

# *Orientaciones de aculturación, estrés de aculturación y bienestar psicológico en inmigrantes latinoamericanos en Santiago de Chile*

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## Resumen

En Chile, el incremento del flujo migratorio desde América Latina ha llamado la atención con respecto a los procesos de ajuste psicológico y sociocultural de los nuevos inmigrantes. Por tanto, con este trabajo se busca (a) establecer relaciones entre las orientaciones de aculturación, el estrés aculturativo y el bienestar psicológico, (b) identificar perfiles según las preferencias de aculturación, y (c) determinar la existencia de diferencias significativas en el estrés y el bienestar, de acuerdo con estas tipologías. Para esto, se realizó un estudio de tipo correlacional con una muestra de (N = 194) inmigrantes latinoamericanos con edades entre los 18 y los 67 años (M = 34.77; DE = 10.181), donde se evaluaron las orientaciones de aculturación, el estrés por aculturación y el bienestar psicológico. Los resultados indican que el predominio de la integración es más salutogénico que la tendencia a la separación cultural como orientación preeminente, lo que facilita un mejor afrontamiento de los estresores del proceso migratorio. Asimismo, se encontraron tres perfiles aculturativos —individualista moderado, integracionista y separatista—, y la comparación entre perfiles arroja que cuando la integración es más saliente, el bienestar es mayor que en presencia del individualismo como orientación predominante. Este trabajo aporta evidencia con respecto al individualismo como orientación de aculturación escasamente considerada en la literatura, cuya posible influencia negativa puede relacionarse con la pertenencia grupal como vía para acceder a recursos que aportan a la adaptación al nuevo contexto.

*Palabras clave:* aculturación, migración, estrés aculturativo, bienestar psicológico.

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## *Acculturation orientations, acculturative stress and psychological well-being on Latin American immigrants settled in Santiago, Chile*

### Abstract

In Chile, the significant increase of migratory flows from Latin America has drawn attention to the psychological and socio-cultural adjustment processes of new immigrants. This paper seeks to (i) establish relationships between acculturation orientations, acculturative stress and psychological well-being, (ii) identify profiles according to acculturation preferences, and (iii) determine the existence of significant differences in stress and well-being between these profiles. This correlational study was conducted with a sample of (N=194) Latin American immigrants with ages between 18 and 67 years ( $M=34.77$ ;  $DE=10.181$ ), where acculturation orientations, acculturation stress and psychological well-being were evaluated. Results indicate that the predominance of integration is more salutogenic than the tendency to cultural separation as a preeminent orientation, facilitating a better coping with the stressors of the migratory process. Three acculturative profiles were found: moderate individualist, integrationist and separatist. The comparison between profiles shows that when integration is predominant, well-being is greater than in the presence of individualism as the principal orientation. This study provides evidence regarding individualism as an acculturation orientation scarcely considered in the literature, whose possible negative influence can be related to group membership as a way to access resources that collaborate with adaptation to the new context.

*Key words:* acculturation, migration, acculturative stress, psychological well-being.

### Introduction

In Chile, social and economic transformations experienced in the recent decades have shaped a new migratory pattern, characterized by an important increase of the number of immigrants; the concentration of the foreign population in the Metropolitan area of Santiago de Chile; and a sustained increase on the arrival of people from several Latin American countries (Stefoni, 2011), who represent 83.1% of the total number of immigrants in the country (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas, 2018).

With respect to this phenomenon, some local studies (Cárdenas, 2006; González, Sirlopú & Kessler, 2010; Mera, Martínez-Zelaya, Bilbao & Garrido, 2017; Sirlopú & Van Oudenhoven, 2013; Stefoni, 2011; Valenzuela et al., 2014), have reported the existence of negative attitudes from the Chilean hot community members towards the Latin American immigrant population. Also, the lack of a public policy which could guarantee and facilitate newcomers' exercise of rights, especially in terms of obtaining residency permit, access to health, education, housing and work, has been identified as a major barrier to their inclusion and to the achievement of personal migration projects (Galaz, Poblete & Frias, 2017; Stefoni, 2011; Valenzuela et al., 2014). The difficulties related to the regularization of their administrative situation, which are associated with the access to various services and social programs of the State (Galaz et al., 2017), supposes that in daily life immigrants have to face multiple environmental and social stressors. Besides that, immigrants have to cope with the management of cultural differences (Urzúa, Basabe, Pizarro & Ferrer, 2017) and the low status derived from inequality in the recognition and exercise of rights (Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault & Senécal, 1997; Galaz et al., 2017). The

presence of these tensions between immigrants and natives is relevant, since inter-group contact constitutes a critical element that mobilises bidirectional changes on identity, attitudes and behaviours, which have been conceptualised as acculturation processes. The bi-dimensional approach of acculturation (Berry, 2005), assumes that the relation with the receiving society poses for the immigrants two basic questions: to which extent their cultural identity of origin is valuable and they wish to maintain it, and at the same time, to which degree they wish to incorporate the culture of the majority society (Berry, 2005; Bourhis et al., 1997). Furthermore, attitudes towards both cultures are not considered to be mutually exclusive and can change independently.

Berry (2005) differentiates four orientations of acculturation: integration or biculturalism, which implies the maintenance of the cultural identity of the group of belonging and the adoption of the host society cultural patterns; assimilation, a strong orientation towards host society culture, and the reject of the culture of origin; separation, which entails the maintenance of strong links with the group of belonging, and a negative attitude towards the host culture; and marginalisation, which refers to a negative attitude towards both cultures. Bourhis and colleagues (1997) propose that in the context of voluntary migrations, motivated by the desire of improve personal and family living conditions, immigrants can develop a fifth orientation, individualism, which consists of identifying themselves as individuals, rather than as members of groups, and represents a strategy of personal social mobility. This implies a greater involvement in achieving one's own goals than in maintaining the culture of origin, or adopting the culture of the host society.

These acculturation orientations are deployed by individuals towards the conflict between the two cultures, which is activated and resolved through daily interaction with host society members. Although certain acculturation preferences may have greater salience, their function is dynamic and interrelated (Barrete, Bourhis, Personnaz & Personnaz, 2004).

At the individual level, these processes imply an emotional and socio-cognitive reorganization, which can produce psychological discomfort, especially when the contextual conditions are adverse (Ochoa, Vicente & Lozano, 2005). The stress associated with the demands of adaptation to cope with the new culture, that exceed people's capacities to face them has been called acculturation stress (Ugalde-Watson, Smith-Castro, Moreno-Salas & Rodríguez-García, 2011; Williams & Berry, 1991), and is related both to the cultural and identity challenges of migration, as well as to aspects related to the preparation for the relocation, the regularization of the legal status in the host country, and economic difficulties (Ugalde-Watson et al., 2011). These stressors are characterized by their intensity, their multiplicity and their sustained presence through long periods of time, which increases the probability of affecting immigrants' mental health (Achotegui, 2006).

Previous studies have provided evidence regarding to the relationship between acculturation styles with stress and the mental health perceived by immigrants. The orientation towards host society's culture, and specifically, the tendency to integration, has been identified as the most salutogenic through cross-cultural samples (Basabe, Páez, Aierdi & Jiménez-Aristizabal, 2009; Chen, Benet-Martínez & Bond, 2008; Kuo, 2014; Torres, Driscoll & Voell, 2012; Urzúa, Boudon & Caqueo-Urizar, 2017; Yañez & Cárdenas, 2010). A meta-analytical study conducted by Yoon and collaborators (2013), which included 325 investigations in this field, confirmed this relationship and also corroborated the negative association of marginalization with different mental health indicators. With respect to the relationship of assimilation and separation with stress and mental health, no conclusive evidence has been found. Although, the same authors found associations with less stress and greater mental health, but in a lesser extent than integration, there are several studies that have reported the opposite, establishing positive relationships between the presence of psychopathological symptoms with assimilation (Elgorriaga, 2011; Urzúa et al., 2017) and separation (Basabe et al., 2009; Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Elgorriaga, 2011; Navas et al., 2004; Urzúa, Heredia & Caqueo-Urizar, 2016). There is little evidence available in the case of individualism as an acculturation orientation and its relationship with stress and mental health; however, in a very isolated way some

research has reported positive relationships with severe depressive symptoms, such as suicidal ideation (Van Leeuwen, Rodgers, Régner & Chabrol, 2010; Van Leeuwen, Rodgers, Bui, Pirlot & Chabrol, 2014). In Chile, Urzúa et al (2017), in a recent study with Latin American immigrants, found that the deployment of individualization coping strategies was associated with an increase of acculturative stress.

Studies that examine the relationship between acculturation and well-being in immigrants are generally framed in the hedonic tradition, taking into consideration aspects such as emotions through the migratory process and satisfaction with life. This line of research has provided evidence which is consistent with the existence of relationships between well-being and immigrants' socio-demographic and cultural characteristics, their acculturation orientations, and the type of relationship that they maintain with the host societies (Bobowick, Basabe & Paez, 2014; Urzúa, Sánchez, Paniagua, Igor & Castro, 2015).

Recently, the approach of eudaemonia, which attends to psychosocial well-being, has been incorporated into the study of immigrant adjustment (Bobowick et al., 2014; Silva, Urzúa, Caqueo-Urizar, Lufin & Irarrázaval, 2016; Urzúa et al., 2015). From this frame (Ryff, 1989), psychological well-being is defined as a multidimensional construct, involving the development of capabilities and personal growth, self-acceptance, the sense of control over the environment and the establishment of positive relationships with others. This approach is particularly interesting in the context of immigration because it emphasizes daily life aspects and experiences that may be affected during the migratory process, impacting immigrants' mental health (Bobowick et al., 2014; Silva et al., 2016). Although studies on its relationship with acculturation are incipient, they have clearly evidenced the existence of associations between these variables. For example, in the case of immigrant population in Northern Chile, it has been found that integration is positively related to psychological well-being, while assimilation is negatively associated with well-being (Silva et al., 2016; Yañez & Cárdenas, 2010).

From the above, a first objective of this research is to determine the existence of relations between acculturation orientations, acculturative stress and psychological well-being, on a sample of Latin American immigrants settled in Santiago de Chile. The second objective is exploratory and seeks to establish typologies based on the grouping of subjects around their acculturation preferences. It also seeks to determine the existence of significant differences in stress and well-being according to acculturation typologies.

In terms of hypotheses, it is expected that the orientation towards cultural integration will be positively related to psychological well-being and negatively to acculturation

stress. On the contrary, it is expected that marginalization and individualism are negatively related to well-being and positively to acculturative stress. Although the literature presents contradictory results regarding the relationship between assimilation and segregation, and well-being, in this study it is expected that both orientations will be negatively related to well-being and positively related to stress. With respect to the acculturation profiles, it is expected that the predominance of integrationism will be associated with greater well-being and less stress than in groups in which the others acculturation orientations predominate.

## Method

### Design

This study is non-experimental, cross-sectional and quantitative; since it seeks to identify general trends on Latin American immigrant population settled in Santiago de Chile. The scope of this research is relational comparative (Hernández, Baptista y Fernández, 2010).

### Participants

The sample consisted of  $N = 194$  Latin American immigrants, men (50%) and women (50%) settled in Santiago de Chile, with ages between 18 and 67 years ( $M = 34.77$ ;  $DE = 10.181$ ). 35.6% have university studies, 13.9% have postgraduate studies, 24.2% have technical studies, 23.2% have secondary studies, and 3.1% have completed only primary studies. The majority of the participants come from countries such as Colombia 31.5%, Venezuela 28.9%, Peru 13.4%, Bolivia 6.2%, Ecuador 5.2%, and Mexico 5.2%, while the rest come from the Dominican Republic 2.6%, Brazil 2.1%, Haiti 1.5%, El Salvador 1%, Paraguay 1%, Costa Rica 0.5%, Cuba 0.5% and Argentina 0.5%. Participants had an average stay in Chile of 19.9 months ( $SD = 31.3$ ; range = 2 and 240 months). Newcomers with refugee status were excluded from this sample.

### Variables and instruments

*Sociodemographic variables:* a questionnaire was administered in order to registered participants' age, sex, nationality, educational level and length of stay in Chile

*Orientations of acculturation:* the sub-scale "Cultural maintenance" of the Immigrant Acculturation Scale (Bourhis and Barrette, 2006) was used. This scale was translated into Spanish and validated in Latin American population by Azurmendi and Larrañaga (2008). It consists of 5 Likert type items with 7 response options (1 totally disagreeing, 7 totally agreeing), which measure the degree to which

immigrants are oriented towards integration ("*I wish to maintain the culture of my country of origin and also adopt aspects of Chilean culture*"), separation ("*I wish to maintain the culture of my country of origin, instead of adopting Chilean culture*"), individualism ("*I have little concern for the culture of my country of origin, and Chilean culture, because it is my personal needs and my own aspirations that really matter to me*"), assimilation ("*I want to leave the culture of my country of origin, to adopt Chilean culture*"), and cultural marginalization ("*I don't want to maintain the culture of my country of origin, nor adopt Chilean culture, because I feel uncomfortable with both cultures*").

*Acculturation Stress:* the Acculturation Stress Scale by Ugalde-Watson et al. (2011) was used. The original instrument consists of 33 Likert type items with 5 response options (1=nothing stressful, 5=very stressful) that measure the degree of perceived stress in four dimensions of the migration process: cultural and social adaptation to the host society, economic concerns, preparations to leave the country of origin, and the stress of adapting to the legal status of refugee (*How stressful, tense or distressing was or do you think certain situations are going to be?... Stabilize economically*). Although no applications of this scale have been found in the Chilean context, previous studies with Latin American immigrants show adequate psychometric properties. For example, Ugalde-Watson and collaborators (2010) in a sample of Colombian immigrants in Costa Rica report the following Cronbach alphas for each subscale: adaptation to the receiving society ( $\alpha = 0.91$ ), adaptation to refugee legal status ( $\alpha = 0.83$ ), socio-economic concerns ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ), preparation for emigration ( $\alpha = 0.77$ ). In this study, given that refugee population was excluded, we adapted the some items to the condition of immigrant, replacing the condition of refugee. In the sample studied in this research, the scale has an overall reliability of Alpha .92 and Omega .92. The reliability for each dimension is as follows: adaptation to the host society ( $\alpha = 0.92$ ), adaptation to legal status ( $\alpha = 0.73$ ), socio-economic concerns ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ), and preparation for emigration ( $\alpha = 0.85$ ).

*Psychological Well-being:* Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale (1989) was used, adapted into Spanish by Díaz et al. (2006). The Spanish adaptation consists of a total of 29 items with a Likert type response format ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree) ("*In general, I feel confident and positive about myself*"). The instrument considers the measurement of six dimensions, which reliability in this study is presented below: self-acceptance ( $\alpha = .63$ ), positive relationships with others ( $\alpha = .61$ ), autonomy ( $\alpha = .62$ ), mastery of the environment ( $\alpha = .65$ ), purpose in life ( $\alpha = .81$ ) and personal growth ( $\alpha = .67$ ). The overall reliability obtained in this study was  $\alpha = .88$ . In other studies

with Latin American immigrant population in Chile, this instrument has also presented adequate psychometric properties. For example, Yáñez and Cárdenas (2010) reported for this scale an overall reliability of  $\alpha = .77$ .

### Procedure

Participants were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling and they were contacted at the Chilean Catholic Migration Institute (INCAMI) and the Scalabrini Foundation's Integrated Migrant Care Center (CIAMI) in Santiago, Chile. The instruments were applied individually by members of the research team, at these institutions facilities.

### Ethical aspects

The project and the informed consents were submitted to the evaluation of an accredited Scientific Ethics Committee, and all the necessary ethical procedures were followed in order to respect participants' human rights, as is indicated by the international conventions and the institutional ethics committees in Chile. All respondents participated voluntarily and were properly informed about the purpose and characteristics of this study. Before answering the assessment instruments, participants signed Informed Consents documents which ensured the confidentiality

and anonymity of the information. The information was treated confidentially, eliminating any element that could facilitate the identification of the subjects.

### Data analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS 24 statistical software. First, the reliability analyses of the instruments were performed, whose alpha coefficients were presented in the previous section. Subsequently, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, with the Lilliefors correction, was carried out for each of the variables. Due to in the most of the cases, non-normality of the distribution of the data was determined, it was chosen to use the typified scores (Z scores) for Pearson's correlational analyses. Cluster analyses were then conducted to identify groups of subjects based on differences in their scores in acculturation orientations. Thus, individuals whose scores exhibited similar patterns across variables were grouped and differentiated from other groups that showed different patterns in their scores (Mooi and Sarstedt, 2011). Finally, to determine the existence of differences between acculturative profiles in acculturation stress and psychological well-being, Kruskal Wallis' H test and Mann Whitney's post hoc tests with Bonferroni's correction were used.

Table 1.

*Descriptive statistics (N=194). Acculturation orientations, acculturative stress and psychological well-being.*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>		M	SD
	Z	p.		
Acculturation orientations <sup>b</sup>				
Separation	.150	.000	4.39	1.86
Integration	.169	.000	4.94	1.58
Assimilation	.401	.000	1.71	1.31
Marginalization	.474	.000	1.48	1.21
Individualism	.377	.000	2.18	1.89
Acculturative stress <sup>c</sup>	.098	.000	2.82	.70
Sociocultural adaptation	.073	.014	2.57	1.06
Economic concerns	.073	.013	2.87	.83
Preparation for migration	.047	.200*	3.18	1.03
Legal status	.117	.000	2.90	.95
Psychological Well-being <sup>d</sup>	.059	.200*	3.89	.47
Self-acceptance	.149	.000	4.10	.61
Positive relations	.082	.003	3.60	.73
Autonomy	.082	.003	3.63	.63
Mastery	.100	.000	3.83	.62
Personal growth	.124	.000	4.12	.61
Purpose in life	.163	.000	4.16	.64

Note: <sup>a</sup> Lilliefors' significance correction; <sup>b</sup> response range from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree); <sup>c</sup> 1 (nothing stressful) a 5 (very stressful); <sup>d</sup> 1 (totally disagree) a 5 (totally agree).

\*. This is a lower limit of the true significance

**Results**

In order to determine the possible influence of socio-demographic variables on the variables under study, mean comparison analyses were conducted according to participants' sex and the educational level. Results showed that there were not significant differences between men and women or according to educational level in the acculturation orientations, stress and well-being. In addition, a correlational analysis was conducted between these variables and the length of stay in Chile, and no statistically significant relationships were found.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for acculturation orientations, acculturative stress and well-being. In general terms, the integration orientation presented the highest levels of acceptance, followed by separation and individualism orientation; while assimilation and particularly marginalization orientations were the least supported by participants.

In terms of acculturative stress, preparation for migration represented the main concern for participants, followed by concerns derived from legal status and economic concerns; while the challenges associated with socio-cultural adaptation

were reported as the least stressful for the participants, but at levels close to the mid-point of the scale.

Finally, levels of psychological well-being were reported above the midpoint of the 1-5 point scale, where purpose in life, personal growth and self-acceptance had the highest levels, followed by mastery of the environment, autonomy and positive relationships with others.

Relationships between acculturation orientations, acculturation stress and psychological well-being

For the correlation analyses, and considering the results obtained in the tests to verify the assumptions of normality, it was decided to work with the typified values (Z scores). As can be seen in Table 2, cultural separation was positively associated with acculturative stress, and all its components. The perception of difficulties in preparing for emigration was linked to the preference of maintaining one's own cultural patterns and a negative attitude towards incorporating the culture of the majority society. In addition, the tendency towards separation was positively related both to the experienced stress due to the legal status of immigrant and to the process of adaptation to the new socio-cultural environment.

Table 2  
*Pearson's correlations between acculturative stress, psychological well-being and acculturation orientations.*

	Separation	Integration	Assimilation	Marginalization	Individualism
Acculturative stress	.33***	-.13	-.10	.09	.06
Sociocultural adaptation	.27***	-.10	-.11	.01	-.05
Economic concerns	.13	-.11	.05	.15*	.17*
Preparation for migration	.20**	-.03	-.13	.06	.02
Legal status	.24**	-.12	-.07	.18*	.10
Psychological Well-being	-.12	.13	-.03	-.07	-.16*
Self-acceptance	-.05	.12	.05	-.02	-.14*
Positive relations	-.15*	.09	-.09	-.12	-.18*
Autonomy	-.07	.04	-.08	-.08	-.13
Mastery	.01	.10	-.05	-.12	-.15*
Personal growth	-.09	.23**	.05	-.03	-.16*
Purpose in life	-.05	.04	.10	-.01	-.11

Note: \* p < .05. \*\* p < .01. \*\*\* p < .001. For the interpretation of correlations' magnitudes, it is suggested to opt for an interpretation of small association (r > .10), medium association (r > .30) and large association (r > .50)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The effect size criteria suggested by Cohen in 1962 state that a correlation of r = .20 is small, r = .40 is medium, and r = .60 is large. The same author, in 1988, modifies his appreciation, and points out that the correlations of .10, .30 and .50 are small, medium and large respectively. Even Cohen, in 1992, recognizes that the definitions he made were subjective. Due to that, the same author (Cohen, Cohen, Wets and Aiken, 2003) states that it is necessary to follow 3 specific strategies (and in strict order) for the interpretation of the size of the associations: 1.- To consider relations founded in previous studies by other researchers as a proposal of range of the effect's size. 2.- In some areas of research, a researcher may raise a minimum size of the effect on the population, which would be of practical or theoretical importance 3.-As a third strategy, and only when the previous ones are not sufficient, use the convention suggested by Cohen (.10, .30 and .50) (Cohen et al, 2003, p. 52)

The orientation towards marginalization was related to the stress produced by objective aspects of the migratory process, such as economic problems and difficulties related to legal status. Acculturative individualism was associated with greater stress due to economic problems. No relationship was found between integration and assimilation, and stress and its dimensions.

With regard to the relationship between acculturation orientations and psychological well-being, separation was linked to a negative perception of the capacity to establish social bonds. Acculturative individualism was negatively associated with psychological well-being, and specifically with self-acceptance, social relationships, environmental mastery, and personal growth. On the contrary, integration was positively related to personal growth. Orientations of assimilation and marginalization were not related to perceived psychological well-being.

#### *Acculturative Profiles*

Clusters' analysis results allowed differentiating three groups according to their acculturative preferences. As can be seen in Table 3, Group 1, which concentrates 53.1% of the participants, presented as a central and distinctive characteristic a high score in the orientation to cultural integration, accompanied by a mean score in separation, and low scores in assimilation, marginalization and individualism. This would indicate that while there is a strong interest in biculturalism, the maintenance of one's own culture would be a condition for cultural exchange, which is reinforced by the low tendency both to assimilation and to the strategies

that involve distancing both cultures. Consequently, this group has been called "Integrationist".

Group 2, which represents 28.4% of the sample, was distinguished by a high degree of separation or motivation for maintaining its' culture of origin, accompanied by the interest on adopting some elements of the host society culture, indicated by its medium-high score on integration. Individualism, marginalization and assimilation emerged as less desirable alternatives, stressing the relevance of maintaining the own cultural background and the low interest on distancing from it in favour of incorporating the host culture. In consequence, this group has been called "Separatist".

Group 3, henceforth "Moderate Individualist", grouped 18.5% of participants, and showed a high tendency towards individualism, giving a great importance to the interpersonal dimension and less value to group memberships. The presence of a medium-high score on integration would reflect their willingness to cultural exchange, and the moderate tendency towards cultural separation would indicate that at the intergroup level there would be a desire of maintain the own cultural background, which would be also related to their low scores in assimilation and marginalization.

Acculturative stress and psychological well-being according to acculturative profiles

Due to the non-normality of the data, the Kruskal Wallis test was used to study the existence of significant differences in stress and psychological well-being between the acculturative profiles.

As shown in Table 4, results show that there were differences between the groups in terms of overall acculturation stress

Table 3.  
*Acculturation orientations descriptive statistics for each cluster*

	Acculturation orientations <sup>a</sup>	N	M	DE
Integrationist	Separation	103	3.44	1.35
	Integration	103	5.26	1.31
	Assimilation	103	1.81	1.28
	Marginalization	103	1.42	1.09
	Individualism	103	1.30	.65
Separatist	Separation	55	6.53	.74
	Integration	55	4.33	1.93
	Assimilation	55	1.09	.29
	Marginalization	55	1.35	1.06
	Individualism	55	1.78	1.66
Moderate individualist	Separation	36	3.83	1.63
	Integration	36	4.97	1.46
	Assimilation	36	2.36	1.87
	Marginalization	36	1.86	1.62
	Individualism	36	5.28	1.36

Note: <sup>a</sup> response range from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree)

Table 4.  
*Acculturative profiles mean ranks and Kruskal Wallis test, in acculturative stress and its dimensions.*

		N	Mean rank	$\chi^2(g^l)$
Global acculturative stress	Integrationist	103	81.89	20.57(2)** a
	Separatist	55	124.13	
	Moderate individualist	36	101.49	
Sociocultural adaptation	Integrationist	103	87.27	11.61(2)** a
	Separatist	55	118.95	
	Moderate individualist	36	94.00	
Economic concerns	Integrationist	103	90.24	3.70(2)
	Separatist	55	105.07	
	Moderate individualist	36	106.71	
Preparation for migration	Integrationist	103	89.61	7.69(2)* a
	Separatist	55	115.14	
	Moderate individualist	36	93.14	
Legal status	Integrationist	103	84.85	13.53(2)** a
	Separatist	55	119.09	
	Moderate individualist	36	100.69	

Note.: \*p<.05, \*\* p<.01. Mann-Withney post-hoc test with Bonferroni' correction a: significant differences p < .01 between Integrationists versus Separatists.

( $H_{(2)}=20.57, p <.01$ ). The post hoc tests of Mann Whitney, with Bonferroni's correction, indicated that the Integrationist group presented a significantly lower middle range than the Separatist group,  $U(N_{\text{Integrationists}}=103, N_{\text{Separatists}}=55)=1623.00, z=-4.42, p<.001$ , however, the Moderate Individualist group did not differ significantly from the other profiles.

In the dimension of sociocultural adaptation, significant differences were also evident between acculturative profiles ( $H_{(2)}=11.61, p <.01$ ), where the Integrationist group showed a significantly lower mean range than the Separatist group  $U(N_{\text{Integrationists}}=103, N_{\text{Separatists}}=55)=1888.000, z=-3.45, p<.001$ , while the Moderate Individualist group did not present significant differences with respect to the other profiles.

Regarding the dimension of preparation for emigration, significant differences were observed between the groups ( $H_{(2)}=7.70, p <.05$ ) The Integrationist group presented a significantly lower mean range than the Separatist group,  $U(N_{\text{Integrationists}}=103, N_{\text{Separatists}}=55)=2099.50, z=-2.68, p<.01$ , but the Moderate Individualist group did not show significant differences with respect to the rest of the profiles either.

On the dimension stress due to legal status ( $H_{(2)}=13.53, p <.001$ ), post-hoc tests show that this pattern is replicated; the Integrationist group showed a significant difference with the Separatist group,  $U(N_{\text{Integrationists}}=103, N_{\text{Separatists}}=55)=1833.50, z=-3.66, p<.001$ , and the Moderate Individualist did not differ significantly from the other profiles. No significant differences were found between the groups on

the economic concerns dimension. The effect sizes for the differences between the groups are shown in Table 6<sup>2</sup>.

On the other hand, Table 5 shows that there are significant differences in overall psychological well-being according to acculturation profile ( $H_{(2)}=8.63, p <.05$ ). Post-hoc comparisons showed that the Integrationist group had a significantly higher mean range than the Moderate Individualist group,  $U(N_{\text{Integrationists}}=103, N_{\text{Moderate Individualists}}=36)=2156.50, z=-2.47, p<.001$ . The Separatist group did not differ significantly from the other groups.

There were also significant differences in the self-acceptance dimension ( $H_{(2)}=6.36, p <.05$ ), in which the Integrationist group also had a significantly higher mean range than the Moderate Individualist group  $U(N_{\text{Integrationists}}=103, N_{\text{Moderate Individualists}}=36)=1354.50, z=-2.43, p<.001$ , but the Separatist group did not differ significantly from any of the other groups. In addition, differences were observed in the personal growth dimension ( $H_{(2)}=12.96, p <.01$ ), where the Integrationist group showed a significantly higher mean range than the Separatist group  $U(N_{\text{Integracionistas}}=103, N_{\text{Individualistas moderados}}=36)=1996.50, z=-3.09, p<.01$ , and the Moderate Individualist  $U(N_{\text{Integrationists}}=103, N_{\text{Moderate Individualists}}=36)=1300.50, z=-2.69, p<.01$ . The effect sizes for the

<sup>2</sup> The authors of this paper argue that these cut-off points for effect sizes are conventions determined by specific researchers and are therefore arbitrary. Thus, they must be interpreted as referential, but not as an absolute rule.



Table 5.  
*Acculturative profiles' mean ranks and Kruskal-Wallis test, on psychological well-being and its dimensions.*

		N	Rango Medio	$\chi^2_{(gl)}$
Global Psychological Well-being	Integrationist	103	108.63	8.63(2)* <sup>a</sup>
	Separatist	55	85.20	
	Moderate individualist	36	84.46	
Self-acceptance	Integrationist	103	106.16	6.36(2)* <sup>b</sup>
	Separatist	55	92.44	
	Moderate individualist	36	80.46	
Positive relations	Integrationist	103	106.50	5.72(2)
	Separatist	55	88.39	
	Moderate individualist	36	85.68	
Autonomy	Integrationist	103	104.41	3.94(2)
	Separatist	55	93.31	
	Moderate individualist	36	84.13	
Mastery	Integrationist	103	104.63	3.64(2)
	Separatist	55	90.61	
	Moderate individualist	36	87.63	
Personal growth	Integrationist	103	110.99	12.96(2)** <sup>a b</sup>
	Separatist	55	82.85	
	Moderate individualist	36	81.28	
Purpose in life	Integrationist	103	106.17	5.35(2)
	Separatist	55	87.35	
	Moderate individualist	36	88.22	

Nota: \* $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ . Mann Whitney post-hoc tests with Bonferroni's correction <sup>a</sup>: significant differences  $p < .05$  between Integrationists versus Separatists. <sup>b</sup>: significant differences  $p < .05$  between Integrationists versus Moderate individualists.

Table 6.  
*Effect sizes (Cohen's d) for mean differences between acculturative profiles in acculturative stress and psychological well-being.*

Variable	Integrationist-Separatist	Integrationist-Moderate individualist	Separatist-Moderate individualist
Global Acculturative stress	-.75	n.s	n.s
Sociocultural adaptation	-.59	n.s	n.s
Economic concerns	n.s	n.s	n.s
Preparation for migration	-.48	n.s	n.s
Legal status	-.65	n.s	n.s
Global Psychological Well-being	.41	n.s	n.s
Self-acceptance	n.s.	.52	n.s
Positive relations	n.s	n.s	n.s
Autonomy	n.s	n.s	n.s
Mastery	n.s	n.s	n.s
Personal growth	.32	.55	n.s
Purpose in life	n.s	n.s	n.s

Note: Cohen's d cut-offs: (i) small: .20; (ii) medium: .50; y (iii) large: .80 (Ellis, 2010; Cohen, 1988).

differences between acculturative profiles are presented in Table 6.

No significant differences were found between the groups in their perception of environmental mastery, positive relationships, autonomy and purpose in life.

## Discussion

Results show that, as in multiple background prior studies in different cultural contexts (see Sam and Berry, 2010), integration was the acculturation orientation most preferred by participants, followed by separation; while assimilation and, specially, marginalization were the least supported orientations, evidencing the importance of maintaining cultural identity for immigrants in this study (Sam and Berry, 2010).

However, one of the most striking results of this study refers to the emerging preference for individualistic acculturation strategies, scarcely documented in previous research in our context.

One of the first references on the importance of considering individualistic tendencies within the framework of analysis of immigrants' acculturation processes, comes from the Interactive Model of Bourhis and collaborators (1997). The authors recognize that in some cases, low levels of cultural maintenance accompanied by distance from the host culture do not necessarily imply marginalization. This distancing may be produced by the fact that some immigrants tend to consider themselves more as individuals than as groups members', thus, their orientations towards the host society may be motivated by individual mobility strategies (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The authors suggest that such trends are more likely to be deployed by immigrants from individualistic societies, where the values of individual achievement and fulfilment are highly promoted, as opposed to those immigrants from collectivistic cultures where people tend to subordinate their personal objectives to the objectives of the groups to which they belong (Triandis, Bontempo, Villareal, Asai & Lucca, 1988).

Our data reveal, however, that such trends are not exclusive to immigrants from typically individualistic societies, but are also observed in our Latin American societies, characterized in the literature as typically collectivist or interdependent contexts (Triandis et al., 1988).

These emerging trends can be explained by several reasons. On the one hand, they may reflect the particular characteristics of the studied sample. Immigrant groups can be classified into two broad categories. On the one hand, there are "voluntary" migrations, which characterize those individuals who leave their countries of origin relatively

freely in search of personal advancement through job, economic and study opportunities, marriage or to join family members who have previously immigrated. On the other hand, there are involuntary migrations, as in the case of refugees and asylum-seekers forcibly displaced by war, persecution or disasters (Berry, 2005; Bourhis, et al., 1997).

Participants in this study fall into the first category. In other latitudes, research has shown that voluntary immigrants have higher levels of personal agency and locus of internal control than their non-immigrant compatriots (Ayçiçeği-Dinn, & Caldwell-Harris, 2011) and that in general, the values of individualism and equal commitment are positively related to the mobility and willingness to migrate to other cities and countries (Basabe & Ros, 2005). Thus, our data seem to indicate that the migratory project involves a series of motivations, goals and personality characteristics potentially linked to individualism.

On the other hand, these trends could be the consequences of possible changes in cultural values that reflect globalization and accelerated intraregional mobilization (Martínez & Vono, 2005). On that matter, several studies indicate that the classic aspects of the protestant ethic of work attributed to the individualist capitalist societies are also part of the values of the societies traditionally classified as collectivist, which is congruent with the presence of competitive attitudes in collectivist societies (Lynn and Martin, 1985). These changes have led to reconsider the traditional notions of collectivism and individualism, as well as the dichotomous classification of societies in these two categories (Oyserman, Coon & Kimmelmeier, 2002).

These hypotheses cannot be addressed appropriately with the data in this study, but they provide important evidence to consider in future research, in which the comparison of different types of immigrant populations and the measurement of values would be of great importance.

In terms of acculturative stress, our results coincide with previous data in Latin America (Ugalde-Watson et al., 2011), showing that preparation for departure and emigration represent the main source of perceived stress, followed by concerns about legal status and economic concerns. Although emigration brings with it opportunities to improve the quality of life of many people, it is also accompanied by a complex processes of cultural and family disassociation that represent an important source of stress, which in turn can affect the processes of socio-cultural and psychosocial adaptation (Bobowik et al., 2014). Similarly, our data suggest that structural barriers to the regularization of the legal status, employment, housing and health of the immigrant population are emerging as important sources of tension and stress that require further study.

Coinciding with previous research findings (Basabe et al., 2004; Elgorriaga et al., 2014; Smith and Bond, 1993; Ward, Bochner and Fumham et al, 2001), the levels of stress reported with regard to adapting to the customs, practices and values of the host society are quite minor, probably due to the presence of a common cultural matrix. Nevertheless, these data suggest the potential negative impact of host society members' attitudes on immigrants' psychological adaptation, as has been evidenced in other researches (Cárdenas, 2006; González et al., 2010; Stefoni, 2011; Valenzuela et al., 2014; Sirlopú & Van Oudenhoven, 2013).

In terms of the links between acculturation orientations and acculturative stress, results corroborated the positive association of cultural separation with acculturative stress, and specifically, with the process of preparation for migration, socio-cultural adaptation to host society, and the stress produced by the legal status of immigrant. This finding is consistent with previous studies (Berry and Sabatier, 2010; Basabe et al., 2009; Elgorriaga, 2011; Navas et al., 2004; Urzúa et al., 2016) which indicate that the preference for maintaining the own cultural background and the rejection of host community's culture is linked to various difficulties in adjusting to the new context. In addition, the orientation towards marginalization was positively related to the stress produced by the economic aspect and the legal status of immigrant, in line with other researches (Berry and Sabatier, 2010; Basabe et al, 2009; Elgorriaga, 2011; Navas et al., 2004; Yoon et al, 2013) which associate this attitude with the risk of social exclusion.

In this study, acculturative individualism was positively associated with stress due to economic problems. It is possible that the interest on individual mobility could be related with the concern about the achievement of resources through the migratory process, producing discomfort. Preceding meta-analytical studies have shown that in immigrant populations the values of personal promotion through achievement are associated with indices of subjective discomfort (Bobowik, Basabe, Páez & Jimenez-Aristizabal, 2010; Bobowik, Basabe, Páez, Jimenez & Bilbao, 2011), evidence that seems to coincide with the idea that the acculturative stress reported in our study is a reflection of the efforts for upward social mobility. It is also possible that the establishment of networks both with other immigrants and host society members may be hindered by individualism limiting the access to support in difficult situations.

Unlike other researches that highlight integration as the orientation that facilitates a better coping with the process of adaptation to the host country (Basabe et al, 2009; Chen et al., 2008; Kuo, 2014; Torres et al., 2012; Urzúa et al., 2017; Yañez & Cárdenas, 2010), our results did not report relationships between this attitude and acculturative stress,

as well as in the case of assimilation. Taken together, these results could indicate that, in this study, rejection and lack of interest in local culture are associated with the ability to cope with the lack of material resources and problems arising from the legal situation, rather than the adoption of the host culture (integration, assimilation).

With respect to the relationship between acculturation orientations and psychological well-being, the separation was negatively related to the establishment of social bonds, reflecting the difficulty to relate to the local population. The integration orientation, on the other hand, was positively related to the personal growth dimension of well-being, in line with the results of other researches (Silva et al, 2016; Yañez & Cárdenas, 2010). Unlike the results obtained by these same authors (Silva et al, 2016; Yañez & Cárdenas, 2010), assimilation and marginalization orientations were not related with perceived psychological well-being.

As some authors have proposed (Van Leeuwen et al, 2010; Van Leeuwen et al., 2014), acculturative individualism was negatively associated with general well-being, and specifically with the dimensions of self-acceptance, social relations, environmental mastery, and personal growth. This could suggest that the search for social mobility as a strategy to satisfy one's own needs and achieve individual goals, paradoxically has a correlate of impoverishment of the capacity to develop personal potentialities, because it implies the distancing of support and learning that can be provided both by the in-group and host community members.

In this study, marginalization, which has been linked to less well-being by previous studies (Yoon et al., 2013), did not present a significant relationship with this variable, and instead, individualism was negatively associated with well-being. Although the common element between these two orientations is the low interest for cultural encounter with others, it is important to point out that the conditions of the Chilean context promote the belief and search of the individual social mobility as a way of access to resources (Mera et al., 2017), facilitating the emergence of individualistic attitudes.

Assuming that acculturation orientations in daily life operate in a dynamic and interrelated way (Barrette et al., 2004), the results by the grouping of subjects according to styles (or typologies) of acculturative orientations, help us to put in to context the established relations by means of correlational analysis between the variables. Thus, it is observed that the predominance of the integration is more salutogenic than the tendency to the cultural separation as preeminent orientation, facilitating a better coping migratory process' stressors. This is coherent with the findings informed by previous studies regarding the process of adaptation to the new context (Basabe et al, 2009; Chen

et al., 2008; Kuo, 2014; Torres et al., 2012; Urzúa et al., 2017; Yañez & Cárdenas, 2010).

Results indicate that when integration is more salient, well-being is greater than in the presence of individualism as the predominant orientation. This result is consistent with other investigations (Silva et al, 2016; Yañez and Cárdenas, 2010) that have related biculturalism with psychological well-being from the eudaemonia approach. In addition, this provides evidence regarding individualism as an acculturation orientation that has been scarcely considered in Latin American literature, especially in relation to psychological health (Van Leeuwen et al., 2010; Van Leeuwen et al, 2014), and whose possible negative influence can be related to the relevance of group membership as a way to access to social, affective and material resources that facilitate adaptation in processes of psychosocial and cultural transition, especially in contexts where there are barriers to inclusion (Mera, Martínez-Taboada & Costalat-Founeau, 2014). It is also necessary to highlight that in this study, the acculturative profiles obtained do not include the typology of marginalization, which has traditionally been linked to less well-being (Yoon et al., 2013). We think that this could be due to the fact that participants were contacted through NGOs that provide support to the newcomers, thus, they were people who presented some degree of social bonding, which could hinder marginalization.

One of the main limitations of this study is the use of a convenience sample within the framework of a transversal design, which does not make possible to observe the relationship between acculturation orientations, stress and well-being over time. In addition, the size of the sample and the diversity of nationalities that compose it did not allowed us to differentiate groups of immigrants according to their countries of origin, as well as the degree to which the participants perceive that their migration was voluntary. Likewise, no acculturation behavioural measures were used, which would allow a more complex approximation of the phenomenon in future studies. Also, some of the instruments presented relatively low internal consistency coefficients that could have affected our capacity to detect the relationships between the variables.

Nevertheless, this research contributes to the understanding of the incidence of acculturation on well-being, highlighting the benefits of biculturalism, but specially, our results warn about the possible psychological consequences of individualism. Although acculturative individualism has been less considered by prior researches, in our study it arises as a threat to psychological well-being. We consider that this information contributes to the development of a research line that is of great relevance as an input for the

design and implementation of actions and public policies on immigration, especially in our Latin-American context.

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