

Acculturation patterns of immigrants in relation to their level of adaptation

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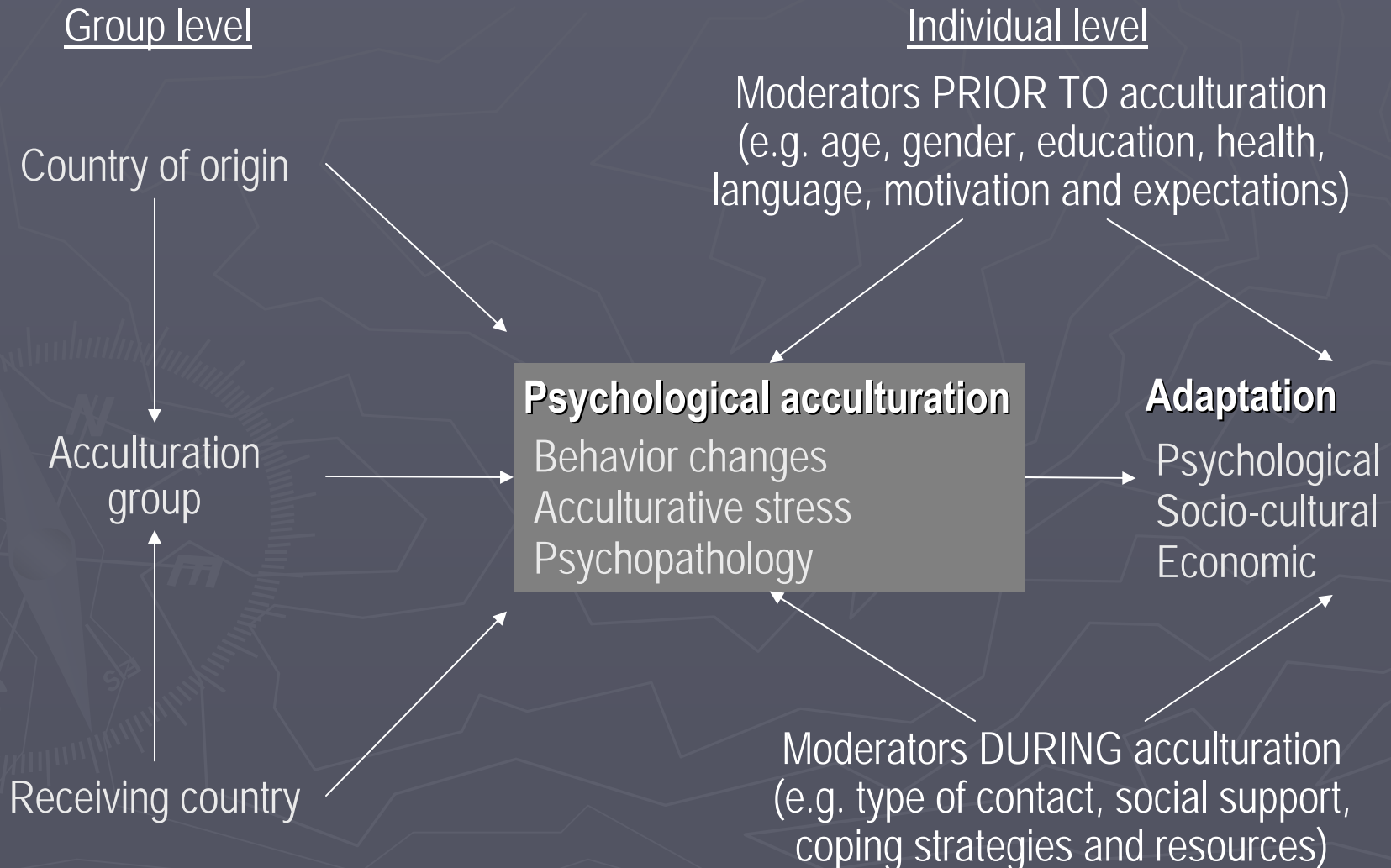
Definitions: Acculturation and adaptation

- ▶ **Acculturation:** the phenomena which result when groups of individuals from different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups (Redfield et al., 1936).
- ▶ **Adaptation:** the short- and long-term changes (affective, behavioral and cognitive) that derive from the acculturative processes. These are usually summarized in two domains, i.e. sociocultural and psychological (Ward et al., 2001).
- ▶ The study of acculturative processes is necessary in order to better understand the findings from research on immigration, which are often contradictory (Baubock et al., 1996).

Three theoretical perspectives in the study of acculturation (Ward et al., 2001)

- ▶ **The stress and coping approach:** Considers cross-cultural transition as a series of stress-provoking life events that draw on adjustive resources and require coping responses.
- ▶ **The culture learning approach:** Views cultural competence as a process of learning the specific behavioral and social skills that are required to negotiate the new cultural milieu.
- ▶ **The social identification theories approach:** Draws on the literature of cultural identity and intergroup relations. Also, points to the importance of attitudes, values, expectations and attributions in intercultural encounters.

A theoretical framework for the study of acculturation and adaptation (Berry, 1997, 2006)



Acculturation strategies of immigrants (Berry, 1997, 2006)

Maintenance of heritage culture and identity

+

-

+

**integration/
multiculturalism**

**assimilation/
melting pot**

-

**separation/
segregation**

**marginalization/
exclusion**

Relationships sought
among groups



Research Questions

- ▶ What is the level of socio-economic and psychological adaptation of immigrants in Greece?
- ▶ What strategies are adopted by immigrants in order to deal with the multiple challenges of acculturation?
- ▶ What is the relationship between acculturation strategies and immigrant adaptation?
 - Explore the effect of demographic variables on acculturation.
 - Test for a structural equation model that specifies relations between acculturation with adaptation.

Demographic characteristics of participants

Country of origin	N	Age (Mn)	Female (%)	Years in GR (Mn)	Education (Mn / 7-point)
Albania	277	35.2	39.4	9.4	3.6
Balkan countries	89	38.0	69.7	6.2	3.8
Former USSR and Eastern Europe	108	36.3	66.7	7.0	4.4
Arab/Muslim	50	36.5	14.0	10.4	3.8
Sub-Sahara Africa	46	24.5	2.2	1.7	2.6
Latin America	20	43.6	57.1	14.6	4.3
Asia	7	30.1	10.0	5.0	4.1
Western countries	4	33.5	50.0	14.0	5.8
Total	601	35.0	43.1	7.9	3.8

Measures: Variables before and during immigration

	BEFORE immigration	DURING immigration (acculturation)
Demographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ethnicity✓ Gender✓ Education level	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Length of stay in Greece✓ Place of residence
Psychosocial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Motivation for immigration✓ Voluntary/forced immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Ethnic relations✓ Use of native language✓ Host-national relations✓ Use of host language <p>Acculturation strategies</p>

Measures:

Adaptation indices (quantitative)

Socio-economic adaptation

- ✓ Occupational status
- ✓ Steady job at present
- ✓ Monthly savings
- ✓ Economic benefits
- ✓ Professional development
- ✓ Improve financial status
- ✓ Improve occupational status

Psychological adaptation

- ✓ Gained skills
 - ✓ Lost skills (-)
 - ✓ Provide family support
 - ✓ Personal development
 - ✓ More opportunities
 - ✓ Isolated from family (-)
 - ✓ Lost social networks (-)
 - ✓ Racism (-)
 - ✓ Health problems (-)
 - ✓ Fulfilled expectations
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Measures:

Adaptation indices (qualitative)

Positive and negative aspects of immigration

- ✓ Factors that impair adaptation
- ✓ Factors that facilitate adaptation

Future goals and plans

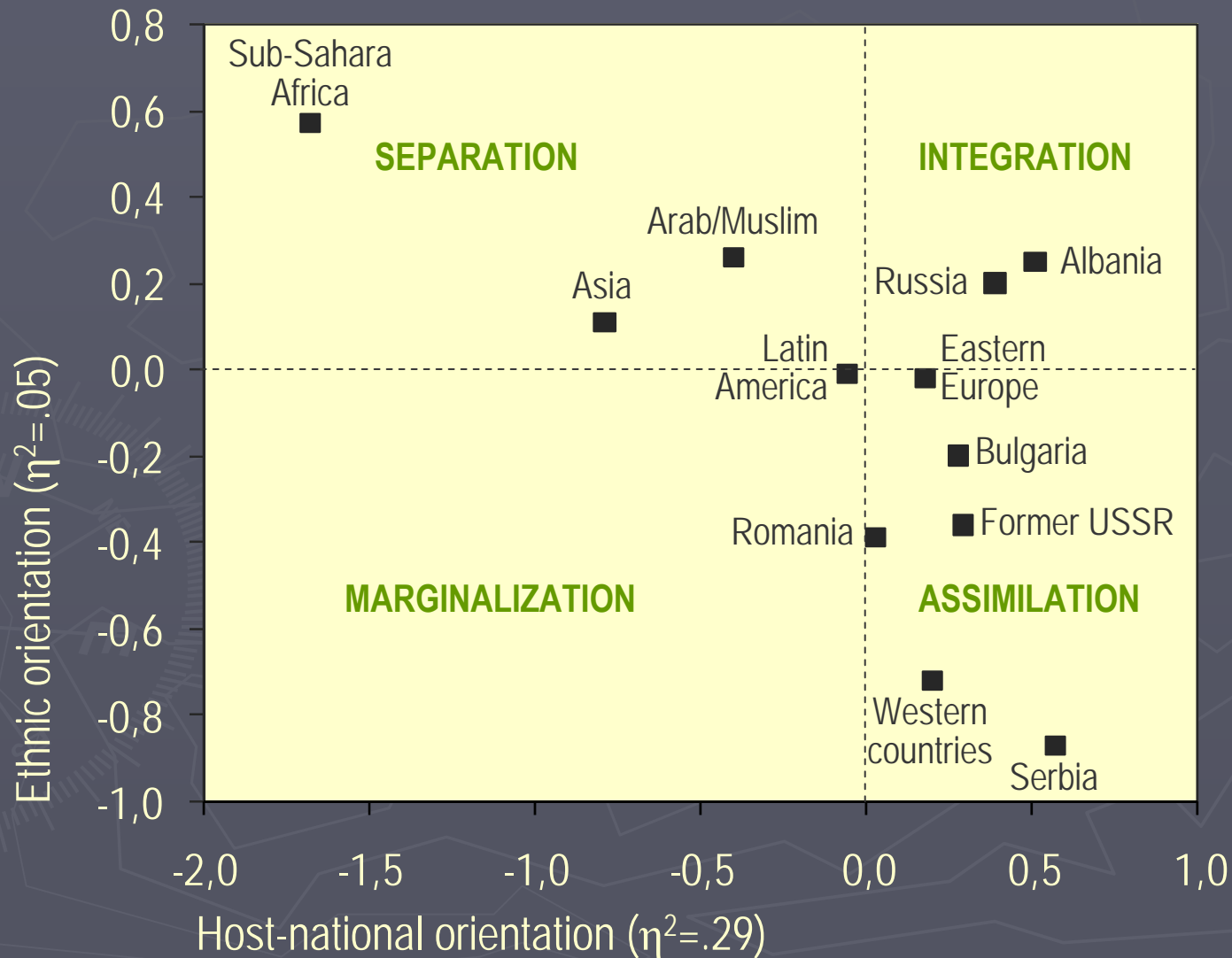
- ✓ Intentions to stay in Greece and/or ask for citizenship
- ✓ Goals related to children's education, work and personal life

Results

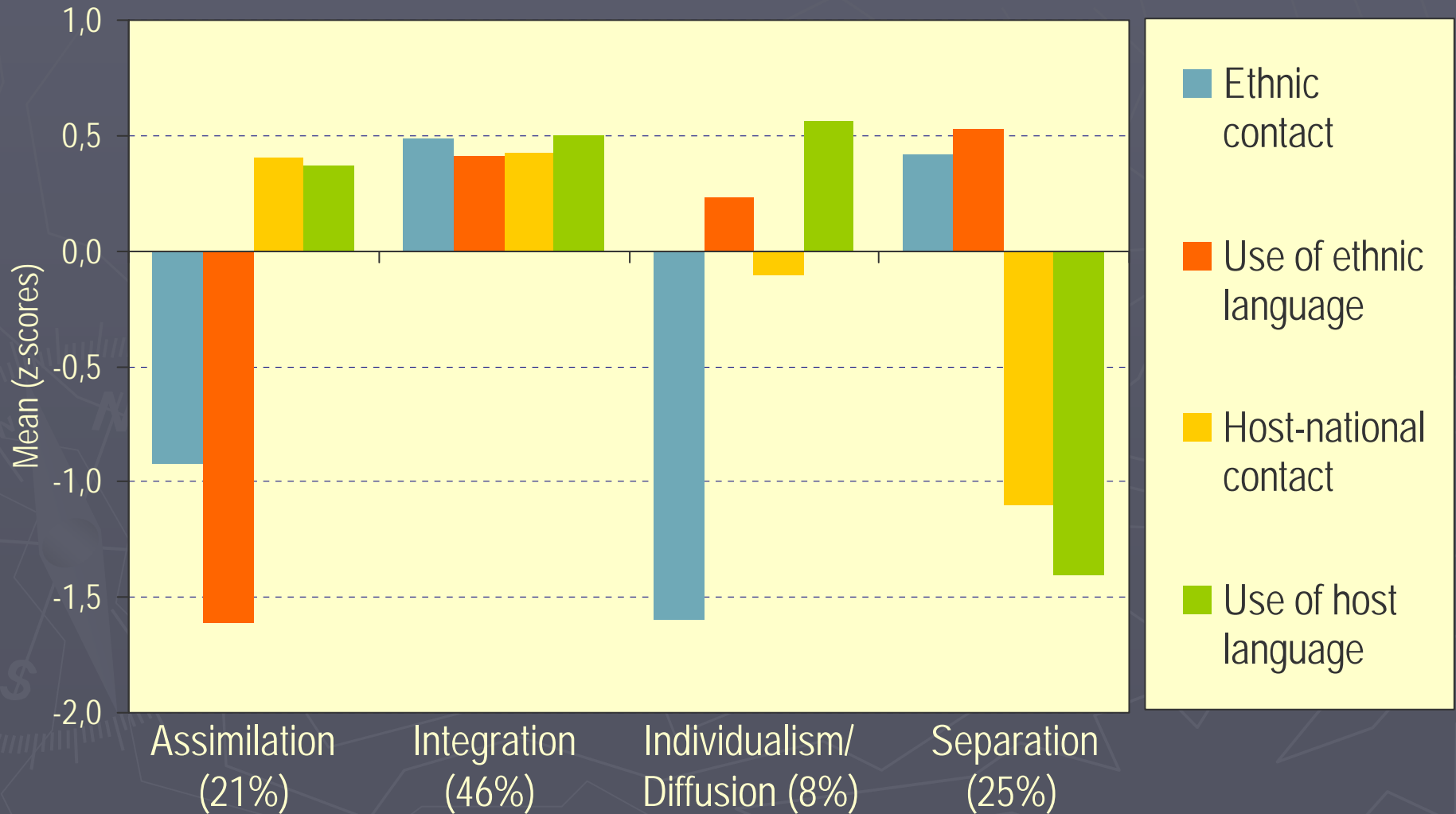
- ▶ **Research Question 1.** Acculturation strategies of immigrants



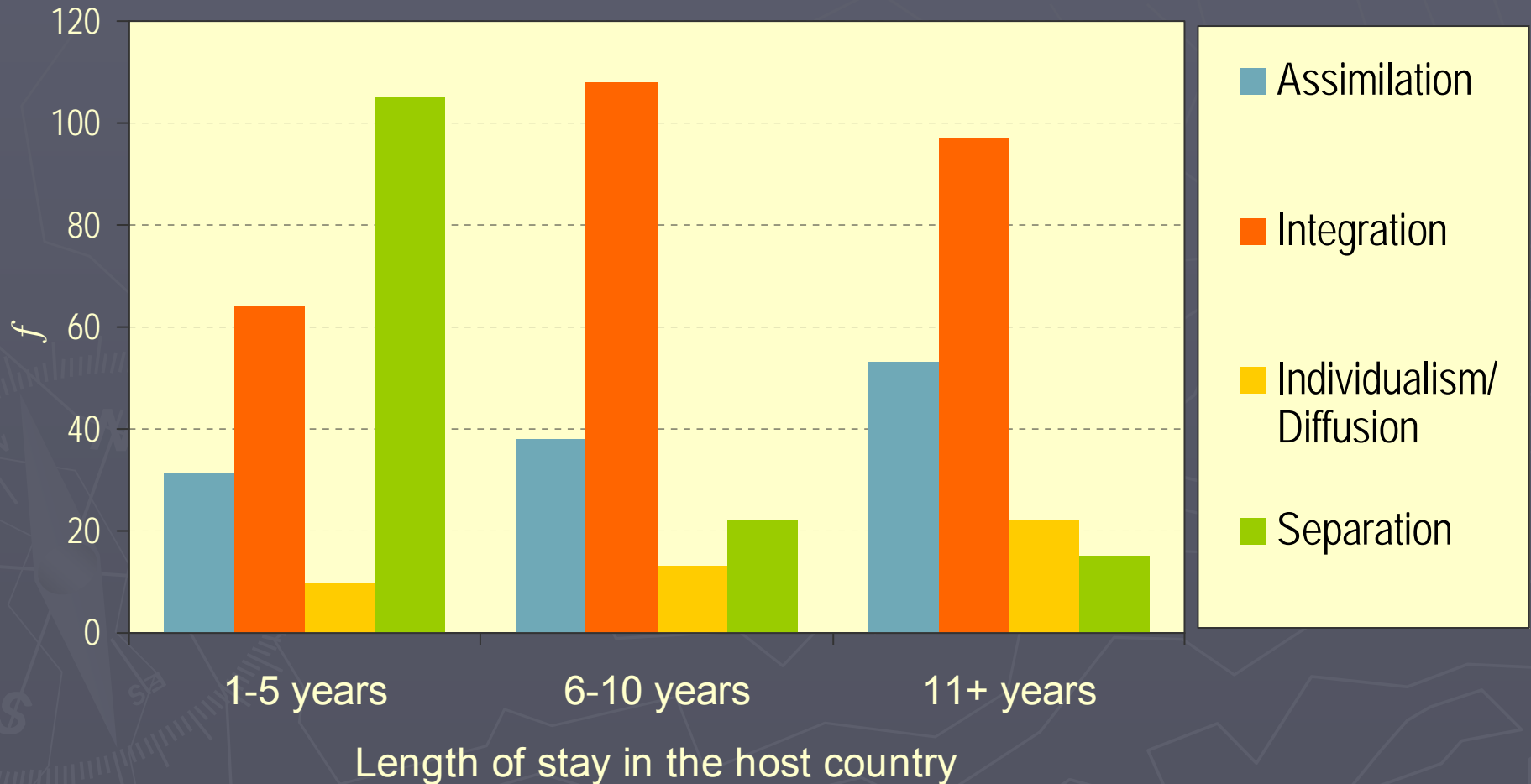
Position of immigrant groups in relation to ethnic and host-national orientation



Clusters of immigrants in relation to acculturation variables

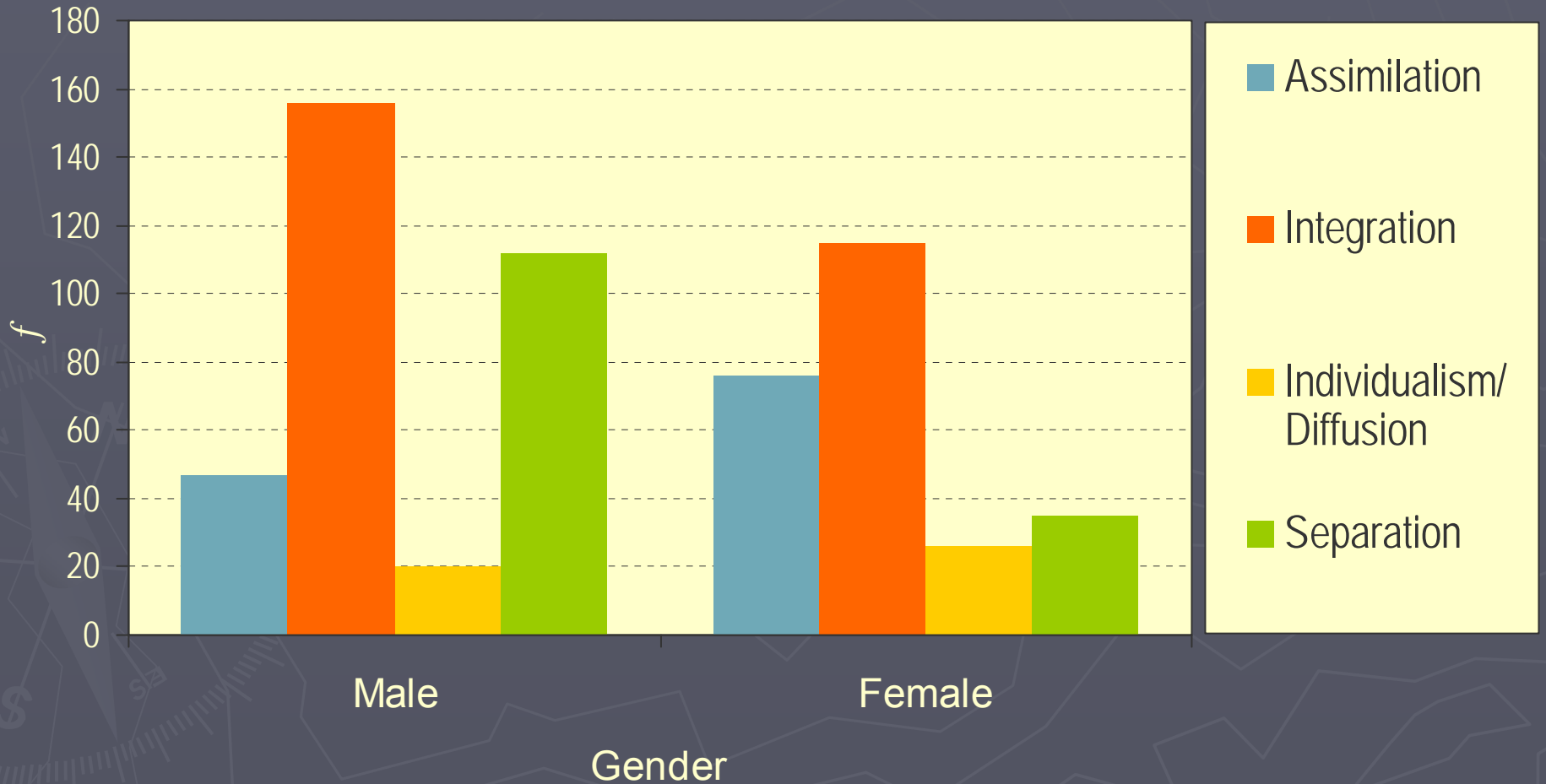


Acculturation strategies as a function of length of stay in the host country



$\chi^2(6, N=577)=121.76, p<.001$

Acculturation strategies as a function of gender



$\chi^2(3, N=587)=43.29, p<.001$

Research Question 1: Summary of findings

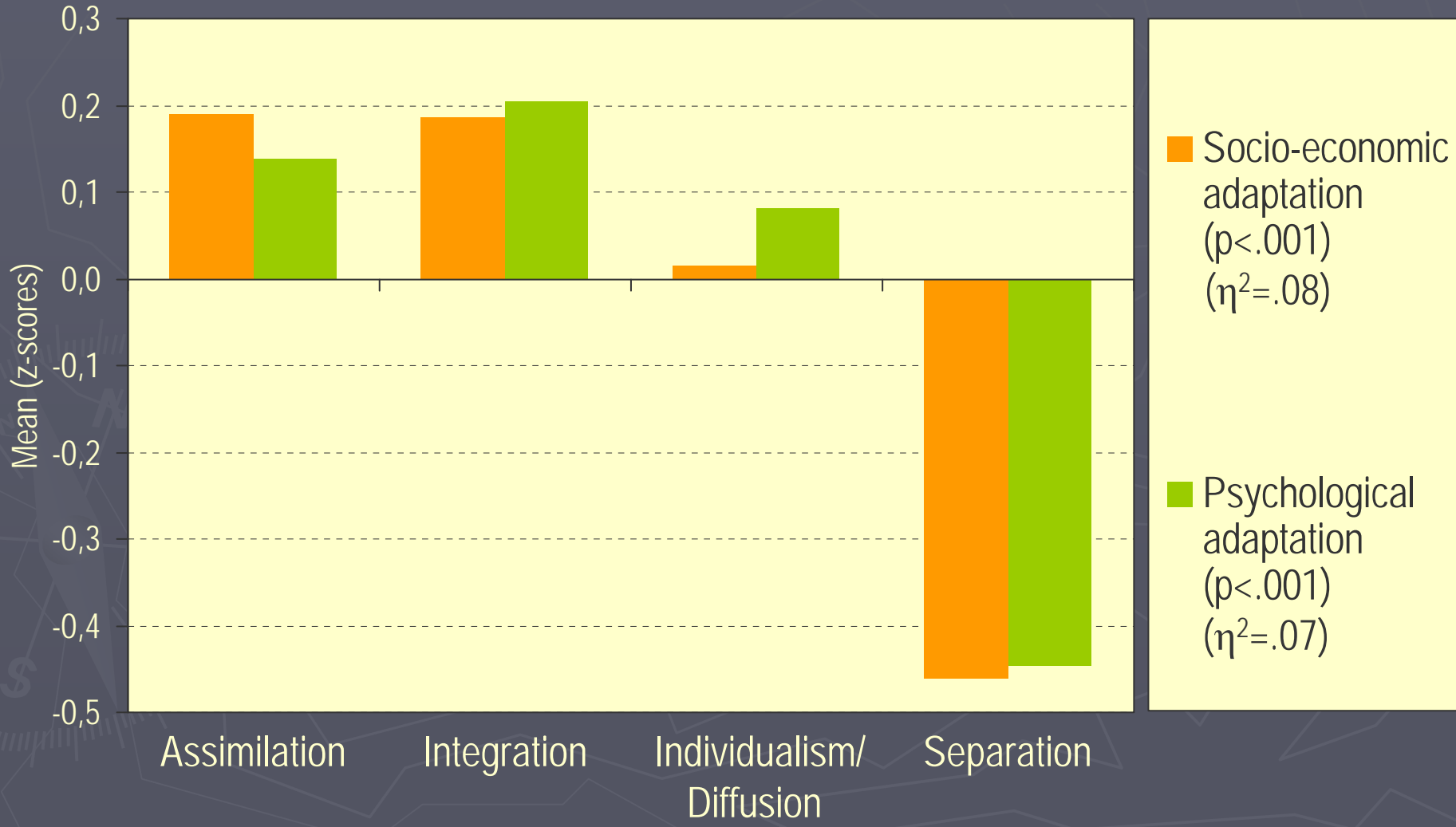
- ▶ The acculturation strategies of immigrants largely replicate the bidimensional model proposed by Berry (1997) with the exception of Diffusion.
- ▶ Length of stay in the host country is positively related to Integration and negatively to Separation.
- ▶ Compared to the total sample, a large proportion of:
 - ☞ Albanian immigrants integrate,
 - ☞ immigrants from Balkan countries assimilate,
 - ☞ immigrants from Eastern Europe tend to be diffused,
 - ☞ immigrants from African and Arab/Muslim countries separate.
- ▶ More men (than women) choose to separate while more women (than men) are assimilated.

Results

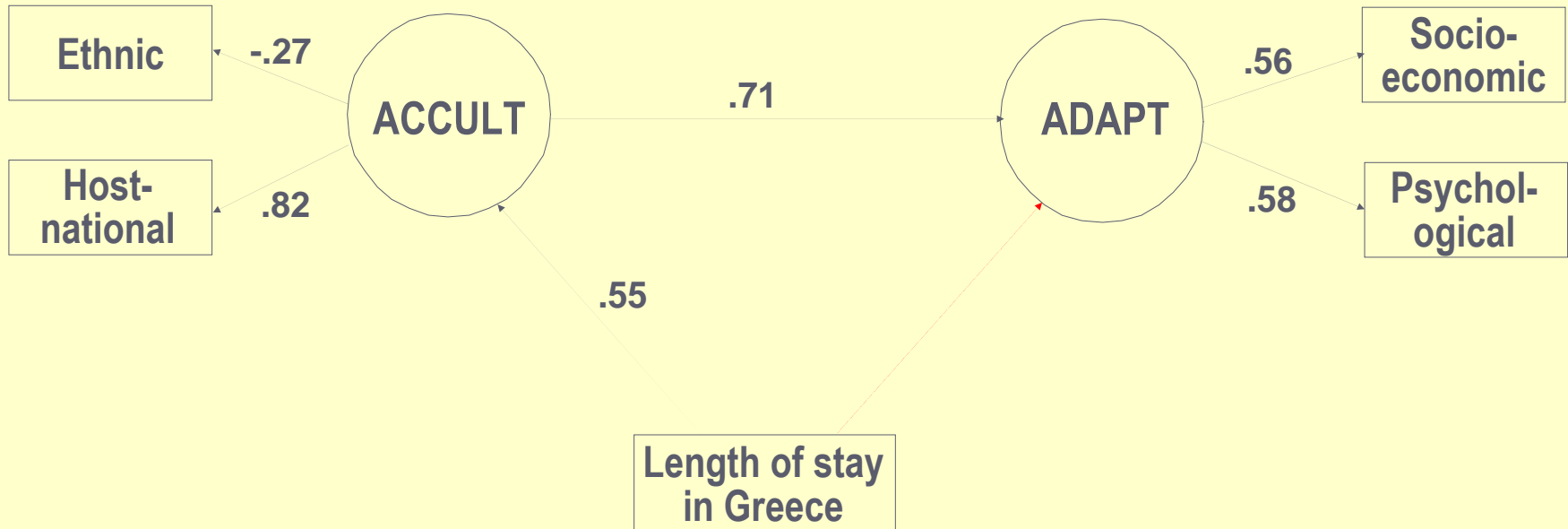
- ▶ **Research Question 2.** Relationship between acculturation patterns and adaptation of immigrants



Socio-economic and psychological adaptation as a function of acculturation strategies

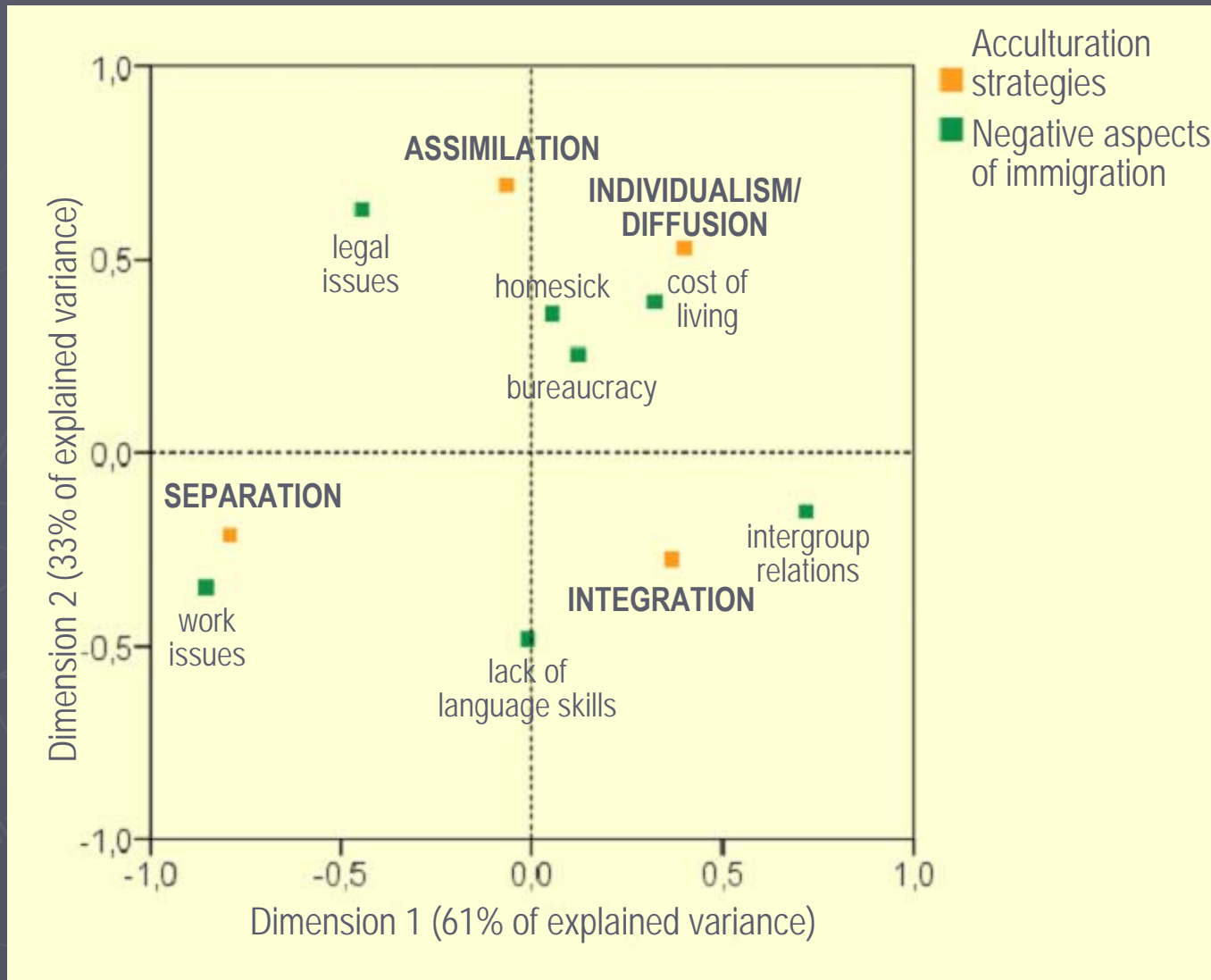


Structural equation model specifying relations between acculturation, adaptation, and length of stay in the host country

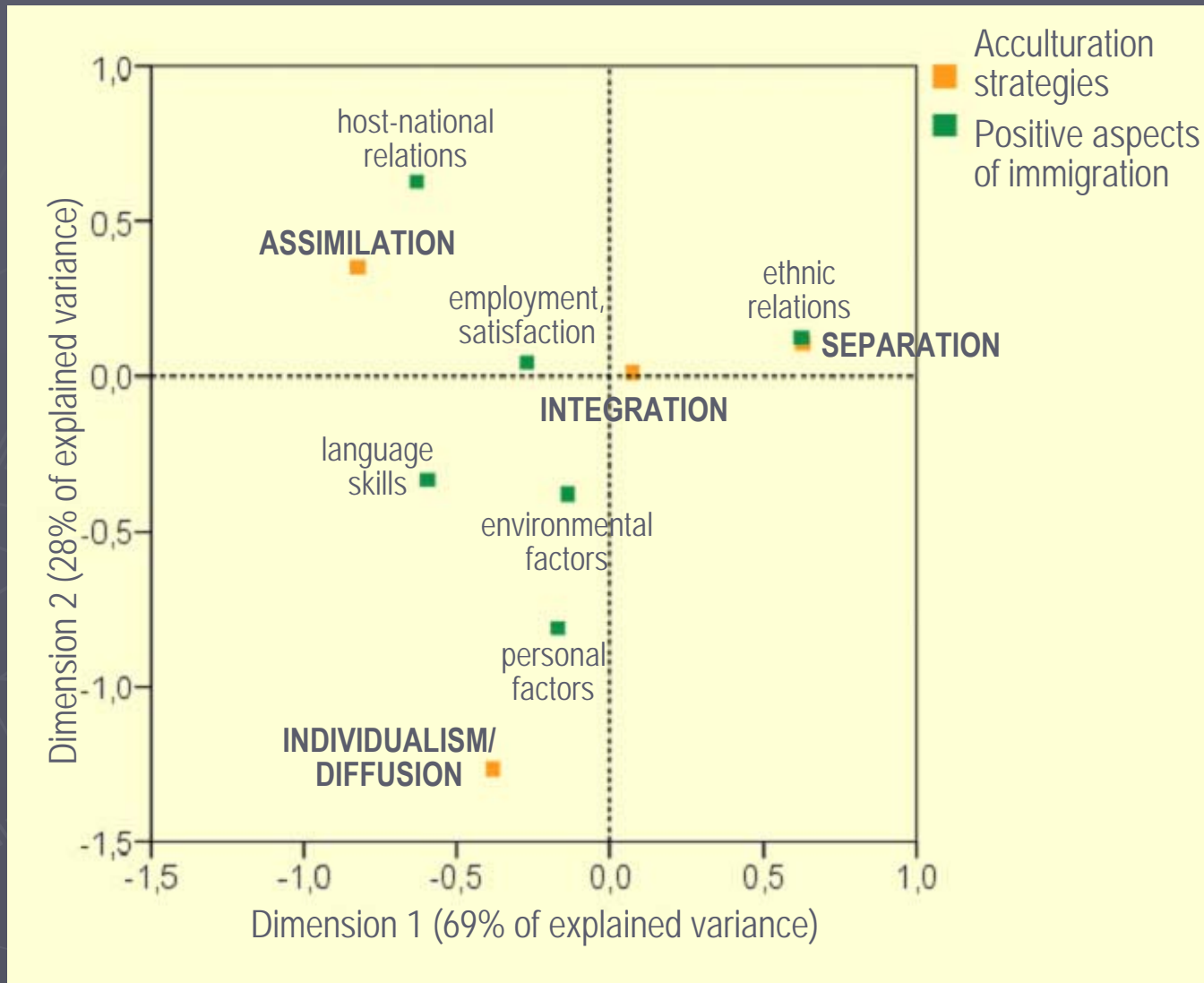


$\chi^2(4, N=601)=7.07$; $p=.132$; CFI=.99; RMSEA=.036

Multiple analysis of correspondence of acculturation strategies and of negative aspects of immigration



Multiple analysis of correspondence of acculturation strategies and of positive aspects of immigration



Research Question 2: Summary of findings

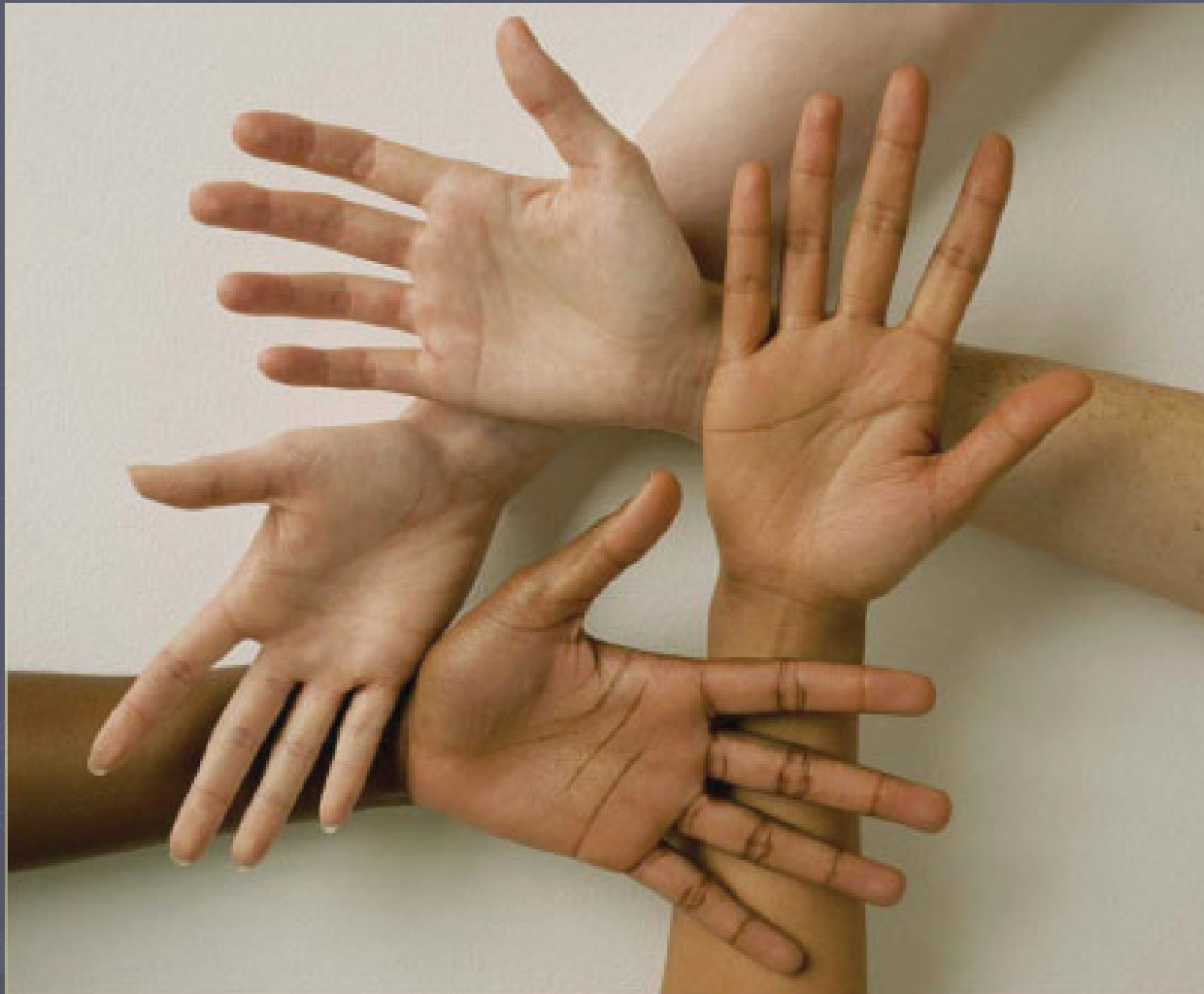
- ▶ The quality of adaptation varies in accordance to the preferred acculturation strategy of immigrants, as follows:
 - the most negative outcomes correspond to separation,
 - while the most beneficial outcomes are related to integration and assimilation.
- ▶ Therefore, host-national orientation seems to hold a key role for adjustment; on the other hand, ethnic orientation may or may not lead to positive outcomes.
- ▶ Length of stay in the host country is only indirectly related to adaptation, i.e. through acculturation orientation (Berry et al., 2006).

General summary – Conclusions

- ▶ Three factors to account for immigrant adaptation: ethnic origin, length of stay in the host country, and acculturation strategy.
- ▶ Integration and Assimilation led to practically equal level of adaptation, the most positive among immigrants
 - ↳ the importance of societal attitudes of the host culture?
- ▶ Separation yielded the most negative outcomes; moreover, it was adopted by 1 to 4 participants
 - ↳ cultural distance or length of stay?
- ▶ Diffused profile: closer to Individualism (Bourhis et al., 1997) rather than to Marginalization (Berry, 1997).
- ▶ Length of stay in the host country: when time is not enough (proper policies and interventions are necessary).

Limitations and future directions

- ▶ Inclusion of additional variables (e.g., identification to one's ethnic group) might affect the size and conceptual meaning of acculturation clusters.
- ▶ Limitations regarding the composition of the sample did not allow for study of acculturation strategies in relation to adaptation *within each ethnic group, separately*.
- ▶ Caution is necessary when trying to generalize across various ethnic groups, cultural contexts, and time sections (Sam & Berry, 2006).



Thank you for your attention!

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