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Acculturation Preference Profiles of Spaniards and Romanian Immigrants: The Role of Prejudice and Public and Private Acculturation Areas

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Acculturation Preference Profiles of Spaniards and Romanian Immigrants: The Role of Prejudice and Public and Private Acculturation Areas

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ABSTRACT. The main goal of this study was to identify acculturation preference profiles using cluster analysis in public and private areas of culture in the host and immigrant populations, and to find out the relationship between these profiles and prejudice levels. Four hundred and ninety-nine Spaniards and 500 Romanians participated in a survey. The sampling of Spaniards was multistage random and the sampling of Romanians was by quota. The results confirm our predictions. Romanians who are less prejudiced against Spaniards prefer assimilation in public areas and integration in private areas. Romanians who are more prejudiced against Spaniards prefer integration in public areas and separation in private areas. Spaniards who are less prejudiced against Romanians prefer integration in both public and private areas. Spaniards who are more prejudiced against Romanians prefer assimilation in both areas.

Keywords: acculturation preferences, immigrants, prejudice, Relative Acculturation Extended Model

A RECENT UNITED NATIONS (UN) REPORT estimated that in 2010 there were 214 million immigrants, and that in the next 40 years, their most likely destinations would be the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Germany, Australia and France, in that order (UN report on World Population Policies, 2010). Successful solutions must be found to incorporate these people in the host societies and ensure peaceful coexistence between majorities and minorities. It is therefore important to study the psychological acculturation process and find out the psychosocial variables that can favor it.

The psychological acculturation process refers to how people change and adapt (in ways of life, attitudes, identity, values, etc.) when they come into continuous contact with people of another culture. In the words of Berry (2005), it refers to “changes in an individual who is a participant in a culture contact situation, being influenced both directly by the external culture, and by the changing culture of which the individual is a member” (p. 701).
According to classic models of acculturation (e.g., Berry, 1990; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997), and more recent contributions (i.e., Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997; Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, & Obdrzalek, 2000; Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006; Zagefka & Brown, 2002), different acculturation preferences may be identified as a combination of two dimensions (maintenance and adoption) in both majority and minority groups: integration (maintain elements of home culture and contact/adopt elements from the host society), assimilation (contact/adopt elements from the host society without maintaining elements of the home culture), separation/segregation (maintain elements of the home culture without contact/adopt elements from the host society) or marginalization/exclusion (preference for not maintaining or adopting cultural elements).

The Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM; Navas et al., 2005; Navas & Rojas, 2010) includes all these majority (host) and minority (immigrants) perspectives.

**Acculturation Preferences: The Role of the Areas**

The RAEM takes into account (and measures) the different sociocultural areas or spheres of life in which acculturation takes place (Navas et al., 2005; Navas & Rojas, 2010). According to the RAEM, acculturation preferences also depend on these areas, which may be classified as public, or peripheral (i.e., political, social well-being, work and economic) and private, the hard core of the culture (i.e., social, family, religious and values; Navas & Rojas, 2010).

Although the Berry and Bourhis models admit that acculturation options are different depending on the life context, few studies have identified specific contexts, and when they do, they are usually concerned with values, language, cultural traditions and social relationships (e.g., Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov, 2000; Kosic, 2002; Roccas, Horenczyk, & Schwartz, 2000; Sam, 2000). Only a very small number of studies have highlighted the need to consider that people (members of either a minority or a majority group) may have different acculturation preferences depending on the context in which this process occurs (e.g., Arens-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2004; Kwak & Berry, 2001; Taylor & Lambert, 1996). Depending on the area in which the interaction with persons from other cultures takes place, people do not prefer the same acculturation options. For example, someone may prefer assimilation (adoption without maintaining) in a work context, integration (adopting and maintaining) in the social relations area, and separation (maintaining without adoption) in the religious area. And the same person may have all three preferences simultaneously.

Some differences in acculturation preferences would be expected depending on the area of life (public or private), and the group analyzed (majority or minority). In public areas (i.e., political, social well-being, work, economic), intergroup contact is not only more frequent, but necessary to be able to perform the daily tasks basic to survival and adapt to the new society (e.g., work, go to the doctor, go to class, go shopping). So immigrants (minority group) would be expected to prefer adopting elements from the host society culture (i.e., assimilation or integration). Adoption is not essential in private areas (i.e., social, family, religious, values), which are reserved to ingroup interaction, and so they would be expected to prefer to keep their home culture (i.e., integration or separation) as a way of maintaining their social group identity and differentiate themselves from other groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Preference for immigrants maintaining their culture would be weaker in natives (majority group). Moreover, in private areas, natives could perceive cultural maintenance as a symbolic threat (to their own values, religion, culture, etc.) (e.g., Stephan & Stephan, 2000). To reduce this threat, the host population would prefer that immigrants assimilate or integrate.
Outgroup Prejudice: Relationship to Acculturation Preferences

Psychosocial research has shown that acculturation preferences (in majority and minority groups) depend on many variables. One of these variables is outgroup prejudice, especially of natives against immigrants. Prejudice has traditionally been considered a general negative attitude toward a social group or its members. Defenders of the three-component attitude model (e.g., Breckler, 1984; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Harding, Proshansky, Kutner, & Chein, 1969; Zanna & Rempel, 1988) conceive it as a particular combination of beliefs, feelings and tendencies to action.

The first studies on the relationship between prejudice and acculturation preferences were done in the 1990s (majority groups only), mainly in Canada and France (e.g., Bourhis & Gagnon, 1994; Bourhis & Guimond, 1992; Kalin & Berry, 1994). In general, these studies found that members of the host culture preferred assimilation of immigrants (especially in the family values area) when their attitudes toward immigrants were positive (less prejudiced).

European studies, for example, in Germany (e.g., van Dick, Wagner, Adams, & Petzel, 1997; Zick, Wagner, van Dick, & Petzel, 2001), Italy (e.g., Kosić, Mannetti, & Sam, 2005; Kosić & Phalet, 2006) or the United Kingdom (e.g., Zagefka, Tip, González, & Cinnirella, 2012) have shown that host population prejudice against immigrants is related to acculturation preferences (cultural maintenance and adoption). In general, natives who preferred integration of immigrants were less prejudiced against them and showed less ingroup bias. Some studies also stressed the moderating role of prejudice in acculturation preferences, especially in the dimension of cultural maintenance. When the majority was prejudiced against minority groups, they were opposed to immigrants maintaining their original cultural traditions. When members of the host culture were less prejudiced against minority groups, they did not mind whether members of minority groups maintained their original cultural traditions (preference for integration or separation) (Brown & Zagefka, 2011; Zagefka et al., 2012). These results suggest that strongly prejudiced people in the host society do not want immigrants to maintain their culture. Studies done with the RAEM in Spain, relating acculturation preferences and prejudice, in natives and immigrants from different origins show similar results (Navas, García, Rojas, Pumares, & Cuadrado, 2006; Navas & Rojas, 2010).

The Present Study

This study was intended to find out if there is a relationship between prejudice and acculturation preferences in native and immigrant populations depending on whether the area of culture is public or private. From the results of the studies cited above, several hypotheses can be established.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Strongly prejudiced natives do not want immigrants to keep their home cultural traditions (i.e., preference for assimilation and/or exclusion) or else would like them to adopt elements from the host culture (i.e., preference for assimilation and/or integration). This trend (less cultural maintenance and more adoption) would take place in public and private areas because strongly prejudiced natives consider requiring immigrants to adopt and respect the host culture to be a “right” and, at the same time, an obligation of immigrants living in “their” country (host country). Less-prejudiced natives want immigrants to maintain their original customs (i.e., preference for integration and separation) in public and private areas.
H2: It could be hypothesized that immigrants who are strongly prejudiced against natives do not prefer assimilation. Maintaining their home customs (i.e., integration or separation) or not adopting the customs of the host society (i.e., separation or marginalization) is a way of positively differentiating themselves from the outgroup and maintaining a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This tendency (more maintenance than adoption) would take place more intensely in private areas, which define individual identity. Less-prejudiced immigrants would have no objections to adopting host society customs (i.e., assimilation or integration). This trend (more adoption than maintenance) would be stronger in public areas.

METHOD

Participants

Four hundred and ninety-nine Spaniards and 500 Romanian immigrants participated in a survey. All participants were living in six municipalities in two Spanish autonomous regions (Andalusia and Valencia).

There are more Romanian immigrants in Spain than any other nationality, outnumbering Moroccans in 2007 according to official statistics. The geographical distribution of Romanian immigrants is characterized by their high concentration in a few provinces and cities, where in recent years the number of Romanian residents has increased (Viruela, 2006). Natives are moderately less prejudiced against Romanians than other immigrant groups in Spain, such as Ecuadorians (rated best in some respects) and Moroccans (rated lowest in general) (e.g., López-Rodríguez, Cuadrado, & Navas, 2013; Rojas, Navas, Pérez, Cuadrado, & Lozano, 2012).

Multistage random sampling was used for Spaniards. In the first stage, a team of experts selected the municipalities with the largest percentage of Romanian immigrants in the census (at least 5% of the census had to be immigrants and of these at least 2% Romanian). The second stage was stratified, with proportional allocation by sex and age, and finally, random routes were selected in each municipality. The sampling error was estimated at ±4.3%. Sampling of the Romanian population was by quota in the same municipalities as the Spanish sample. The purpose was to select groups analogous to what would be found with a random sample. The mean age of Spaniards was 45.0 years (SD = 16.7) with 48.8% men and 51.2% women. The mean age of Romanians was 34.0 (SD = 10.6), with 47.9% men and 52.1% women.

Variables and Instruments

Acculturation preferences. This variable was measured on two scales asking about the participants’ acculturation preferences (natives and immigrants): home culture maintenance and host culture adoption, following an adaptation of Berry’s (1997) taxonomy of acculturation options and other acculturation models (i.e., Interactive Acculturation Model [IAM], Bourhis et al., 1997; Relative Acculturation Extended Model [RAEM], Navas et al., 2005). Each of these scales consisted of eight items distributed in two dimensions (public and private areas). The maintenance scale is an indicator of how much the participants want the immigrants to maintain the customs of their home country. For Spaniards the question was: How much would you like Romanians
who live here to maintain the customs of their own country? For Romanians it was: How much would you like to maintain the customs of your own country? The adoption scale is an indicator of the degree to which the participants prefer immigrants to adopt the customs of the host society. For Spaniards, the question was: How much would you like Romanians who live here to adopt/practice the customs of this country? And for Romanians it was: How much would you like to adopt/practice the customs of this country? All the items were answered from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much), specifying the areas indicated in the RAEM: public (political, social well-being, work and economic) and private (social, family, religious and values) (area contents are shown at the end of Table 1).

**Outgroup prejudice.** The Prejudiced Attitude Test (PAT) (Rojas, Lozano, Navas, & Pérez, 2011; Rojas et al., 2012) was used to measure prejudice in both groups (Spaniards natives and Romanians immigrants). This PAT uses a prejudice scale based on the three-component model of prejudiced attitude (cognitive, affective, and conative/behavioral). The test is composed of 16 items: eight items measure the cognitive component (beliefs about the outgroup), seven items measure the affective component (emotions), and one item measures the tendency to action (preferred social distance from the outgroup). In all cases, the answers vary on a scale of 1 to 5. Scores on each component are averaged and weighted by 1/3. The PAT scores can vary from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 15 (strongest prejudice).

The reliability coefficients for the two scales (cognitive and affective components) and the test were estimated by the split-half method (applying the Spearman-Brown correction) and the Cronbach alpha coefficient. The results found were adequate in all cases (see Table 1). The correlation between cognitive and affective components was .35 (Romanians) and .57 (Spaniards),

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Note: Content of the acculturation areas:

**Public areas: political:** their political system and government (how they elect governments, how they work, political participation, laws, etc.); **social well-being:** their social welfare system (education, health, social services); **work:** how they work (rhythm of work, schedule, working conditions, e.g., unemployment, job insecurity, etc.); **economic:** their consumer habits and home economy (products they buy, food they eat, family economy, e.g., money they spend and save, how they administer what they have, etc.).

**Private areas: social:** social relations (how they relate, usual places for social relations, use of free time and entertainment, etc.); **family:** family relations (how they relate to their partner, children, elderly persons in the family, distribution of roles or functions, etc.); **religious:** their beliefs and religious practices (beliefs, practices, personal compliance with religious obligations or prohibitions); **values:** their values (respect for the elderly, how they educate their children, equality between men and women, role of religion in their lives, etc.).
between cognitive and conative components was .21 (Romanians) and .42 (Spaniards), and between affective and conative components was .22 (Romanians) and .51 (Spaniards).

Procedure

The acculturation preference and outgroup prejudice scales were included in a questionnaire for a wider study on acculturation and related psychosocial variables. Trained personnel gave the questionnaire individually to Spaniards at the home of the person selected. Romanians answered the questionnaire either at the person’s home, or at labor union, immigrant association or other NGO offices.

Data Analysis

The means of the maintenance and adoption scale scores were calculated (two per sample: one for public areas and the other for private). An acculturation preference indicator was found from the combination of the mean scores on the two scales. A score of less than three points on both questions would indicate that the groups preferred a marginalization/exclusion option. If the mean scores were over three on the maintenance scale and under three on adoption scale, the preference would be separation/segregation. If the mean score was lower than three on the maintenance scale and over three on the adoption scale, the preference would be assimilation. And, finally, if the mean score for the group on both questions was over three, the preference would be integration (Navas, Rojas, García, & Pumares, 2007). Only scores under and over 3 points were considered for analysis because it is the midpoint of the rating scale. A frequency analysis of acculturation preferences by areas and groups was performed.

A non-hierarchical cluster analysis (two per sample: one for public areas and another for private) was performed using the responses to each of the acculturation items (maintenance and adoption scale items) to find the acculturation profiles. K-means clustering, in which the Euclidean distance was used as a metric of similarity, was used on public and private areas to minimize variance within each cluster and maximize variance between clusters. The variables were measured on the same scales and were not standardized. This technique was used so the groups most differentiated by their acculturation preferences could be identified by areas and group.

The means of independent samples were compared (t-test) to find out whether there were differences in outgroup prejudice by group (Spaniards/Romanians) based on the different acculturation profiles (clusters) in the two areas (public/private).

All data were analyzed using the SPSS program (IBM Corp, 2010).

RESULTS

Acculturation Profiles

A frequency analysis of acculturation preferences was performed by areas and groups (see Figure 1) using the combination of the mean scores on the maintenance and adoption scales. The results show that Romanians prefer integration (41.5%) and assimilation (30.1%) in public
areas and integration (52.4%) and separation (44.9%) in private areas. Spaniards prefer assimilation (80.1%) and integration (14.4%) in public areas, and integration (53.5%) and segregation (37.2%) in private areas.

These results, which clearly show two preferences by areas, were the basis for a cluster analysis. K-means cluster analysis was used with a two-cluster solution for both samples because it is easy to interpret, parsimonious, and relevant, and group sizes are adequate. Moreover, more clusters led to loss of stability in all samples, showing uninterpretable results. In order to confirm the stability of the final clusters, 12 K-mean cluster analyses were done with different sized random samples (75%–50%–25% sample size × public/private × Spaniards/Romanians) from the two original samples. The results confirmed the stability of the two-cluster solution in terms of profile shapes and cluster sizes.

In agreement with our hypotheses, the results show two acculturation profiles depending on the type of acculturation area (public or private) and group evaluated (Spaniards or Romanians) (see Figure 2 and Table 2). Table 2 shows the two-cluster solution found with final cluster centers for each acculturation item in each group. The final cluster centers are computed as the mean for each acculturation item and reflect the characteristics of the typical case for each cluster. A one-way ANOVA was done to compare the centers of Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 for each ethnic group. All the variables produce statistically significant differences (except family in Romanian private areas on the maintenance scale).

For Romanians, a majority cluster appears (64.64% of participants) in public areas, which corresponds to an integration profile. They scored above 3 in almost all the public areas. There is a second minority cluster (35.35% of participants) corresponding to an assimilation profile (scored below 3 in all public areas on the maintenance scale and above 3 on the adoption scale).

For Spaniards, there are also two clusters in public areas. The majority cluster (58.78% of participants) represents an assimilation profile as the acculturation preference preferred for Romanians. The second cluster, minority (41.22% of participants), may be interpreted as a preference for integration of Romanians in public areas.
Preferences profiles in public and private areas.


Results of the cluster analysis in private areas may be seen in Figure 2 and Table 2. For Romanians, in private areas, the majority cluster (60.88% of participants) is an indicator of a separation profile. They scored above 3 on the maintenance scale and below 3 on the adoption scale in almost all private areas. The second cluster, minority (39.12%), shows an integration profile (scores above 3 on maintenance and adoption scales). For Spaniards, in private areas, a first majority cluster appears (68.59% of participants), which can be interpreted as a Romanian integration profile (maintain and adopt). The second cluster, minority (31.41% of participants), shows a Romanian assimilation profile (adopt and not maintain).

Outgroup Prejudice

Results of this scale are moderate in both samples. Spaniards who evaluated Romanians scored a mean of 8.6 (SD = 2.36). The mean score for the Romanian group was 7.08 (SD = 1.6). Spanish PAT scores were higher than for the Romanians and the difference between these averages is statistically significant, $t$ (t-test $df = 618.82$) = 11.10, $p < .001$. 

![Figure 2](image-url)
Differences in Prejudice Scores Between Acculturation Profiles by Area (Public vs. Private)

The results show (see Table 3 and Figure 3) statistically significant differences in the prejudice scale: (a) Romanians, in the two public area profiles, with a higher average in the integration
profile than in the assimilation profile; (b) Romanians, in the two private area profiles, with a higher average in the separation profile than integration; (c) Spaniards, in both public and private area profiles, with a higher average in the assimilation profile than integration.

Outgroup prejudice varies as predicted across acculturation preferences in both groups. In agreement with our hypotheses, the results show differential prejudice levels in the majority (Spaniards) and minority (Romanians) groups, based on their preferences for acculturation and in both areas (public vs. private).

DISCUSSION

This research, based on the RAEM, attempted to analyze the relationship between prejudice and acculturation preferences in both public and private areas and in two groups (native majority Spaniards, and minority immigrant Romanians).

The results show, as the RAEM hypothesizes, that Spaniards and immigrants prefer different acculturation options depending on the area of culture considered (public or private). The acculturation preferences depend on context. This result is consistent with those found by other authors who include some specific context of acculturation, like values, language, cultural traditions or social relationships (e.g., Bourhis et al., 1997; Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov, 2000; Kosic, 2002; Roccas et al., 2000; Sam, 2000), or differentiated areas of acculturation, like public versus home domains (Taylor & Lambert, 1996), public (functional, utilitarian) versus private (social-emotional, value-related) domains (e.g., Arens-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2004) or core cultural values (Kwak & Berry, 2001).

The most important and novel results found were that prejudice levels in both groups are related to acculturation preferences by area (public or private). This preference for maintaining the home culture may or may not be accompanied by a preference for adopting the host culture. Romanians who are less prejudiced against Spaniards prefer assimilation in public areas and integration in private areas. When Romanians are less prejudiced against the natives, immigrants do not mind adopting host country customs, and this trend (more adoption than maintenance) appears especially in public areas. Romanians who are more prejudiced against the Spaniards prefer maintaining their original customs more. In private areas (that define the individual identity), Romanians who are more prejudiced prefer to maintain their original culture and not adopt the host country customs (separation). This way, people probably achieve or maintain a positive social identity, differentiated from the outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which they do not appreciate, and so do not wish to adopt any elements of its culture. In public areas, Romanians...
also prefer to adopt elements from the host culture (integration). The adoption of a few cultural elements facilitates indispensable daily activities associated with these areas without discarding elements that support their group identity.

These results are especially novel for two reasons. First, there are very few studies relating prejudice in immigrant minorities with their preferences for acculturation. Zick and colleagues (2001) cite the results of a study, which measured antipathy of immigrants (Turks, Greeks, Italians, and Yugoslavians) for Germans (natives) and for the rest of the immigrant groups. They were asked to show the extent of their support for integration vs. segregation of immigrants in Germany. In general, antipathy for Germans was related negatively to support for integration. Our results show different and more varied aspects about the relationship among preferences of acculturation and prejudice in immigrants. The second reason is that they show the importance of the context or area of acculturation in the relationship between prejudice and acculturation preferences.

Less Spanish prejudice against Romanians is related to a stronger preference for them to maintain elements of their home culture. Strong prejudice against Romanians is related to a preference for their assimilation (adoption of host country customs without maintaining their own). This preference appears in public and private areas. The strongly prejudiced majority group may consider it obligatory for immigrants living in “their country” to adopt Spanish customs. This could be due to the relationship between prejudice and certain acculturation ideologies (Zick et al., 2001). Another explanation of this preference for assimilation is to understand converting them into “people like us” as a way of reducing the perception of threat that immigrants cause in the majority. Nevertheless, as none of these variables were measured in the study, we can only speculate about them.

These results corroborate those of other European authors (e.g., Kosic et al., 2005; Kosic & Phalet, 2006; van Dick et al., 1997; Zagefka et al., 2012; Zick et al., 2001) in majority groups, emphasizing the importance of prejudice to acculturation preferences, especially in the dimension of cultural maintenance. When natives are less prejudiced, they do not mind if members of minority groups maintain their own customs (i.e., integration). Research done with the RAEM also supports this result (e.g., Navas et al., 2006; Navas & Rojas, 2010). However, when native prejudice is strong, they are opposed to immigrants maintaining their own customs (i.e., assimilation). These trends are independent of the acculturation area (public or private), showing the need to intervene to diminish prejudice in the host society.

In spite of the limitations of the study, for example, its correlational nature, the results constitute important contributions to the study of one of the most important psychosocial variables of intergroup relations and acculturation of majorities and minorities (outgroup prejudice). Moreover, the study shows the need to contextualize acculturation. People (members of the majority or minority) show different acculturation preferences depending on the concrete area, and these preferences are related in turn to a prejudiced attitude toward the outgroup. Future research should determine the directionality of these relationships.

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AUTHOR NOTES

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