspora to mean migration and colonization. In Hebrew, the term initially referred to the settling of scattered colonies of Jews outside Palestine after the Babylonian exile, and came to have a more general connotation of people settled away from their ancestral homeland. The meaning of diaspora has shifted over time and now refers not only to traditional migrant groups, such as Jews, but also to much wider communities composed of voluntary migrants living in more than one culture. For example, there were an estimated 5 million Philippine citizens living in over 160 countries in 2000 (Ehrenreich and Russell-Hochschild, 2002). Diasporas are not temporary; they are lasting communities. They differentiate themselves from their new environment, identify themselves with other members of diasporas through networks of symbols and meanings, and form an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1983). Such a community maintains the identification of members outside the national borders of space and time in order to live within the new environment (Clifford, 1997).

The concepts of migrancy and transnationalism are intertwined. Migrancy highlights movement, so that greater attention is paid to movement in both space and time in transnational practices. Basch and colleagues (1994) define transnationalism as the process by which migrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. Many immigrants today build social networks that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders. For example, ethnic business entrepreneurs in Australia maintain close ties with their ethnic group because bonds of solidarity within the ethnic community provide resources for business operations as they establish and develop businesses (Dyer and Ross, 2000). In addition, ethnic communities may be a source of intangible assets, such as values, knowledge, and networks upon which ethnic business people may draw (Liu, 2011). However, clientele from the ethnic community alone is insufficient to sustain ethnic businesses. To survive in a competitive market in the host country, ethnic businesses have to expand their target customers to the mainstream group. Those who present themselves well in both cultural contexts can reap the financial reward from drawing upon a wider clientele. Immigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships spanning borders – familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political – are referred to as transmigrants.

Sociologists generally focus on the receiving end of immigration, while anthropologists tend to work at both ends of the immigration process, beginning in the country of birth and asking what prompts individuals to leave particular communities, what happens to them in their receiving country, and how they remain connected to their former homeland. While sociological and anthropological approaches
appear to differ in their methodologies, they do not differ in their outcomes; both fields have developed ‘push-and-pull theories’ in an attempt to explain the reasons, selectivity, flow, and scope of migration (Kearney, 1995). For example, predominant push factors include economic stagnation, decline in living standards, reduction of national resources, low personal income, unemployment, political and other discrimination, political persecution, alienation, and natural disasters. On the other hand, the principal pull factors are economic prosperity, education, appropriate employment, and higher income.

As Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) observed, immigration is no longer considered as a one-way or two-way journey. Instead, immigrants bridge here and there by continuously coming or going, or by engaging economically, socially, or politically in their home country while residing abroad. In essence, sociological and anthropological approaches appear to agree that immigrants do not make a sharp break with their homeland; for example, they continue to observe ethnic festivals or religious practices while living in the host culture.

It’s important to look at how migrants maintain contacts across international borders, and how their identity is not necessarily connected to a unique home. One implication is that migrants continuously negotiate identities between ‘old’ and ‘new’ worlds, creating new configurations of identification with home in both places. One interesting example of this is Salih’s (2003) research on Moroccan women living in Italy. Writing about their cooking practices, Salih shows how these women fuse elements of both countries’ cuisines to symbolize their double identities in homes ‘here’ and ‘there’. When in Italy, the women mix traditional Italian recipes with imported Moroccan ingredients to enliven the dishes; and conversely, returning to Morocco for holidays, Italian goods are used in the preparation of local Moroccan meals. Rather than seeing the women’s identities in relation to specific homes as mutually exclusive, Salih demonstrates how the meaning of home is defined through interactive transnational identifications with homes stretched across geographically remote places.

Identity reconstruction for immigrants

Migrancy and transnationalism necessitate the reconsideration and reconstruction of identity. The difficulty that confronts immigrants in terms of how they reconstruct their identity in order to fit into the new society has been extensively researched and commented on in the scholarly literature. For example, the melting-pot ideal used to be the dominating discourse of immigrant identity in Australia and the United States. People with this ideal take the view that national identity should be the amalgam of the cultures – a melting pot – so that differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are reduced, in the hope that ‘we’ become more like ‘them’, and ‘they’ see us as less alien and more like them (Zubrzycki, 1997). Over time has come the realization that a multitude of ethnic cultures can co-exist in a given environment, retaining their original heritage while functioning in the mainstream culture. This has led to a change of perspective from the melting pot to the salad bowl to depict contemporary American society (Ogden, Ogden and Schau,
2004). Similarly, Canada has been described as a mosaic of cultural groups, to reflect the distinguishable constituent parts of the multiple cultures there. The survival of ethnicity has directed scholars’ attention towards understanding how immigrants integrate into the host society. When immigrants interact with people from host cultures, they move not only between languages, but also between cultures. Central to this culture-switching process is the presentation of the self in terms of their relationships to the ingroup (their ethnic group) and outgroup (the mainstream cultural group). Connectedness to either their own ethnic group or the larger cultural group is not merely affiliation between the self and others, but also entails fundamental differences in the way the self is construed under different circumstances (Triandis, 1989). As Waters (1995: 3) states, migrancy and transnationalism are the ‘social process in which the constraints of geography and social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding’. In this process, the boundaries used to define one’s identities also recede.

**Critical thinking...**

The host country environment plays an important role in influencing immigrants’ adaptation. Think of the differences between the melting pot and the salad bowl metaphors when talking about immigrant identity. What are the positives and negatives of each conception? If you were (or if you are) a migrant, which would you prefer? Why?

**DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURALISM**

The increase in cultural diversity has led to the promotion of multiculturalism, which ‘aims to achieve social cohesion through an environment where diverse cultures are recognized and valued’ (Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2000: 4). The concepts of multiculturalism and diversity have captured the imagination of the public and scholars alike, suggesting a reconfiguring of economic arrangements, adjusting of political systems, and a recasting of cultural identities.


**Attitudes towards diversity and multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism stresses the importance of recognizing cultural diversity within a given social and political environment. On the one hand, it promotes multi-ethnic or multicultural co-existence; on the other hand, it can lead to group distinctions (Brewer, 1997) and threaten social cohesion (Berry, 2001). Berry and Kalin (1995) argue that groups are more in favour of multiculturalism when they see advantages for themselves. The **ideological asymmetry hypothesis** (Sidanius and Pratto, 1999) suggests that hierarchy-attenuating ideologies such as multiculturalism appeal more to low-status groups than to high-status groups because the existing status hierarchy tends to be more beneficial for members of high- than low-status groups. For minority and lower-status groups, multiculturalism offers the possibility of maintaining their own
culture and at the same time obtaining higher social status in society. Majority group members, on the other hand, may see ethnic minorities and their desire to maintain their own culture as a threat to mainstream cultural identity and their higher-status position. Thus, multiculturalism has more to offer to less powerful groups than to more powerful ones.

Multiculturalism holds that a multitude of ethnic cultures can co-exist in the mainsteam or host culture and yet retain their original ethnic cultural heritage (Tadmor and Tetlock, 2006). The question remains: to what extent can immigrants maintain their access to ethnic language, religion, customs and traditions, and ethnic organizations without posing a threat to the overall political unity of the host society? Studies conducted with Asian immigrants in Australia show that they tend to view multiculturalism as a greater benefit than do Anglo-Australians, who see it as more of a threat (Liu, 2007). The perceived threat to one’s own culture from another culture is one of the greatest stumbling blocks in intercultural relations (Stephan, Ybarra and Bachman, 1999). Such fears interfere with diplomatic relations, business cooperation, and interpersonal relations between members of different cultures, and can even lead to wars between nations. Such fears may also lead to prejudice by people in one culture against another. According to the multicultural hypothesis, confidence in one’s cultural identity involves a sense of security, which is a psychological precondition for the acceptance of those who are culturally different (Berry, Kalin and Taylor, 1977). When people feel their cultural identity is threatened, they reject others. The extent to which members of the majority tolerate ethnic culture maintenance plays an important role in the construction of a truly multicultural society.

### Theory Corner

#### Integrated Threat Theory

A significant amount of research indicates that perception of threat plays an important role in prejudice towards outgroups in general and immigrants in particular. Integrated threat theory, advanced by Walter G. Stephan and his associates (1999), identifies four domains of threat: realistic, symbolic, negative stereotypes, and intergroup anxiety. Realistic threat concerns threat to the political and economic power and well-being of the ingroup. Immigrants are likely to evoke such a threat as they need jobs and may also require additional resources from the host society. Symbolic threat concerns group differences in values, beliefs, morals, and attitudes, which may lead to prejudice against members of outgroups. Negative stereotypes serve as a basis for negative expectations concerning the behaviour of members of the stereotyped group. For example, when migrant group members are perceived to be untrustworthy, mainstream group members may feel threatened when interacting with them. The fourth type of threat, intergroup anxiety, refers to people’s feeling of being personally threatened in intergroup interactions because they are concerned about negative outcomes for themselves, such as being embarrassed, rejected, or ridiculed. Interacting with immigrants is often difficult for people from the host culture because of differences in language and cultural values, and this adds to intergroup anxiety in interaction.
INTRODUCING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Reference

Further reading on integrated threat theory

Theory in Practice

MUSLIMS IN WESTERN EUROPE

Following a number of terrorist attacks in the early twenty-first century, including the September 11 attacks in the USA, the 2002 nightclub bombings in Bali, and the 2005 bombings in London, Muslims have increasingly become the targets for hostility across the world. Croucher (2013) studied the effects of growing Muslim populations in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany, where Muslims are increasingly becoming ‘victims of prejudice and hate’ (pp. 50–51). He applied Stephan’s four domains of threat in integrated threat theory to examine the relationship between host nationals’ perceptions of Muslims’ motivation to fit into the host culture and the level of perceived threat from them. Firstly, he found that when members of the host culture feel a threat, either real or symbolic, they are more likely to believe that the immigrant group does not want to integrate. Secondly, the research revealed that there is increasing nationalism among host nationals across Europe, expressed particularly by intensifying ethnic or linguistic pride. Finally, Croucher’s findings showed that the economic and political context strongly affected the perceived level of threat from migrants. Muslim immigrants are considered a higher threat, both symbolic and real, in the United Kingdom and France, where both unemployment and anti-Muslim rhetoric is high. People in Germany, on the other hand, see Muslims as less of a threat.

Questions to take you further
How are Muslim immigrants viewed in your country? How about Chinese or Indian immigrants? If there is a perceived threat, do you think the threat is real or symbolic?

Reference

Further reading on integrated threat theory and immigration
Critical thinking...

Does multiculturalism pose a threat to our cultural uniqueness? How do we locate a cultural home while living in a multicultural society?

Challenges faced by host nationals and immigrants

The arrival of immigrants as new settlers brings changes to the host cultural environment. As pointed out by Sayegh and Lasry (1993: 99), it is difficult ‘to imagine a host society which would not be transformed after immigrants have been accepted as full participants into the social and institutional networks of that society’. Thus, both the immigrant group and host nationals undergo psychological and sociocultural adjustment as a result of the presence of culturally distinctive others (Ward and Kennedy, 2001). Under some circumstances, psychological adjustment for members of the majority may be even more difficult than that experienced by immigrants. The reason is that immigrants, in many cases, are aware of the need to adjust to their host cultural environment as soon as, if not well before, they set foot in the host country. People in the majority group, however, are not likely to be so well-prepared to accept or adjust to the changes in their lives brought about by the immigrant population. Hence, in discussing multiculturalism, it is important to take into consideration both ethnic minorities and the majority group or groups, because the lack of accommodating attitudes in either group may hamper the realization of a positively diverse and equal society.

Significant debate has surrounded the question of how immigrants should live in their host societies. In some countries, immigrants are increasingly seen as a source of social disturbance and economic burden, and opinion polls show unease with the growing visibility of foreign cultures. There seems to be no consistent framework for immigrant ethnic minorities to participate in the political and social life in European countries. Some European countries, like Germany, see immigrants mainly as temporary labour, whereas the traditional countries of immigration, including the United States and Canada, see immigrants as permanent settlers (Hargreaves, 1995). Governments differ in the degree of cultural diversity they are ready to accept. The 2004 French law banning the wearing of religious insignia in schools, for instance, has over time led to many hot public debates about the issue of the role of religion in the public sphere. In Western European countries such as the Netherlands and France, young Muslim women wearing the hijab, a headscarf that fully covers the hair and neck of Muslim women, have become the symbols of controversy (Vivian, 1999). Thus, the presence of visible multicultural symbols, such as ethnic shops and clothing, is not an indicator of a truly multicultural society unless there is both mutual acceptance and equal societal participation by all groups.
Critical thinking...

What do you believe that immigrants should do to acculturate into the host country? Do host nationals and immigrants share the same understanding of what the immigrants should do to adapt into the host culture? For example, should immigrants abandon their traditional dress in favour of the dress of the host culture?

CULTURE SHOCK AND ACCULTURATION ORIENTATIONS

Culture shock and reverse culture shock

*Culture shock* refers to the feelings of disorientation and anxiety that a sojourner experiences when entering a new culture. It occurs in social interactions between sojourners and host nationals when familiar cultural norms and values that govern behaviours are questioned in the new cultural environment (Furnham and Bochner, 1982). Adler (1975) notes that culture shock is a psychological and social process that progresses through several stages. For some people, it may take several weeks to overcome psychological stress; for others, the frustration of culture shock may last as long as a year. Symptoms of culture shock include depression, helplessness, anxiety, homesickness, confusion, irritability, isolation, intolerance, defensiveness, and withdrawal, all indicators of psychological stress.

The most widely known model is the *U-curve model*. The initial stage of culture shock, usually called the *honeymoon stage*, is characterized by intense excitement associated with being somewhere different and unusual. The new arrival may feel euphoric and excited with all the new things encountered. The second stage is called *disintegration*, when frustration and stress begin to set in owing to the differences experienced in the new culture. The new environment requires a great deal of conscious energy that is not required in the old environment, which leads to cognitive overload and fatigue. Communication difficulties may occur. In this stage, there may be feelings of discontent, impatience, anger, sadness, and feelings of incompetence. The third stage of culture shock is called the *reorientation* or adjustment phase, which involves reintegration of new cues and an increased ability to function in the new culture. Immigrants start to seek solutions to their problems. A sense of psychological balance may be experienced, which initiates an evaluation of the old ways versus the new. The fourth stage of culture shock is labelled the *adaptation* stage. In this stage, people become more comfortable in the new culture as it becomes more predictable; they actively engage in the culture with their new problem solving and conflict resolution tools, with some success. The final stage is described as *biculturalism*, where people are able to cope comfortably in both the home and new cultures. This stage is accompanied by a more solid feeling of belonging as people have recovered from the symptoms of culture shock.

The literature on the classical U-Curve hypothesis suggests that there is an association between the length of time spent in the host country and the cross-cultural adaptation experience. This and other similar models are not without criticism, because they seem to simplify cross-cultural adaptation and fail to reflect the range of factors at play (Ward, Okura, Kennedy and Kojima, 1998). Furthermore, numerous studies have not found support for claims about the U-Curve (e.g., Kealey, 1989). Nevertheless, intercultural scholars do recognize that the culture shock models significantly contribute to the theoretical
understanding of the study of cross-cultural adaptation processes. For instance, in a longitudinal study on the cross-cultural adaptation of 35 international students studying in New Zealand, Ward and colleagues’ (1998) found that psychological and sociocultural problems were greatest at the beginning of their sojourn. In a more recent study of 500 Korean immigrants residing in the United States, Park and Rubin (2012) reported that longer residence was associated with better adaptation. The longer the sojourners stay in the new culture, the more likely they are to develop sociocultural and linguistic competence as they become more experienced in dealing with their lives in the new culture.


Culture shock can also be experienced by people who return to their home country after an extended stay in a foreign culture. Such an experience is referred to as reverse culture shock. In fact, in early work, Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) extended the U-curve hypothesis to account for reverse culture shock, in the W-curve. This type of culture shock may cause greater distress and confusion than the original shock experienced in the new culture. In reverse culture shock, the home culture is compared adversely to the admired aspects of the new culture. Research indicates that no one wants to admit that he or she is having difficulty readjusting to the home culture, so the re-entry process often involves suffering in silence. Upon first returning home, there is a sense of relief and excitement about being back in familiar surroundings, seeing old friends and family, and eating familiar food. However, to the surprise of everyone, especially the returning expatriate, a sense of depression and a negative outlook can follow the initial re-entry cycle. Several factors contribute to the downturn phase. Firstly, upon re-entry to the home culture, there is a feeling of a need to search for identity. Secondly, the home culture may look so negative at times that the re-entering person longs for the ‘good old days’ in the host country where she or he lived for the previous period. Thirdly, the old values, beliefs, and ways of thinking and living, with which the person was once familiar, may have changed, resulting in a sense of loss or ambiguity. Finally, people too may have changed over the intervening years; resuming deep friendships with old friends may not be automatic or easy. For example, Chiang (2011) conducted a study of 25 young Taiwanese who emigrated to Canada and New Zealand with their parents at a young age in the 1980s and 1990s, but who had returned to Taiwan. The findings showed that although these returnees were born and raised partly in Taiwan, they reported encountering reverse culture shock during their adaptation process. More than half of the participants interviewed would like to move back to the place to which they had emigrated for a better living environment and for their children’s education in the future.

Critical thinking...

Can you list some factors that contribute to culture shock? What about reverse culture shock? Can you give an example to explain why reverse culture shock tends to cause greater distress and confusion than the culture shock the person first experienced in the new culture?
Acculturation refers to the changes that cultural groups undergo after being in contact over a period of time (Berry, 1986). Acculturation is often marked by physical and psychological changes that occur as a result of the adaptation required to function in a new and different cultural context. The most widely applied model of acculturation was developed by John Berry (1980). According to his model, immigrants are confronted with two basic issues: maintenance of their heritage culture and maintenance of relationships with the host society. On this continuum, acculturation orientations range from a positive value placed on both the heritage and the new culture (integration), a negative value to the old and a positive value to the new (assimilation), a positive value to the old and a negative value to the new (separation), and a negative to both cultures (marginalization). For example, individuals who wish to maintain their ethnic traditions and at the same time to become an integral part of the host society are integrationists. Marginalization refers to individuals devaluing their cultural heritage but not having significant psychological contact with the host society either. Marginalized people may feel as though they do not belong anywhere or, in a variant of this orientation, they may reject ethnic identity altogether as a valid source of self-esteem (Bourhis et al., 2007, refer to such people as individualists). Assimilation and separation both refer to rejecting one culture and living exclusively in the other. Many immigrants move between these orientations and over time gravitate to one – most commonly integration or assimilation. People adapting to new cultures face changes in diet, climate, housing, communication, roles, social networks, norms, and values. The stress associated with such changes is called acculturation stress.

A shortcoming of Berry’s original model is that it places the emphasis in acculturation on minority or immigrant groups, on the assumption that immigrants have the freedom to pursue the acculturation strategy they prefer in the host society. In reality, host-culture attitudes can exert a strong influence on how immigrants experience the acculturation process (Kosic, Mannetti and Sam, 2005). Like immigrants, members of a host society also develop acculturation attitudes (Rohmann, Florack and Piontkowski, 2006). For them, acculturation centres on whether they want immigrants to maintain their heritage culture and whether they value intergroup contact. Their acculturation attitudes, in a model analogous to Berry’s but referring to the host culture, are referred to as integration, assimilation, segregation, and individualism (Bourhis et al., 1997). Discordance between majority and minority acculturation attitudes leads to negative outcomes such as stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination (Zagefka and Brown, 2002). To overcome the limitations of the original model, Berry (2005) proposed a three-dimensional model, including cultural maintenance, contact and participation, and the power to decide on how to acculturate. With the promotion of cultural diversity and multiculturalism, immigrants are more welcome to integrate into the host culture while maintaining ties with their own ethnic heritage.

Integration offers immigrants the opportunity to keep their ethnic cultural practice while maintaining a positive relationship with the host society. Integration probably benefits immigrants most, as among other advantages it gives them an opportunity to raise their lower social status. An important assumption of social identity theory is that membership in a high-status group is desirable because it contributes to positive social identity (Hogg and Abrams, 1988). To maintain a positive self-concept derived from a satisfying social identity, individuals who belong to a group of subordinate status may either strive for a higher status by leaving their low-status group or try to upgrade the status position of their group as a whole (Tajfel, 1978). In the case of immigrants, it is difficult, if not impossible, for them to upgrade the status position of their whole ethnic group. Efforts to achieve a positive social identity are therefore often focused on integrating into the host group rather than remaining as a member of the foreign outgroup. Evidence from
previous research also indicates that the integration strategy is linked to good psychological adjustment, a sense of belonging, and a feeling of acceptance.

Critical thinking...

Immigrants across the world are subject to various stereotypes. Why are some immigrant groups subject to more prejudice and negative stereotypes than others? What factors do you think make people most resilient in the face of such prejudice?

THEORY CORNER

BICULTURAL IDENTITY INTEGRATION

Many people are now exposed to more than one culture and become bicultural or multicultural. These bicultural/bilingual individuals may be international students, expatriates, business people, immigrants, refugees, foreign-born migrants, or children of interracial marriages. As a result, biculturalism and bilingualism have been attracting increasing attention in research in the field of cross-cultural psychology and intercultural communication. One influential theoretical concept in this field is bicultural identity integration (BII), developed by Benet-Martínez and colleagues. Bicultural individuals differ in how they combine and negotiate their two cultures. Benet-Martínez and Haritatos (2005) conducted a study using a sample of Chinese American biculturals to unpack the construct of BII, that is, the degree to which a bicultural individual perceives his or her two cultural identities as ‘compatible’ versus ‘oppositional’. The BII measure has two components: distance (versus overlap) and conflict (versus harmony) between one’s two cultural identities or orientations. A high BII person is one who identifies with both heritage and mainstream cultures, sees them as compatible and complementary, and sees themselves as part of a combined, blended cultural being (e.g., ‘I keep Chinese and American culture together and feel good about it’); a low BII person also identifies with both cultures, but they are more likely to feel caught between the two cultures and prefer to keep them separate (e.g., ‘I feel conflicted between the Chinese and American ways of doing things’). Benet-Martínez and Haritatos’s study also found that the perceived cultural distance and conflict have distinct personality, acculturation, and sociodemographic antecedents.

Reference

Further reading on bicultural identity integration
Theory in Practice

SHIFTING BETWEEN CULTURAL IDENTITIES

Bicultural individuals engage in a process called cultural frame switching, where they shift between their two cultural interpretive frames in response to cues in the social environment. However, although extensive research has investigated the differences between cultural groups, relatively less is known about cultural switching processes within multicultural or bicultural individuals. For example, how do bicultural individuals organize and move between their various cultural orientations without feeling disoriented? Cheng, Lee and Benet-Martínez (2006) conducted a study to examine how the valence of cultural primes affects the cultural frame switching of individuals with high and low levels of bicultural identity integration (BII), using a sample of 179 first-generation and 41 second-generation Asian–American biculturals. They used an implicit word-priming task that included one of four types of words: (a) positive words associated with Asians, (b) negative words associated with Asians, (c) positive words associated with Americans, or (d) negative words associated with Americans. The findings indicate that when exposed to positive cultural cues, biculturals who perceive their cultural identities as compatible (high BII) respond in culturally congruent ways, whereas biculturals who perceive their cultural identities as conflicting (low BII) respond in culturally incongruent ways. The opposite was true for negative cultural cues. These results confirmed that the cultural frame switching process is different depending on one’s level of BII, and that both high and low BIIs can exhibit culturally congruent or incongruent behaviours under different situations.

Questions to take you further
What kind of factors can contribute to positive bicultural experiences for individuals? What kind of individual differences can also shape the positivity of one’s bicultural experiences, and in turn influence the level of BII?

Reference

Further reading on biculturalism in practice

CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION

Regardless of their reasons for calling the new country home, all sojourners have to adapt to an unfamiliar cultural terrain. Cross-cultural adaptation refers to the process of increasing one’s level of fitness in a new cultural environment (Kim, 1988). A number of factors influence the level of anxiety, distress, and frustration experienced by sojourners or new immigrants, and thus influence cross-cultural adaptation outcomes.
Factors influencing the cross-cultural adaptation process

Similarity between host and home cultures
The degree of similarity between the host and the home cultures of immigrants can predict the acculturation stress experienced by immigrants. For example, Sudanese immigrants in Australia exhibit significantly larger psychological and cultural distance as compared to those from New Zealand. In addition to physical appearance and language, cultural traits such as beliefs and values may also be used to set one group of immigrants apart from others. The early Chinese settlers in Australia in the 1840s were resented because they were efficient, hardworking, and economically competitive, and were therefore viewed as a threat to the livelihoods of the European migrants (Ang, 2000). Increasing cultural distance encourages immigrants to remain psychologically located within their ethnic groups. This creates a challenge, particularly for ethnic business people who need to be accepted by both the co-ethnic and the mainstream groups if they are to sustain businesses and clientele.

Ethnic social support
Immigrants extend their connection to their home culture through various types of ethnic association, including religious groups. Ethnic community networks provide valuable support for immigrants in adjusting to the new culture. For example, previous research identifies social networks as a critical part of the entrepreneurial activities of immigrants in many countries (Light and Gold, 2000). When immigrants relocate from the home country, they bring with them significant attachments to their home culture. They also extend this attachment in the host country by connecting to ethnic social networks, which provide an initial cushion for negotiating a sense of place, as evidenced in ethnic residential concentration in certain areas. Ethnic social support can therefore create a space where immigrants can bridge cultural distance and gradually build connections with the mainstream culture.

Personal characteristics and background
Demographic factors such as age, native language and education, personal experience such as previous exposure to other cultures, and personality characteristics such as extraversion may all influence cross-cultural adaptation outcomes. Younger migrants generally adapt more easily than older ones, particularly when they are also
well-educated. However, there are studies that did not find age a significant predictor of acculturation outcomes (Park and Rubin, 2012). The ability to speak the language of the host culture certainly facilitates one’s ability to adapt and function in the new culture and therefore reduces acculturation stress. Scholars argue that the lack of host language proficiency is one of the main barriers that sojourners face during cross-cultural adaptation, especially in terms of developing quality and quantity of contact with host members (e.g., Berry, 2005). Previous exposure to other cultures also better prepares a person psychologically to deal with the stress and frustration associated with settling in a new culture. For example, international students cope with the settling-in process better if they have travelled to other countries where they cannot use their native language to communicate.

### Effect of mainstream media

As an institution of culture and an influential shaper of cultural thought, mass media influence the consciousness of the public through the symbolic environment they create and sustain (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967). This symbolic environment is commonly referred to as symbolic social reality (Adoni and Mane, 1984). When an ethnic group is portrayed in the mass media, that particular symbolic social reality becomes a common category utilized by others to identify members of that ethnic group (Potter and Reicher, 1987). Because of this naturalizing effect on the materials they present, mass media can serve as a contributor to perpetuating or diminishing racial stereotypes (Mastro and Greenberg, 2000). This role of the mass media in activating and perpetuating racial stereotypes is particularly significant when the audience either has little direct experience of the group or lacks other sources of verification (Khan et al., 1999). For example, Lee and Wu (2004) found that exposure to negative images associated with Asian Americans create doubts and ambivalence about them among other racial groups. When negative stereotypes are perceived to be real, prejudice is a likely outcome. An ethnic group’s perception of how they are portrayed in the mass media will affect their attitudes to the host culture and, subsequently, their desire to integrate into the host society (Liu, 2006).

### Effects of ethnic media

In addition to exposure to mainstream media, ethnic minorities or immigrants also have access to ethnic media, such as newspapers printed in their native language published in their host countries. Ethnic media have both intragroup and intergroup functions. As an intragroup function, ethnic media promote ethnic group cohesion not only through their news stories but also via the ethnic language they use (Ward and Hewstone, 1985). For example, Chinese ethnic groups in Australia, like other groups, value their own language as a tool in maintaining their cultural identity (Luo and Wiseman, 2000). Ethnic media also serve to help immigrants to broaden and deepen their knowledge about the unfamiliar host culture via their familiar language. Past studies have found that ethnic minorities, especially during the early stages in the new culture, may avoid interpersonal encounters when they can instead use less personal mass media, such as newspapers printed in their native language, as alternative and less stressful sources of learning about the host environment (Adoni and Mane, 1984). Ethnic media, therefore, play a positive role in affecting immigrants’ cross-cultural adaptation.

### Intergroup contact

The amount of interpersonal contact between immigrants and host nationals can influence the process of cross-cultural adaptation. Contact between groups has long been considered to be an important strategy for improving intergroup relations. Pettigrew (1997) examined the responses of over 3,800 majority group members from France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Germany, and found that intergroup contact played a critical role in reducing bias. Appropriate and friendly intergroup contact may translate into more positive perceptions and may also strengthen ingroup identification by creating positive feelings about it.
Potentially negative stereotypes created by the mass media may also be reduced by more frequent contact. For example, Hartmann and Husband (1972) demonstrated that among adolescents living in low immigration areas, the tendency to define race relations in the terms used by the mass media was greater than among those living in high immigration areas. Intergroup contact or intercultural friendships can facilitate immigrants’ cross-cultural adaptation.

**Political and social environment**

The host culture’s political and social environment has a major impact on adjustment to new cultural surroundings. Specific outgroups are more (or less) welcome in a culture. Negative attitudes towards immigrants and sojourners can demonstrate a rejection of a minority group and establish impermeable social boundaries (Bourhis et al., 1997). Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor (1977) argue that the extent to which an immigrant or minority group is supported in the host society (captured by the numerical and political strength of the group, support for its language and culture, and support from institutions in the larger society like the media) is a strong predictor of resilience of the language and culture in the new society and a marker of discrimination as well. The higher the support (which they call ethnolinguistic vitality), the more resilient the ethnic group is and the lower the discrimination will be. Numerous studies have found that perceived discrimination is significantly associated with acculturative stress and psychological adaptation. For instance, Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000) compared the experiences of discrimination on psychological distress among a large sample of 1,146 immigrants representing seven ethnic groups (Russian, Ingrian/Finnish, Estonians, Somalis, Arabs, Vietnamese, and Turks) in Finland. They found that, across the sample, self-reported experiences of discrimination were highly predictive of psychological well-being. Factors affecting the degree of tolerance of particular outgroups include the social or political policies of the mainstream culture, such as political representation, citizenship criteria, language requirements, and employment opportunities.

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**THEORY CORNER**

**THE STRESS–ADAPTATION–GROWTH MODEL**

Communication scholar Young Y. Kim (2001) explains the intercultural adaptation process in a new culture in her stress–adaptation–growth model. According to this model, adaptation is a progressive series of positive and negative experiences, rather than a smooth, continuous process. This process can be pictured as a coiled spring, which stretches and grows but is pulled back by its own tension. Kim argues that acculturation is an interaction between the stranger and the host culture. Personal and social communication, the host environment, and individual predisposing factors are the central features of the acculturation process. Personal communication refers to the individual’s ability to use verbal and non-verbal codes to communicate in the host environment. Social communication refers to the interaction between the newcomer and host nationals. The environment includes: the degree to which the host
culture is receptive to strangers; the extent to which host nationals exert pressure on newcomers to conform to their culture’s values, beliefs and practices; and ethnic group strength. Predisposing factors include how much people know about their new culture, their ability to speak the language, the probability of employment, their understanding of the cultural institutions, and the characteristics that newcomers have regarding orientation change and personal resistance.

Reference

Further reading on cross-cultural adaptation

Theory in Practice

MEASURING ADAPTATION OF REFUGEES FROM POST-CONFLICT ZONES

Refugees constitute a special category of migrants. Often, they have been through traumatic experiences, such as persecution, or substantial discrimination amounting to a gross violation of their human rights in their home countries. They have to flee their home country to seek refuge and protection in a foreign country. Many of them suffer from distress, anxiety, or mental illness after arrival in the destination country. The loss of social networks, separation from family members, lack of language proficiency of the settlement country, fear of repatriation, and the situation in the home country, among other factors, play a role in perpetuating psychiatric symptoms, particularly depression.

Shoeb, Weinstein and Mollica (2007) conducted ethnographic interviews with 60 Iraqi-born refugees in Detroit, a city which is home to the oldest, largest, and most visible population of Arabs in North America, to inform the development of the Iraqi version of the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire (HTQ). The individual life stories of the participants revealed their life in Iraq, the decision to escape, the circumstances of their flight, the escape journey and transition in refugee camps, conditions surrounding their acceptance for resettlement in the United States, their early experiences in America, and the nature of their current social participation within the Iraqi community and the larger society. The in-depth data provided rich resources for developing culture-specific items used in the HTQ. The findings from this study also painted a vivid picture of the ordeal and challenges refugees may face in resettlement and integration into the host culture.

Questions to take you further
What level of support do you think a receiving country should provide for refugees arriving in its land? How can refugees contribute to their receiving country?
Developing strategies for cross-cultural adaptation

Immigration invariably means having to live in both the home culture and the host culture. Consequently, migrants engage in communication with three types of audience: members of the mainstream culture, people from the home country, and their children who have grown up in the new culture. Firstly, migrants have to learn how to communicate with members of the dominant culture in the host country. This involves learning about a new culture and the practices and discourses of this host culture. They face a choice of how to respond to the new culture they encounter, allowing themselves to be assimilated into the new culture (assimilation), opting to minimize their engagement with the new culture by withdrawing into an ethnic enclave (separation), developing the skills of functioning simultaneously in two different cultures and of effectively moving between cultures (integration), or withdrawing from both the host and home cultures (marginalization). Secondly, immigrants must relearn how to communicate with people from the home country. Engaging with the home culture can take the form of remaining as a part of it by keeping in regular contact with people from the home country. Some immigrants, for example Vietnamese refugees who arrived in Australia in the 1970s, may lose touch with the old country owing to the prevailing conditions there. If this happens, they will eventually only have a historical understanding of the ‘home’ country, and they will lose the ability to move between the two cultures. Thirdly, immigrants have to learn to ‘translate’ between their old culture and their children’s hybridized culture (Liu and Louw, 2009). Learning to cope with their children’s hybrid culture is a part of the daily routine of older generations of immigrants, as dealing with their parents’ and grandparents’ different culture is a part of the daily life of second- or third-generation immigrants.

This myriad of relationships requires immigrants to adopt strategies to integrate into the host country. Learning as much as possible about the new culture is the first step of acculturation. Successful cross-cultural adaptation is related not only to the psychological and social well-being of the immigrants, but also to their economic survival. Part of the process of acculturation is learning survival skills, including how to use banking services, where to go shopping, when to eat, how to work and rest, how to use public transport, among other things essential to daily life. Building intercultural friendships can be helpful as it not only gives immigrants local guidance, but also increases the opportunity for intergroup contact, hence promoting mutual understanding. It is not uncommon to find many immigrants remaining within a network of their own ethnic group, not being aware that the best way to become acquainted with another culture is to establish relationships with members of that culture. Further, cross-cultural adaptation also requires immigrants to learn to accept differences.

As intercultural communicators, we should try to understand and interpret the things we experience as they are within a particular cultural context, rather than using our own cultural norms as the only
judgement criteria. Regardless of how well we have prepared ourselves before entering a new culture, there will always be moments when we experience culture shock, encounter difficulties, or feel frustrated at our own incapability to accomplish our goals. Therefore, a positive attitude towards the new culture is something we should carry with us throughout the cross-cultural adaptation process.

**SUMMARY**

- The cultural diversity that immigrants bring to the host country also means changes for mainstream cultural beliefs, values, and identities. Thus, diversity creates challenges for both sides. It is not only the immigrant group but also the host nationals who need to undergo psychological and sociological adjustment as a result of the presence of culturally distinctive others.

- The concepts of migrancy and transnationalism are intertwined. The transnational movement associated with migrancy is no longer a one-way journey. Many immigrants today build social networks across geographic, cultural, and political borders, hence engaging in the process of transnationalism.

- All people moving to a new culture experience culture shock, the process of which can be divided into several stages. Returning migrants may experience reverse culture shock, too.

- Orientations to heritage and host cultures can result in four acculturation orientations: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization.

- Acculturation processes can be influenced by a range of personal, social, cultural, and environmental factors.

**JOIN THE DEBATE**

To what extent should migrants be encouraged to maintain their heritage culture?

People move to other cultures for different reasons, including joining family, undertaking further study, or seeking humanitarian protection or employment opportunities. For example, almost 1.5 million migrants over the age of 15 have settled in Australia since 2000. As the global number of migrants increases, the debate over the maintenance of heritage culture remains at the forefront. A melting pot versus a salad bowl is a commonly used metaphor when discussing managing diversity in multicultural societies. While we enjoy the benefits of cultural diversity and encourage migrants to keep their heritage, cultural traditions, and practices (particularly language and customs), and pass these on to future generations, we also hope that the endorsement of diversity will not create a threat to the uniqueness of our own culture. The question is: To what extent should we encourage migrants to maintain their heritage cultural practices without creating a threat to the unity of the mainstream culture? What difference does context (e.g., public versus private) make? What other factors make a difference, and what difference do they make?
The cronulla riots

Alcohol, the Australian flag, and raw racism fuelled a violent demonstration by thousands of young people in Sydney, Australia. The demonstrators were singing and waving the national flag as they ‘reclaimed’ Cronulla, a beachfront suburb of Sydney, in December 2005. The incident was known as the Cronulla riots – a series of confrontations between white Australian youths and Middle Eastern Australian youths. Fuelled by drink, the crowd of white youths became a mob, beating up anyone who looked Middle Eastern. That night and the next, carloads of young men of Middle Eastern descent headed for the beach suburbs to launch similarly random and savage acts of revenge.

In the lead-up to the riot, allegations circulated around the local area that groups of Middle Eastern youths had asked white women on the beach wearing bikinis to ‘cover up’; a 23-year-old man was stabbed in the back outside a golf club by what police described as a group of males of Mediterranean or Middle Eastern appearance; and three off-duty lifeguards from north Cronulla were assaulted by youths of Middle Eastern origin. It was believed that these alleged incidents, among others, prompted retaliation by Cronulla locals.

On Sunday, 11 December 2005, approximately 5,000 people gathered on the Cronulla beach to protest against the reported incidents of assaults and intimidating behaviour by people, most of whom were identified in earlier media reports as Middle Eastern youths from the suburbs of Western Sydney. The crowd initially assembled without incident, but violence broke out after a large group chased several men of Middle Eastern appearance into a nearby hotel. As the crowd moved along the beach and foreshore area, a man on the back of a utility vehicle began to shout ‘No more Lebs!’, a chant picked up by the group around him. A small number of demonstrators wore clothing bearing racist slogans such as ‘We Grew Here, You Flew Here’, ‘Ethnic Cleansing Unit’, ‘Aussie Pride’, ‘Save Nulla’, ‘Lebs Go Home’, and ‘No Lebs’. Through the remainder of the day, several more individuals of Middle Eastern appearance were allegedly assaulted, including several people who were not ethnic Arabs (among them Turks, a Jewish boy, and a Greek girl). Police and ambulance workers who were leading the victims away from the riots were also assaulted by groups of people throwing beer bottles. Several dozen people were treated for minor cuts and bruises, while six individuals were evacuated under police escort for medical care. In some cases, police cars were swamped and stomped on as they tried to move from one violent flare-up to another.

The police employed riot equipment, including capsicum spray, in order to subdue several of the attackers. Local police at Cronulla had earlier commented that they were sufficiently prepared to deal with any anticipated violence at Cronulla beach, but they appeared to be overwhelmed by the sheer number of protesters.

number of people who arrived. A call for reinforcements was placed to police stations in other suburbs. The following nights saw several retaliatory assaults in the communities near Cronulla and an unprecedented police lock-down of Sydney beaches and surrounding areas. Political spokespeople attributed the state of conflict to years of disagreements and simmering hatred between the two main ethnic groups involved in these incidents: white Australians and Middle Eastern Australians. In the years after the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York City, many began to feel a sense of fear created by terrorism and a perceived threat of Islamic terrorists. This has heightened public awareness of Arab-Australian communities in Sydney and their ongoing differences with non-Muslim Australians.

ABC’s Four Corners programme interviewed some of the participants – young Anglo-Australians who joined the seething mob at Cronulla on 11 December 2005 and Middle Eastern men who took part in revenge attacks. The report exposed a strong perception of threat among white Australians in the suburb. The white Australian youths expressed their desire for the government to stop appeasing people who follow Islam, for fear that those people would ‘out-breed white Australians’. ‘Once they get the numbers’, one of the youths remarked, ‘they can vote their members into parliament. And once their members are in parliament, they can pass laws, like they’ve already tried to get the Islamic law into Australia a few times.’ To many Arab Australians, the Cronulla riot represented an attack on their entire community. A comment from one youth who twice joined the revenge convoy was: ‘When I watched the TV, it hurt me, it hurt everyone ... they hit our innocent people ... so why not, may as well do the same thing.’

The aftermath of the riots on the economy in the local area was enormous. Many of the small businesses in the nearby beachside suburbs reported a significant downturn in trade following the main incident of 11 December 2005, normally a busy time of the year. On 22 December, the BBC reported that some beachside businesses indicated a slump in takings of up to 75 per cent since the riots. Authorities in Britain, Canada, and Indonesia issued warnings to their citizens visiting the area to be on guard for possible continuing racial violence. Subsequently, the New South Wales state government announced an AU$250,000 (at the time, approximately US$183,000) campaign to bring tourists back to Sydney beaches, including advertisements featuring well-known sports stars, assuring tourists that it was safe to visit the area.

References


Questions for discussion

1. What were the causes of tension between white Australian youths and Lebanese Australian youths? How common do you think these tensions are between immigrant and host communities elsewhere?

2. What characteristics of culture can you identify based on the Cronulla riot?

3. What problems does this case reveal about co-existence of different cultural groups in the host country?

4. What challenges can you identify from this incident regarding promoting multiculturalism in our society?

5. How can we prevent such incidents from happening again in our society?
FURTHER READINGS

Acculturation orientations and strategies


This article discusses the potential issues arising when intercultural couples raise children. Twenty-one participants were interviewed regarding their parenting experiences as part of an intercultural couple, where each member of the couple had different sociocultural heritages with distinct cultures of origin, as identified by the participants. All couples identified that either they or their parents were born and raised in a different country of origin from that of their partner. The study identified the diverse strategies that were used by intercultural parents to negotiate diversity based on their cultural differences, and their degree of mutual acculturation emerged to support this model. These strategies of adaptation included assimilation, cultural tourism, cultural transition, cultural amalgamation, and dual biculturalism.

Culture shock


This paper provides a theoretical basis for the empirical link between traits and intercultural success indicators relying on the A (affect) B (behaviour) C (cognition) model of culture shock. With respect to affect, the authors argue that intercultural traits can be differentiated according to whether they predispose individuals to be (in)sensitive to either threat or challenge. Whereas stress-related traits (emotional stability, flexibility) are linked to a lower tendency to perceive an intercultural situation as threatening, social-perceptual traits (social initiative, open-mindedness) may predispose individuals to perceive its challenging aspects and respond with positive affect. As a behavioural consequence, stress-buffering traits may protect against culture shock, whereas social-perceptual traits may facilitate cultural learning. Finally, the ABC model defines cognitions in terms of associated cultural identity patterns. Whereas stress-related traits may help individuals refrain from sticking to one’s own culture, social-perceptual traits reinforce identification with new culture.

Factors influencing cross-cultural adaptation


The preferred emigration destinations of adolescents reflect images and stereotypes of other countries that continuously emerge in a multitude of local and global discourses and from other concrete experiences with other countries. This study found that, if they wish to leave Iceland, female adolescents are more likely to move to other Nordic countries, particularly Denmark. Male adolescents, on the other hand, preferred English-speaking countries that have a reputation for economic or military power, such as the United States or the United Kingdom. The study also found that Icelandic adolescents who are proud of their Icelandic
nationality and have more highly educated parents are more likely to prefer to emigrate to Europe for study or employment opportunities, whereas adolescents who actively wish to leave Iceland are more likely to move to North America.


This multidisciplinary volume considers the cross-cultural adaptation process from psychological, sociological, anthropological, and communication perspectives. Using diverse case examples, it integrates theoretical and empirical research and presents studies of both long- and short-term adaptation. Reflecting these multidisciplinary and multi-societal approaches, this collection presents 14 theoretical or research-based essays dealing with the cross-cultural adaptation of individuals who are born and raised in one culture and find themselves in need of modifying their customary life patterns in a foreign culture. Papers in the collection include the adjustment of sojourners, the psychological acculturation of immigrants, and the issues around cross-cultural adaptation.

**Multiculturalism**


Multiculturalism is a fiercely debated subject, and this article argues that ambivalence is a central feature of people’s perspectives on societal diversity. Focusing on interviews with leaders of three Norwegian social movement organizations, the study found that despite the leaders’ very different organizational and political vantage points, they share a common ambivalence towards multiculturalism. This perspective on political and organizational leaders’ views on diversity provides an important supplement to analyses aimed at classifying specific political preferences on multiculturalism. Ambivalent multiculturalism, the author argues, is key to understanding those elements of public debate that are not ‘either/or’.