

MOVING ON THE TRAJECTORY:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF NEW IMMIGRANTS' ACCULTURATION IN FINLAND

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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>With a steady growth of immigration in Finland, the current number of immigrants has reached nearly 6% of the total population. These immigrants have crossed cultural boundaries for a new home and better life in Finland, but often face the compound challenges of navigating a new culture while striving to function efficiently in an unfamiliar environment. Thus, the aim of this study is to investigate new immigrants' acculturation in Finland. Previous studies have been focused on either refugees or returnees, so this study aims to produce an inclusive investigation of acculturation of on both forced and voluntary immigrants, as well as returnees who have engaged in the official integration plan in Finland. A total of eleven new immigrants were interviewed face-to face. The interview questions explored the general status of the immigrants prior to migration, their adjustment and adaptation in the host society, acculturative stress, the preference of acculturation strategy, and transformation reported through their individual experience and interaction with the host population during the initial phase of the migration process.</p> <p>The results of this study identified the acculturative stressors as Finnish language deficiency, employment, and dealing with the medical system. Discrimination was not considered as a significant issue. The preferred acculturation strategy was integration strategy among the participants. In the associated matter of the individual's cultural identity, the original background and nationality were the most important factor. The individuals' transformations of cultural schemas were modified depending on the cultural context, individual background, and societal characteristics.</p>	
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The number of immigrants has been steadily increasing in Finland. From the small historical minorities such as Romas, Tatars, Jews and Russians to the 90's big wave of immigration from Ingrian returnees, the amount of immigrants was less than 2% of the total population before the millennium year 2000. According to latest preliminary data, the population of immigrants in Finland reached 31,941 in 2013, which is nearly 6% of the total population in Finland. The three largest groups of foreigners consisted of people from Estonia, Russia, and Sweden (Statistics Finland). These immigrants have crossed cultural boundaries for a new home and better life in Finland, but often face compound challenges of navigating a new culture while striving to function efficiently in an unfamiliar environment. This process of navigation is understood by framing their experience in the context of acculturation, which pinpoints and describes psychosocial and social behavior changes influenced by a number of factors over a prolonged period of time for individuals entering a new culture (Berry, 2003, 1997).

The initial narrative of acculturation suggested “the process of cultural change that occurs when individuals from different cultural backgrounds come into prolonged, continuous, first-hand contact with each other” (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, p. 146). Consequently, continuous contact results in changes at both individual and group levels. The individual level refers to values, attitudes, beliefs and identities; whereas the group level refers to social and cultural systems (Berry, 2003). As acculturation encompasses all forms of changes, the changes can be problematic and produce stresses which affect an individual's well-being. Researchers expressed two diverse opinions on acculturative stress. It is indicated that stress is negatively related to acculturation and can affect individuals

enormously with a disruptive effect on their psychological and physiological well-being (Bhugra, 2003; Glass & Bieber, 1997). On the contrary, Kim (2001) declared that acculturative stress has been found to be positively correlated with the learning and growth-facilitating nature of the adaptation process. Despite these contrasting statements, stress naturally occurs especially at the beginning stage of adaptation process (Abouguendia, & Noels, 2001).

Acculturative stress is also associated with acculturation strategy. Berry (1997, 2001) developed a bidimensional model of acculturation, which provides a supporting structure for the study of articulation attitudes. The notion of acculturation strategies is based on two underlying dimensions: one's own cultural maintenance and involvement with other cultures. Members of the ethnic minority groups may use four stages to handle acculturative stress: integration, marginalization, assimilation, and separation (Berry, 1997, 2001)

The process of constant contact with the host culture has modified immigrants' generalized knowledge of past experiences implicitly and explicitly. In other words, the transformation of one's own cultural schemas is seen as inevitable when migrants step into the host culture and attain new cultural schemas in the host-cultural environment (Nishida, 2005). This perspective is correlated with Kim's theory pertaining to individuals moving along a path of changes towards learning and facilitation for cross-cultural adaptation in the host culture.

While the vast number of studies on acculturation are compelling and endeavor to help understand the complexity of migration, one question that has arisen is how new immigrants map out their ground and its impact on their own cultural, social and psychological levels as individuals. Thus, this paper aims to investigate the new immigrants' perspective and their experience of adjustment and adaptation, to identify the preference of acculturation strategy, and to explore changes in the individual's cultural schemas in the

initial phase of postmigration.

Investigating how these new immigrants, who either have involved in the official integration plan or had at least one year of Finnish for foreigners course, adapt to the culture of Finland will help the author better see the process of acculturation along with the integration plan that the new immigrants have been involved in. In addition, the outcome may further develop and lead to productive groundwork in the acculturation process of new immigrants. To do this I will proceed as follows. In the first part of the literature review, the context of immigration and immigrants in Finland and Finnish immigration and integration policy are briefly presented. The second subchapter reviews the relevant literature on acculturation with a focus on Berry's acculturation strategy and Nishida's cultural schema theory. Next, the design, procedures and findings from this study of eleven respondents are discussed. Fourth, the discussion section discusses how the findings challenge and support the theories. Fifth, the conclusion summarizes the findings. Sixth, the evaluation of the study discusses the limitations and general feedback from the interviews. In the final section, implications for further studies and training are discussed. In addition to focusing on the experiences of new immigrants who have engaged in the official integration plan, another contribution of this study is in the use of a hot air balloon to the concept of acculturation strategy and its associated findings on acculturative stress. With the assistance of a hot air balloon image, immigrants can easily understand the structure of acculturation strategy and its influential factors around them.

1.2 Significance of the study

Ingrian returnees have been a main focus of research (e.g., Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000; Varjonen, Arnold, & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2013). Thus, in order to inquire into more comprehensive and multifaceted perspectives of acculturation experience and not only to focus on one group, this

paper aims to conduct an inclusive investigation of acculturation on both forced and voluntary immigrants, as well as returnees who have engaged in the official integration plan in Finland. The official integration plan for registered unemployed migrants provides guidance in acquiring Finnish language skills and profession attainment. Thus, a more comprehensive investigation can be achieved through the experiences and perspectives of new immigrants who have participated in an integration plan with a course in basic Finnish language skills.

The utilization of explaining culture by the iceberg metaphor and U-curve in psychological adaptation has been presented in many studies and has helped people understand them better. However, the presenting of a clear picture of acculturation strategy to immigrants is absent. Based on the model of acculturation that Berry (1997, 2001, & 2003) proposed, the author believes in the possibility to use a hot air balloon to present the concept of acculturation strategy and its associated findings on acculturative stress. First, the wind currents influencing how the hot air balloon moves corresponds to how preceding factors (such as age, gender, educational level, etc.) affect the acculturation process and choice of acculturation strategy. Next, the envelope refers to the acculturation strategy. Then two strings connecting the envelope and the basket represent the two fundamental aspects: intercultural contact and cultural maintenance. Fourth, the basket carries the four strategies of integration, marginalization, assimilation, and separation. Then finally the sandbags hanging outside the basket symbolize how minority groups may use four strategies to handle acculturative stress. With the assistance of the hot air balloon image (Appendix C), the concept of acculturation can be easily explained to immigrants coming from different backgrounds. Immigrants can also understand the process better instead of letting acculturative stress take a central position in their lives. Moreover, a reciprocal relationship between theoretical frameworks and immigrants can be achieved.

1.3 Definitions of immigrant, refugee and returnee

Finland is a member state of the European Union (EU). Naturally, all citizens of the EU can move freely within EU territory without a visa and permission according to the regulations.

The regulations concerning free movement apply also to the citizens of Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway based on the European Economic Area Agreement, as well as Switzerland based on a special agreement with the EU (Finnish immigration service, 2013).

The definition of major terms is given according to the Finnish immigration service. It provides an essential knowledge of these terms, although they are not strict definitions provided by legislation.

- Immigrant (fin. Maahanmuuttaja)

A person moving from one country to another. A general concept which applies to all migrants with different reasons for moving.

- Refugee (fin. Pakolainen)

An alien who has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of origin, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion. Refugee status is granted to a person who is granted asylum by a state or who is defined to be a refugee by UNHCR (i.e., The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees).

- Returnee (fin. Paluumuuttaja)

A Finn in exile who returns to Finland. In Finland, the term is applied to former and current Finnish citizens, as well as to persons returning from the former Soviet Union area, such as the Ingrian Finns, who are of Finnish origin. The latter are Finnish by nationality, but they are not Finnish citizens.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Contextual immigration and immigrants in Finland

Finland is conventionally perceived as a country of emigration and a homogeneous society in the last century. People have left Finland and migrated to Sweden, Denmark, the United States, and other countries during wars, famine, and other circumstances. Immigration in Finland has not drawn much attention to either foreign workers or policy making. Before Finland gained its independence in 1917, Finland was a region attached first to the Swedish empire and next to the Russian empire. Naturally, these periods in history affected the Finnish mold of migration. On the grounds of family-ties and other connections to these countries, war children returned from Sweden to Finland was the first significant quantity of resettlement. There were about 70,000 war children sent to Sweden for safety reasons during World War II. Then later around 20,000 people came back from the Ingrian areas of Russia, where families were transferred to the territories of Finland during the Swedish reign in the seventeenth century. Their resettlement was because of the re-drawing of the Finnish-Soviet border (Leitzinger, 2008). Aside from the above re-migration, there were only a few small historical minorities such as Romas, Tatars, Jews, and Russians.

In focusing on recent immigration, the history of Finnish immigration dates from 1973 when the first hundred refugees from Chile were admitted, and then mainly Vietnamese boat people arrived in 1979. The proportion of immigrants in the population increased slowly in the 1970s and 1980s before the large wave of immigration at the beginning of the 1990s (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). The main contributors to the wave are returnees, who are of Finnish decent returning from Russia, Estonia, and other parts of the former Soviet Union.

Emigration to the Ingrian area occurred during the period ranging from the 17th to the beginning of the 20th century, and the Ingrian area is located partly in Russia and partly in Estonia (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Overall, the compound reasons for resettlement consist of

the return migration of ethnic Finnish Ingrians, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the immigration of Estonians, multicultural marriage, and the influx of refugees from ex-Yugoslavia, Africa, and Asia (Jasinskaja-Lahti, & Mähönen, 2009). The total number of immigrants in Finland was only 80,060 at the end of 1998, or 1.65% of the total population. Russian-speaking immigrants, from Russia and the former Soviet Union, formed the largest group. According to the data (Central Population Register, 1999), 23,000 (i.e., 68%) of immigrants were from the former Soviet Union (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). In addition to returnees, refugees from Somalia, ex-Yugoslavia and Iraq, plus the increasing number of multicultural marriages all contributed to immigration in the 1990s (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Mähönen, 2009).

Despite growing immigration in the 90's, more immigrants have been called for in order to compensate for the aging and declining population that practically all countries in Europe will face during the next several decades (DESA, UN Population Division, 2000). It is estimated that approximately 40% of the present labor force will have withdrawn from the Finnish labor market by the year 2020. Moreover, almost one third of the Finnish population will be over 60 years old, according to projections by the year 2020 (Łobodzińska, 2011). Thus, immigration is proposed as a partial solution for both serving the elderly and contributing to an increase in the working-age population. According to the latest preliminary data (Statistics Finland), the number of immigrants in Finland reached 30,420 in 2012, which is 5% of the total population in Finland. At the end of 2013, the largest groups of foreigners in Finland were Estonians (44,774), Russians (30,757), and Swedes (8,382). Other major groups include people from Somalia (7,465), China (7,121), Thailand (6,484), Iraq (6,353), Turkey (4,398), India (4,372), and the United Kingdom (4,048). Furthermore, the capital city Helsinki is increasing steadily by 6,000 immigrants per year and immigrants account for half of Finland's population growth (Helsinki Sanomat, 2011).

On the other hand, challenges have arisen in relation to immigration and ethnic diversity. It is pointed out that the Finnish authorities began to organize the immigrant reception system only after the first wave of immigrants had already arrived (Koivukangas, 1999 as cited in (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000)). Consequently, the authorities were instantly faced with multiple problems, such as massive unemployment, monolingualism in Russian among working-age and young returnees, and even document falsification (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). These problems were partially caused by the liberal criteria for getting immigrant status with encompassing different social rights in the beginning of the 1990s (Kyntäjä, 1997 as cited in Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Within the big wave of immigration, the unemployment rate among immigrants (42.8%) was almost triple that of the dominant population (12.7%) in 1997; refugee groups from the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Iran and Somalia were affected worst by unemployment at that time. Excluding the refugee population, the worst affected by unemployment were Russian-speaking immigrants from the former Soviet Union, despite almost 60% of those being eligible to work (Ministry of Labor, 1999 as cited in Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). The integrating process into Finnish society was far from smooth with the situation of high unemployment. In relation to the unemployment of immigrants in Finland, Perkinen (1996) found the effect of unemployment and uncertainties about the future have caused a major problem to immigrants' mental health. Consequently, it became a subject that municipal mental health has been handled in the recent years (as cited in Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000).

Based upon the various problems that immigrants encountered, Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000) suggested a rough outline into two categories; 1) problems may arise from a deficiency in human or material resources, which prevents immigrants from functioning as full members of society, 2) immigrants may encounter intentional or unintentional discrimination. In relation to discrimination, a survey conducted in 1998 found

the attitudes of the Finnish host population towards immigrants were fairly intolerant in comparison with 14 other European countries (Eurobarometer opinion poll No.47.1, as cited in (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). Besides that, there were also signs of a relative consistency of racist attitudes, especially towards groups of Somalis and Russian speakers who arrived in the 90's (Jaakkola, 1999). The serial survey, conducted by the same researcher, Jaakkola, in 2005, presented significantly negative attitudes by the host population towards immigrants in the recession years from 1993 to 1998, but afterwards more positive attitudes towards immigrants were found. Moreover, the attitudes were more positive towards refugees from war zones, developing countries and environments suffering starvation than those refugees who came for political or religious reasons, or to escape from persecution due to racism. In addition to that, 74 % of Finns had more positive attitudes towards Ingrian Finns and 61% of Finns welcomed migrants from Estonia. The attitudes of the dominant culture towards Somalis, Arabs, and Kurds have consequently turned more positive since the recession (Jaakkola, 2005). Nevertheless, the negative attitude or hostile attitudes towards Somalis was higher than other immigrants. A total of 698 suspected racist crimes were reported to police in 2007. Although Finns' attitudes towards immigrants have varied locally, the ethnic hierarchy has not changed (Jaakkola, 2009).

2.1.1 Finnish Immigration and Integration Policy

The first decree concerning immigration was given in 1811, which aimed at people moving into the territory of Finland. This decree was passed in regard to various forms of immigration throughout the early nineteenth century. During this time, Nordic cooperation was also established for introducing a type of free movement of persons from autonomous (not Russian) Finland to Sweden or vice versa. In 1888, the scattered regulations concerning immigration were amalgamated into a new decree on aliens' entry into and stay in Finland. This decree was executed over a period of 30 years by local authorities in registering

foreigners present on Finnish territory. As a modernizer of the scattered framework from earlier years, a new and unified Aliens Decree (187/1958) was enacted and remained in force until 1983. Finland's first Aliens Act (400/1983) was enacted and also accompanied by a new Aliens Decree. During the 80's, there were lively debates and critiques on immigration issues, such as the new challenge of larger groups of asylum seekers arriving, the Aliens Act insufficiently guaranteeing the rule of law, and being politically steered in decision-making. Thus, a new Aliens Act was prepared, and then enacted in 1991. Nevertheless, a notable immigration legislation, especially on human rights, was established during the 1990s by the democratic legislative procedures and Finland's international obligations (Leitzinger, 2008).

All through the developments and numerous amendments, *The Aliens Act* (301/2004) is the foremost act of law regulating the status of immigrations in Finland nowadays. The document was created in describing the rights and obligations of foreigners in Finland with a variety of essential issues. These issues include admission of legal entry, granting of citizenship and permit, subsidiary protection for refugees and asylum seekers, legal aid for interpreters or counselors, and so forth. Based on the *Act on the Application of Residence-Based Social Security Legislation* (1573/1993), immigrants who intend to stay permanently in Finland are entitled to obtain social security benefits. The Finnish Integration Act came into force in 1999. The aims of the *Act on the Integration of Immigration and Reception of Asylum Seekers* (439/1999) are promoting integration, equality and freedom of choice by providing measures that help immigrants to attain knowledge and skills they need to function in Finnish society, participate in work life, and also ensure the essential livelihood and welfare of asylum seekers by arranging for their reception. The integration is defined as the individual development of the immigrant who vigorously participates in the labor market and society while keeping his or her own language and culture. Integration also means (1215/2005) providing the services, resources and measures taken by authorities in

consideration of the needs of immigrants in planning. Therefore, every immigrant who has registered as an unemployed job seeker and applied for social assistance is entitled to an individual integration plan. An integration plan is drawn up as a collaborative process between an immigrant and his or her municipality of residence and an Employment and Economic Development Office (i.e., TE Office). The purpose of the plan sets out the measures needed to help immigrants integrate into Finnish society by facilitating Finnish or Swedish language skills, supporting education and assistance in employment. The maximum duration of the integration plan is three years; however, it can be extended by up to two years due to certain individual circumstances. Within the validation of the integration plan, financial assistance or so-called labor market subsidy for unemployed immigrants is granted from the Social Insurance Institution of Finland (i.e., KELA) as long as immigrants have registered with the TE Office in the first place. The financial assistance is tied with an obligation to participate in a language course and profession training. Immigrants are required to report how they have followed the plan and whether it needs to be updated. A refusal to participate in the preparation process or to follow the plan is sanctioned by a reduction or withdrawal of integration benefits (KELA).

With the constantly increasing number of immigrants, issues related to migration policy have become the subject of discussion for the Finnish government. Debates on the subject of immigration in the Finnish parliament have been a familiar feature in the election campaign. In 2010, a group of influential immigrants planned to establish the Immigrant Parliament of Finland (IPM) in order to participate in the immigration debate and give the ethnic minority a voice outside. The planned body, IPM, would have taken place with the Finnish parliamentary election in 2011 with the election of 50 IPM members (Helsinki Sanomat, 2010). Immigration and anti-immigration attitudes have been also a familiar feature of Finnish public opinion. According to the survey, two-thirds of the supporters of the Green

Party and Conservatives felt that Finland should welcome more foreign work applications than today. Attitudes towards refugees were more favorable among voters for the Greens and the Left Alliance in Finland (Jaakkola, 2009).

Finland is one of a total of 25 countries across the world that have accepted an annual numerical quota for refugees. Finland is third in the list of EU countries with an annual quota of 750. Sweden tops the list with a total of 1900, and Great Britain comes in second with 1000 (Helsinki Sanomat, 2010). In responding to the Syrian crisis, the Finnish government announced an additional quota for 2014 of 300 persons. A total of 500 Syrian refugees would be accepted to enter Finland, with 200 places being allocated from the standard annual quota of 750 (Ministry of Interior, 2013).

In accordance with the recently amended Alien Act, returning Ingrian Finns are required to prove their language skills in either Finnish or Swedish to the A2 level (basic ability) and to have accommodation arranged in Finland before entering Finland. Re-migration courses and language examinations for those people on the waiting list have been arranged in the St. Petersburg area, Karelia, and Estonia. In order to meet the needs of the regional labor market, returning Ingrian Finns must complete a form about their educational and profession background, as well as work preference. With the purpose of following the demand for workers, the job forms are sent to employers and municipalities who express an interest in new workers (Saarto, 2007). In fact, the registration for the re-migration queue of Ingrian Finns ended on 1 July 2011. Ingrian Finns who have registered before the deadline can apply for a residence permit based on re-migration till 1.7. 2016. If they do not apply for the residence permit as a returnee during the five year transition, then they will be required to apply through the general permit system (Finnish Immigration service, 2014).

Overall, Jaakkola (2009) stated the Finnish immigrant policy is in a phase of transition. As the large post-war age groups retire, a labor force shortage is expected. Thus, the threat of a labor shortage is currently one of the most important issues the Finnish government needs to deal with (Ilmarine, 2006). The latest immigrant policy program has shifted its focus from refugees to work-oriented immigration in order to replace those retired by attracting foreign skilled labor (Jaakkola, 2009).

2.2 Theoretical frameworks

2.2.1 An Overview of Acculturation

The initial narrative of acculturation traces back to the year 1936 with American anthropologists Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits. They explained how *acculturation* occurs when groups of individuals from different cultures come into constant contact with each other; there are changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups subsequently (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Based on this initial narrative, researchers have defined the concept and developed it further. First, Kim (2002) claimed the term acculturation was publicly adopted as the concept in place of the new area of studying dealing with “*those phenomena which result when groups of individuals have different cultures and come into first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original pattern of either or both groups*”. Second, as cited from the same book, Celenk and Van de Vijver (2011) see the definition of acculturation as “*the process of cultural change that occurs when individuals from different cultural backgrounds come into prolonged, continuous, first-hand contact with each other*”. Berry (2003) declared this ‘first-hand contact’ results in changes at both individual as well as group level. The individual level refers to values, attitudes, beliefs and identities; the group level refers to social and cultural systems. Kim also offered an overview of these individual level studies, which aims at understanding and explaining the

experiences of individuals who (1) have had a primary socialization in one culture and find themselves in a different and unfamiliar culture, (2) are at least minimally dependent on the host environment for meeting personal and social needs, and (3) are at least minimally engaged in first hand contact and communication with that environment (as cited in Gudykunst & Mody, 2002).

Berry (2010) declared adaptation is not synonymous with acculturation, adaptation is considered a consequence of acculturation. Acculturation and assimilation are sometimes used synonymously (Gordon, 1964). Therefore, one way of illustrating the distinctions between the terms and clarifying the focus of this study is presented in Figure 1. Kim (2001) viewed cross-cultural adaptation as a process that occurs in and through communication and it occurs as long as the individual remains in interaction with the host environment. In connection with the relationship of cross-cultural adaptation, Kim (2001) described cross-cultural adaptation occurs following the process of childhood *enculturation* (or socialization) of individuals into recognizable members of a given cultural community. At the process of enculturation, individuals socialize merely with an own culture such as a given childhood cultural community. By the time individuals enter a new or unfamiliar culture, all individuals undergo some degree of cultural learning such as food habits and festival celebration. The learning of resocialization activities are like the acquisition of the native cultural practices in wide ranging area. Therefore, it is often seen as starting an enculturation process all over again when one enters a new culture, because a newcomer faces situations that deviate from the original culture. Deculturation, acculturation, and assimilation are categorized into cross-cultural adaptation as they are a continuous interaction process across cultures. *Acculturation* is the process commonly defined as the acquisition of some, but not all, aspects of host cultural elements. The acquisition fulfills the purposes of coping and adjustment in the host society. As new learning occurs, the unlearning of at least some of the old cultural elements

has to occur. *Deculturation* (or unlearning) means that new responses are adopted in situations, and then the old cultural rules are inevitably lost. The act of losing something old is foreseeable as individuals acquire something new in the cultural practices. For instance, many Chinese find the longer they stay in Finland, the less they celebrate the traditional Chinese New Year. Meanwhile, it also refers to unlearning in the new cultural context. The minimal interaction between the residents of an ethnic community and those outside of the community would lead to deculturation since the individuals' cultural practices are unaffected. Both acculturation and to some extent deculturation take place when one is faced with living in a new culture where those elements learned in childhood no longer apply. Nevertheless, a newcomer carries out an internal transformation in the direction of assimilation as the interplay of acculturation and deculturation continues. *Assimilation* expresses the acceptance of mainstream cultural elements of the host society by the individual. Theoretically, *assimilation* is the highest degree of deculturation and acculturation.

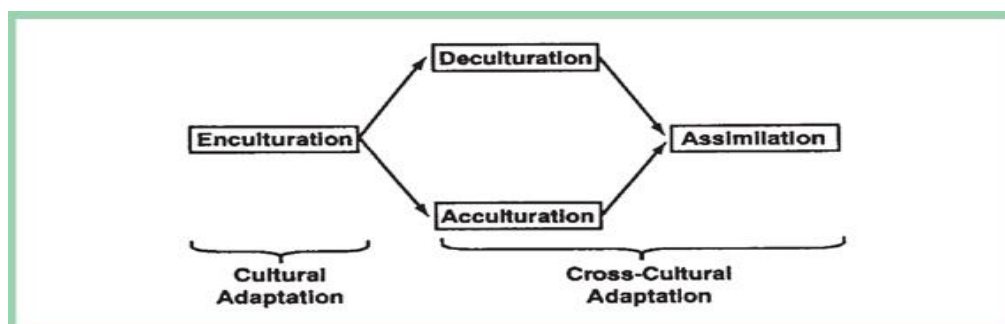


Figure 1 Relationships among Terms Associated with Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Assimilation may consider as the ultimate goal and motivate some immigrants to achieve the maximum adaptation. Some may think of it as falling at a point of minimal acculturation and deculturation in relation to their maintaining of own ethnic identity. Although individuals vary in the level of overall adaptation achieved, the stress of adaptive change is a common issue immigrants have to face (Kim, 2001).

2.2.2 Acculturative stress

The definition proposed by Redfield and his colleagues (1936) disclosed that acculturation encompasses all forms of change. It is indicated that there is the need to consider the psychological changes at the individual level (Sam, & Berry, 2010). These changes range from simple behavioral shifts (e.g., in ways of speaking and eating) to more problematic facets that produce acculturative stress (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987).

The stress naturally comes along as part of adaptation once migration takes place. Especially at the beginning stage of the adaptation process, the newcomer is overwhelmed by daily problems (Abougundia & Noels, 2001). Berry (1997, 2010) suggested in his acculturative stress model that migration is naturally stressful, and this stress could result in lowered mental health status, particularly in anxiety, depression, uncertainty and feelings of marginality and alienation, increased adjustment disorder symptom levels, and identity confusion. This stress is negatively related to acculturation and can affect individuals vastly with a disruptive effect on their psychological and physiological well-being (Glass & Bieber, 1997). This stress appears more severe at a low level of acculturation since the stress is a product of the anxiety of dealing with an unfamiliar environment for all migrants (Bochner, 1982). Likewise, researchers have found the prevalence of suicidal behaviors among the first or second –generation immigrant populations was higher than among the general population (Hjern & Allebeck, 2002; Lindert, Schouler-Ocak, Heinz, & Priebe, 2008). A high level of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts are also found among adolescents born of immigrant parents (Choquet & Ledoux, 1998; Douillard, 2003, as cited in Van Leeuwen, Rodgers, Régner, & Chabrol, 2010).

On the other hand, Kim (2001, 2002) declared acculturative stress has been found to be positively correlated with the learning and growth-facilitating nature of the adaptation process. The core of Kim's theory is the "stress-adaptation-growth dynamic", which is

stimulated by a continual and cyclic tension between stress and adaptation that produces an appearance of subtle growth. She claims a forward and upward psychological movement of intercultural transformation towards greater adaptation and growth. The intercultural transformation emerges in three facets: 1) increased functional fitness, 2) improved psychological health, and 3) moving into intercultural identity (Kim, 2001). Moreover, shared networks with members of the host country have been found to facilitate the acculturation process. However, the home country network may instead hinder acculturation over a long period, because it reduces the motivation for social interaction with the host country members, and as a result the needs to learn acceptable social behaviors (Gudykunst & Kim, 1984; Kim, 2001). Conversely, Sandel and Liang (2010) found a long-term association with co-ethnics appears to correlate positively with greater satisfaction and adaptation.

Studies have found this acculturative stress or as it is commonly known, culture shock, often stems from the process of acculturation (Dyal & Dyal, 1981; Graham, 1983 as cited in Dow, 2010). *Culture shock* refers to the feeling of disorientation and anxiety that a sojourner experiences when entering a new culture (Liu, Volcic, & Gallois, 2011). It also has been indirectly supported by other sojourner studies that attempted to depict the stages of the adaptation process (Kim, 2002). The anthropologist Oberg (1979) identified the four stages of culture shock: 1) a *honeymoon* stage characterized by fascination and optimism; 2) a *crisis* stage characterized emotionally stereotyped attitudes toward the host society and increased association with the fellow sojourners; 3) a *recovery* stage characterized by increased language knowledge and ability to get around in the new environment; and 4) the adaptation stage characterized the adjustment is about as complete as possible, anxiety is largely gone and new customs are accepted and enjoyed (as cited in Kim, 2002). Empirical studies have documented what is called a “U-curve hypothesis” (e.g., Furnham, 1988; Ward et al., 1998). This U- curve model delineates how sojourners typically embark on their cross-cultural

adaptation process with optimism and excitement, followed by a sequent crisis and dissatisfaction, and a recovery (Kim, 2002). Similar findings emerged in a study of multicultural relationships in Finland. After the initial excitement, the Finnish foreign spouses generally moved towards the crisis stage during the first year due to difficult language, cold winter, unemployment, and so forth. Followed by environmental support, coping strategy and relationship development, spouses moved forward to a stable relationship and problems were seen as a natural part of daily life (Angle, Uusiautti, & Määttä, 2014).

In reality, host cultural attitudes can exert a strong influence on how immigrants experience the acculturation process (Kosic, Mannetti, & Lackland Sam, 2005). The attitude of intolerance, prejudice, and discrimination aimed at immigrants, refugees, and sojourners is often reflected in *host conformity pressure* (Kim, 2001). Bond and Smith's (1996) result revealed the degree of conformity varied with aspects of culture, and generally was correlated to the tightness of a society like a subsistence society. They found that conformity was lower in societies valuing autonomy, individualism, and status achievement, while it was higher in societies that held values of conservatism, collectivism and a preference for status acknowledgment.

However, poor adaptation is not necessarily an inevitable outcome of migration. This is because moderating and mediating factors such as age, personality, gender, social support, acculturating strategies, and coping can either strengthen or ease the adaptation outcome (Berry, 2006). Moreover, a distinction has been made between psychological and sociocultural adaptation by Ward (2001). She stated that in the broadest sense, psychological adaptation refers to an individual's satisfaction and overall emotional or psychological well-being; yet sociocultural adaptation refers to how successfully the individual acquires the appropriate sociocultural skills needed for living in the new sociocultural milieu.

2.2.3 Factors affecting the degree of acculturation

Nauck (2008) declared vast individual differences in psychological acculturation exist; not every group or individual enters into, participates in, or changes in the same pattern during their acculturation. Even individuals who have the same cultural origin and who live in the same acculturation ground would adapt in a different way. Studies have found multiple factors including motivation for migrating, individual factors, cultural factors and factors related to the migrant experience influence the degree of individual experience of acculturation (Arends-Tóth, & Van de Vijver, 2006; Berry, 1997, 2001; Ozgur, & Van de Vijver, 2011). In comparison with motivation between voluntary and involuntary migrants, Keller (1975) found involuntary migrants can be substantial weaker than voluntary migrants, because the trauma of involuntary leaving the country of origin had a crucial impact on the refugee's psychological state. This crucial impact would influence forced immigrants' residual behavior for years in a new resettlement.

Berry (1997) suggested a number of personal characteristics of both a demographic and social nature influence the acculturation process of individuals. The individual factors consist of age, gender, education and socioeconomic status, cultural distance, as well as personal factors. These individual factors existed prior to acculturation, and give the ability to lower the amount of uncertainty experienced and increase familiarity with the new environment.

Age

Age is negatively associated with acculturation success (Berry, 2001). It is generally smooth when acculturation starts early. Nevertheless, there appears to be increased risk in resettlement if acculturation begins at retirement or if older parents migrate to join their resettled adult offspring due to family reunification (Beiser, Barwick, Berry, da Costa, Fantino, Ganesan, Lee, Milne, Naidoo, Prince, Tousignant, & Vela, 1988). Studies found

individuals who relocated to the United States at an early age and who had been in the United States for an extended period of time were more acculturated (Faragallah, Schumm, & Webb, 1997; Tran, 1989). Yet immigrants in adolescence may experience conflicts between their parents' cultural values and those of the host culture, although they tend to acculturate faster (Sam, 1995; Tran, 1993). Berry (1997) suggested that life transition between childhood and adulthood is compounded by cultural transitions. People who immigrate in later life are predisposed to pressure in adaptability and an increased risk of mental health problems. The demands for adjusting to different customs and social norms, learning a new language, and getting familiar with new rules can create stress and strain on older migrants (Beiser et al., 1988; Organista, Organista, & Kurasaki, 2003).

Gender

Gender has also been found to influence the process of acculturation (Berry, 1997). It is reported that different gender role expectations are factors contributing to stress and tension in immigrant families (Dion & Dion, 1996). Berry (2001) claimed social structural factors and values pertaining to the process of immigration and adaptation may lead to very different experiences from men and women. Dions' finding (2001) demonstrated the expectations and responsibilities related to family roles may be renegotiated between the host culture and the culture of origin. For example, Korean women attempt to adopt new roles in the United States in asking for husbands' involvement in household work, although the majority of the wives and husbands regarded family work as primarily the wife's duty (Lim, 1997).

Level of Education and Socioeconomic Status

It has been suggested that an individual's acculturation is positively associated with their level of education and socioeconomic status (Beiser et al., 1988; Berry, 1997). Berry

(1997) proposed three reasons for this relationship: 1) education is a personal resource in itself; problem solving and problem analysis is generally embedded in formal education and possibly contribute to better adaptation, 2) education is interrelated with other resources, such as income, occupational status, support networks, etc., and 3) education may accustom migrants to features of the society into which they settle; it is like pre-acculturation to the language, history, values and norms of the new culture. Studies conducted with Albanian immigrants (Dow, & Woolley, 2011) and Bosnian refugees (Colic-Peisker & Walker, 2003) evidently found that members were less educated or those who originated from rural areas were more likely to use separation as an acculturation strategy. Yet members who were educated or coming from more urban areas in these groups were likely to use integrative acculturation strategies to adjust to life in the United States.

Cultural distance

Cultural distance lies in the dissimilarity between the two cultures in contact such as language, religion, and so forth. Greater cultural distance indicates the needs for great cultural learning and shedding. However, large differences probably cause negative intergroup attitudes and bring greater culture conflict leading to poorer adaptation (Berry, 1997). Studies conducted among Chinese shopkeepers in Montreal, Canada (Croucher, 2008) and Muslims in France (Croucher, 2009a, 2009b) echo the cultural conflict in great cultural distance. The results show that ethnic minorities would respond by closing themselves off from the dominant culture and be less motivated to acculturate when they are oppressed to linguistically, religiously, politically, culturally and economically adapt to a dominant mode (Croucher, 2006).

Personal factors

Personal factors have also been shown to affect acculturation, but consistent findings

have been rare. It is possibly because it does not matter about trait itself, but on the subject of its fit with new cultural setting (Berry, 1997). One finding (Ramdhonee & Bhowon, 2012), among a group of immigrants to Mauritius after transnational marriages, is that personal traits are related to a person's preferred acculturation strategy and acculturative stress. By using the five-factor model (also called the "big five": extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism and openness to experience), neuroticism, openness to experience and agreeableness factors emerged as noteworthy predictors of integration and marginalization (except agreeableness) strategies and acculturative stress. Neuroticism, openness to experience, and marginalization were significant predictors of acculturative stress.

2.2.4 Indicators of Acculturation

In addition to Kim's structural model, the framework of assessment of acculturation from Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver (2006) provides a salient process tool that examines three criteria: acculturation condition, acculturation orientations, and acculturation outcomes. The acculturation process is composed of precedent factors (i.e., acculturation conditions), strategies (i.e., acculturation orientations), and consequences (i.e., acculturation outcomes) (Ozgur, & Van de Vijver, 2011).

Acculturation conditions are individual and group-level factors referring to the resources behind the acculturation process. At the individual level, conditions can refer to changes over time (e.g., age, length of settlement), position in society and personality characteristics (e.g., social norms and coping strategies), and social context (e.g., social support and stressful situations). In order to establish the context within which the acculturation process occurs, it is essential to understand the acculturation conditions. The first investigation examines the characteristics of the receiving society, such as whether it is perceived or objective discrimination or not; next are the characteristics of the society of origin (e.g., political context and cultural homogeneity), then the characteristics of the

immigrant group (e.g., ethnic vitality and social attachment). The final characteristic investigation is about personal characteristics such as expectations, norms and personality. These characteristics define the context on the process of acculturation (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2006).

Acculturation orientations, the second dimension of the acculturation process, involve the way immigrants prefer to relate to the society of settlement (i.e., cultural adoption) and country of origin (i.e., cultural maintenance). Acculturation orientation is also referred to as acculturation strategies, styles and attitudes in the literature, mostly related to acculturation attitudes. The mediator in the acculturation process is affiliated to Berry's model of integration, marginalization, separation and assimilation or cultural maintenance vs. cultural adoption (Celenk & van de Vijver, 2011). Research by Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver (2003) argued that there are two major theoretical perspectives on acculturation which are related to acculturation orientations: the relations between cultural adoption and maintenance (i.e., dimensionality) and the finding that acculturation preference and behaviors can vary across life domains and contexts (i.e., domain specificity). Studies have found a distinct preference in acculturation strategies between public and private life spheres. For example, Turkish and Moroccan immigrants in the Netherlands and Belgium prefer cultural adoption in the public domain (e.g., school, work) and cultural maintenance in the private domain (e.g., marriage, family) (Snauwaert, Siemens, Vanbeselaere, & Boesn, 2003, as cited in Celenk & van de Vijver, 2011).

Acculturation outcomes are the final component of the acculturation process. Studies have made a distinction between psychological outcomes (internal adjustment) and behavioral adaptation (social, external adjustment). Internal adjustment is constituted by emotional and affective of psychological acculturation outcome, which leads to one's mental health, well-being and satisfaction with the life in a new culture. Acculturative stress is

expected to be part of psychological adjustment and is believed to be affected by acculturation conditions and orientations. External adjustment is seen as acquiring culturally appreciate knowledge and skills, which causes interacting with the dominant culture and dealing with stressors (Celenk & van de Vijver 2011). Yet Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver (2006) claimed sociocultural competence in the ethnic culture also needs to be addressed instead of just social adjustment to the mainstream culture.

2.3 Acculturation strategy

Padilla (1980) stated that “*the individual’s experiences to role conflicts, interpersonal relationships, and adaptation strategies are essential in our understanding of acculturative change*” (p. 2). Thus, the choice of acculturation strategy plays an influential role in the process of adaptation in the host environment, and as well forms one of the fundamental constructions of building a ‘home’ in an unfamiliar environment. Joining Berry’s acculturation strategy model and Nishida’s pragmatic cultural schema, we now turn to these models for discussion.

2.3.1 Berry’s model

Immigrants embark on the process of acculturation and consequently go through the different stages of acculturation. They adopt different acculturation strategies for adjusting to the new environment. However, not everyone seeks out contact, and even among those who do, not everyone seeks to change their own culture and behavior to be more like the dominant group. Based on this assumption, Berry (1997) developed this bidimensional model of acculturation, which provides a supporting structure for the study of acculturation attitudes. Berry (2001) stated everyone virtually in an intercultural contact arena holds attitudes toward the two fundamental aspects: intercultural contact and cultural maintenance. He proposed two critical issues that determine the type of acculturation: 1) is it considered to be of value to maintain

one's identity and characteristics? 2) Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with the larger society? When these two questions are crossed, a space of acculturation is created with four sectors within which individuals may express how they seek to acculturate (Berry, 1997). Thus, the notion of acculturation strategies is based on two underlying dimensions: own cultural maintenance and involvement with other cultures (Berry, 2001; Berry, 1997)

Members of ethnic minority groups may use four stages to handle acculturative stress: integration, marginalization, assimilation, and separation. From the point of view of immigrants, when individuals are not longing to maintain their cultural heritage and seek daily interaction with other cultures, *assimilation strategy* is defined. In contrast, the *separation* alternative is defined when immigrants wish to avoid interaction with others and at the same time place a value in maintaining their original culture. *Integration* is the option when there is an interest in both maintaining one's original culture and engaging in daily interactions with other groups. When there is little possibility of cultural maintenance and little interest in having relations with others, then the final strategy, *marginalization*, is defined (Berry, 1997, 2001).

Without a doubt, the dominant group plays a powerful role in influencing the way in which mutual acculturation would take place. Therefore, when the new environment or the receiving society enforces a certain kind of relation or constrains the choices of immigrants, then the other terms are replaced (Berry, 2001). On the subject of strategies of the larger society, assimilation can be termed as the "melting pot" when the dominant group enforces immigrants to reject their cultural heritage and seek daily interaction with other cultures. When separation is demanded and implemented by the dominant group, it is "segregation". When marginalization is imposed by the dominant group, it is a form of "exclusion" (Bourhis et al., 1997). When the larger society as a whole perceives cultural diversity as an objective,

the strategy of mutual accommodation is widely called “multiculturalism”, replacing integration (Berry, 1984). *Mutual accommodation* is required for integration to be achieved. That involves the acceptance by both dominant and nondominant groups of the right of all groups to live as culturally diverse people within the same society. This integration strategy requires immigrants to take on the fundamental values of the receiving society, and at the same time the receiving society ought to be prepared to adapt national institutions, such as education, health, justice and labor. In this way, the receiving society can meet better the needs of all groups now living together in the larger plural society (Berry, 2001).

The concept of cultural identity is used as a parallel approach to understanding acculturation strategies. It is a complex set of beliefs and attitudes that individuals have about themselves in connection with their cultural group membership, and usually these come the fore when people are in contact with another culture, not just when they live entirely within a single culture (Berry 2001; Phinney 1990). Research by Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, and Vedder (2001) suggested the strengths of ethnic and national identity vary depending on the support of ethnic maintenance and the pressure for assimilation.

It is believed that acculturation is more difficult for those people who are more distinct (e.g., by skin color, religious practices, etc.) from the dominant group (Padilla, & Perez, 2003). In addition to the cultural distance factor Berry suggested, studies have also found that for those whose physical features set them apart from the mainstream society, these people may experience prejudice and discrimination and thus be unwilling to assimilate in order to steer clear of being rejected (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, & Obdrzálek, 2000). At the same time, immigrants may experience less discrimination for those seek to assimilate and who undergo greater behavioral shift towards receiving society norms (Mummendey & Wenzel, 19999 as cited in Berry, 2001). Thus, the behavioral shifts from one’s own culture toward the new culture in

receiving society turn to next discussion.

2.4 Nishida's cultural schema theory

It is clear that cultural differences reflect in verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Communication behaviors such as gestures, turn taking, and directness are all expected to conform to a culture's expectation. Therefore, difficulties may arise when we try to share meaning with people whose communication behaviors are governed by different cultural rules from us (Liu, Volcic, & Gallois, 2011). While Berry's model has been instrumental in advancing the notion of acculturation, there is a gap in this conception. Berry's concept of integration fails to describe 'how' people go about integrating (identification with both original and new cultures) and maintaining one's dual cultures (Benet - Martinez & Haritatos, 2005). Thus, Nishida's (2005) culture schemas is entailed here for providing a better understanding of how new immigrants develop a sense of proper and improper behavior and communication for social interaction after migration taking place.

Nishida (2005) defined *culture schema* (or schemata) as a generalized knowledge of past experiences organized into related categories and used to guide our behavior in familiar situations. When one enters a familiar situation in his or her own culture, this stockpile of knowledge of appropriate behavior and an appropriate role is retrieved. This pre-acquainted knowledge is referred to as cultural schema. It is viewed as well as packets of information stored in the memory that can represent general knowledge about objects, situations and events or actions (Cohen, Kiss, & Le Voi, 1993). Then when one interacts with members of the same culture in a certain situation for a number of times, cultural schemas are produced in the brain. As the person encounters more of these similar situations, the cultural schemas become more organized, compact, and usable. As a result, communications become much easier through such refined cultural schemas (Nishida, 2005). However, when one enters into

an unfamiliar environment, they experience cognitive uncertainty and anxiety because of lacking cultural schemas for the new situation. Individuals usually go through the process to accommodate to the host culture by self-regulation and self-direction; the self-regulation stage refers to newcomers trying to solve ambiguities and set up an integration of information by drawing upon their home cultural schemas; the self-direction stage is that newcomers try to re-organized their home culture schemas or generate home culture schemas to adapt to the new environment (Liu, Gallois, & Volcic, 2011).

Cultural schemas for social interactions are classified into several types. Through examination of schemas and other related literatures, Nishida (2005) found the following eight schemas can be extracted as primary types for generating human behavior for social interaction. She calls these eight cultural schemas “primary social interaction schemas” (PSI schemas) in a culture hereafter. The PSI schemas are:

1. Fact- and- concept schemas: They are pieces of general information about facts, such as Helsinki is the capital of Finland, and concepts such as cars are vehicles that have tires and seats.
2. Person schemas: These are knowledge of different types of people, which include their personal traits, such as shy, smart, funny, neurotic and so forth.
3. Self schemas: These are components of self-concept, such as how we see ourselves and how others see themselves.
4. Role schemas: These are knowledge about social roles that represent sets of behaviors that are expected of people in particular social positions. These refer to achieved and ascribed roles.
5. Context schemas: These include knowledge on the subject of the situations and appropriate setting of behavioral parameters. The context schemas are activated ahead of other schemas being activated.

6. Procedure schemas: These are knowledge about the appropriate sequence of events which are derived from past actions, experiences and planning that worked.
7. Strategy schemas: These are knowledge about problem-solving strategies, such as a pilot preparing for emergency landing.
8. Emotion schemas: When other schemas are activated, the information about effect and evaluation stored in our long-term memory becomes accessible. These are constructed through social interactions all through one's life.

The PSI schemas of one's own culture are interrelated with each other, forming a network of cultural schemas to generate appropriate behaviors in the culture. Experience in the host culture may cause a change in one cultural schema. This further causes changes in all other cultural schemas and eventually in the behavior. In other words, cross-cultural adaptation can be perceived as the transformation of one's own PSI schemas into the host culture and as the attainment of new of new PSI schemas in the host-cultural environment (Nishida, 2005).

Greater opportunities for intercultural encounters can enable the individual to build a richer intercultural knowledge stock, which in turn can facilitate subsequent communication. As knowledge increases, one's attitudes to the intercultural communication become more positive and the motivation to engage in it increases. As motivation increase, one is more like to translate it into behavior in terms to participate in intercultural communication (Liu, Volcic, & Gallois, 2011). From the related study on the role of communication in the adaptation of dominant cultural values and practices embodied, McKay-Semmler and Kim (2014) stated as well that Hispanic youth with better host communication competence were more actively engaged in host interpersonal communication and functional fitness with respect to US public schools and the larger US society.

2.5 Research questions

The Ingrian returnee has been a main focus of research (e.g., Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000; Varjonen, Arnold, & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2013). Thus, in order to inquire into more comprehensive and multifaceted perspectives of acculturation experience and not only focusing on one group, this paper aims to produce an inclusive investigation of acculturation of on both forced and voluntary immigrants, as well as returnees who have engaged in the official integration plan in Finland. Through the lens of new immigrants' firsthand and intimate contact with a new culture and members of the new culture, this paper brings close informed insight regarding the individual's experiences, attitudes, and adaptive changes in the initial stage of acculturation process.

Age, gender, educational level and socioeconomic status, cultural distance, personal factors, motivation of migration, and condition of receiving society were proposed by scholars as influencing the degree of individual experiences acculturation. Thus, the 1st question is posed by using the preceding factors that Berry (1997) proposed to investigate how new immigrants' acculturation process has been affected.

RQ1. How are age, gender, educational level and socioeconomic status, cultural distance, and personal factors related to the acculturation process of individuals in the initial stage of acculturation?

The next question draws upon the acculturation strategy in Berry's model. This question intends to find the preferable acculturation strategy and self-recognition on cultural identity among the interviewed new immigrants in Finland.

RQ2. What is the preferred acculturation strategy among the participants?

The last question is posed by drawing upon the cultural schemas from Nishida's model. Nishida (2005) claimed the PSI schema in one's own culture is generally refined for

acculturation. Hence, this question intends to explore the transformation for acculturation.

RQ3. What kind of transformation takes place among the participants?

3. Research Method and Procedure

3.1 Nature of the study

Data for this study were collected via in-depth interviews with 11 participants. The aim of qualitative, interview-based research is to depict and clarify people's experiential life: how it is felt, lived, undergone, understood, and accomplished by human beings (Schultze, & Avital, 2011; Schwandt, 2001). Therefore, it is particularly expedient to adopt this method in this study when exploring new immigrants' stories behind their experience, especially in the initial phase when they are undergoing a prolonged cross-cultural adaptation process.

Furthermore, interviews enable the generation of deeply contextual accounts of participants' experiences and their interpretation of them (Schultze, & Avital, 2011). The semi-structured interview was applied since it can be flexible, with open-ended questions and the chance to explore issues that take place instinctively (Berg, 2009), as well as to ask additional questions (Corbetta, 2003). Moreover, questions in qualitative interviews are characterized as open-ended, clear, neutral and sensitive; questions can be based on behavior or experience, opinion or value, feeling, knowledge, sensory experience and demographic or background details (Patton, 2002). In fact, age, gender, educational levels, socioeconomic status, cultural distance, and personal traits have emerged in the literature as factors affecting the degree of acculturation.

The official integration plan set out the guideline for the selection of participants in this study. The condition was composed of individuals: 1) who are over 18 years old at the time, 2) who have completed at least 10 months of the Finnish for foreigners course in the integration plan, and 3) who have lived in Finland for less than six years with a range of legal statuses of resettlement. The integration plan for registered unemployed takes 3 years, but in some circumstances it can be extended due to personal reasons like sickness or maternity

leave. After the minimum 10 months of the Finnish for foreigners course, the students should be equipped to communicate with basic Finnish language skills (A2-B2 according to The Common European Framework) and as well as gained essential knowledge of Finnish culture through the course and internship. Internship also comes along for some practical reasons. Immigrants in the Finnish for foreigners course are required to work 3-7 weeks in a Finnish organization such as day care centers and shops in order to practice their Finnish language skills with members of the host groups, exploring Finnish organization systems, and having the possibility of obtaining a job.

This study is completed mainly throughout face to face and one on one interviews: 9 individual interviews and a group interview formed by two returnees. Apart from that, the author found some important information came from chatting with participants in the education center during breaks and lunch time. Thus, a small amount of information was partly used to supplement the data.

The research in this study took place in a neutral venue, and mutual respect was expected during the interviews. Scholars have stated it is important to establish rapport with participants prior to the interview as this can also have a positive effect on the subsequent development of the interview (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). Thus, in order to build trust and establish rapport with participants, the author explained briefly the personal background of immigration as a kind of an 'insider' with 'outsider' experience in the host culture before the interview took place. The personal experience of learning Finnish, culture shock, and professional training were mentioned, for instance. By the stimulation of the author's experience in Finland, the author found that the participants were more willing to yield as much information and their opinions, and in addition shared their personal experience in the process of adaptation.

3.2 Participants

Eleven new immigrants participated in this study, which included 8 females and 3 males, aged from 18 to 46. Brief information of each participant is found in Table 1 and more detailed description of the participants is listed in the Appendix B. These new immigrants were recruited by snow sampling and convenience sampling. Two participants are of the author's acquaintance, six participants were accessed through the author's previous teacher in an adult education center in Tampere, and the other three participants were recruited via the author's friends in a language center and school. Individuals who agreed to be interviewed gave verbal consent, were informed of the aims of the study, and that their participation was voluntary and could be discontinued at any time. All the face to face interviews were conducted mainly through 9 individual interviews with a small group of two returnees from October to December 2014. The length of interviews varied depending on the individual's responses. However, on average, each interview lasted 30-80 minutes. All participants received a box of candy or a donut for their involvement in this study.

The respondents' countries of origin were in the Middle East (3), Africa (2), Russia (2), Asia (3), and Europe (1). Five participants were forced immigrants, four were voluntary immigrants, and the other two participants were returnees. Six individuals were married, one was divorced, and the other four were single.

Table 1. Brief descriptions of participants

Participant A: a 35 year-old female from Hong Kong.

Participant B: a 20 year-old male from Iraq.

Participant C: a 24-year-old female from Iraq.

Participant D: an 18 year-old female from Afghanistan.

Participant E: a c.40 year old male from Somalia.

Participant F: a 36 year-old female from Russia.

Participant G: a 34 year-old female from Russia.

Participant H: a 46 year old female from China.

Participant I: a 26 year-old male from Ireland.

Participant J: a 24 year-old female who was born in the Congo.

Participant K: a 33 year-old female from Taiwan.

3.3 Procedure and instruments

A qualitative questionnaire was organized and used as a guided discussion in interviews.

Moreover, a semi-structured questionnaire was generated to address issues that newcomers come across, which correlate with the stages of pre-migration, acculturative stress, social life, cultural identity, acculturation strategy, transformation of original cultural schemas, and impact of adaptation. The demographic questions came first in order to understand each individual's background and current status. The second part of the questionnaire elicited views about the above mentioned aspects from an individual perspective. The guided questionnaire (Appendix A) was created first in English, and then translated into Finnish. The findings are presented in the results section.

All questions were designed with the intention to explore a number of topics in an individual's acculturation experience, acculturative stress, choice of acculturation strategy and cultural identity, and cultural learning in new cultural schemas. Taking into account the suggestion from Doody and Noonan (2013), the author began to ask questions about the participant's current situation before questioning about the past or future, since this procedure may help the participants engage more easily with the questions. Right after the demographic

questions, next the author asked participants “Why did you move to Finland? What was your expectation before moving to Finland? Have you ever lived in other countries than your motherland? How would you describe your experience up to this point? Is there any similarity and difference to experience in other countries where you have lived?” These questions can imply a number of factors, including motivation for migrating, individual factors, cultural factors, and factors related to the migrant experience that influence the degree of an individual’s acculturation, as researchers have suggested (e.g., Berry, 1997; Ozgur, & Van de Vijver, 2011). Acculturative stress is a product of anxiety in dealing with an unfamiliar environment for all migrants (Bochner, 1982). Such a disruptive effect strongly affects individuals in terms of their psychological and physiological well-being (Glass & Bieber, 1997). However, Kim (2001, 2002) suggested that stress has been found to be positively correlated with the learning and growth-facilitating nature of the adaptation process. Thus, the author asked participants questions that explore this issue, such as: “How do you feel while communicating with Finns in Finnish? What kind of resources do you have for coping with the stress and the unfamiliar culture? Where do you get help or support for adapting to Finnish culture? What kind of support comes from relatives or friends from your hometown or local ethnic community, co-ethnic, or other Finnish organization?” Then through the bidimensional questions in Berry’s model, the author asked about the individual’s acculturation strategy, as well as the self-recognition of cultural identity at the time. On the subject of changes of one’s own cultural schemas, questions were asked such as “Have you found any behavior changes in yourself? What kind of positive change occurred to you? What impact or learning was caused by the changes after moving to Finland?”

Before conducting the interview, the author explained to the participants the type of interview to be conducted, its nature and purpose. Next, a simple demographic questionnaire was given to each participant that included first name, gender, age, nationality, and ethnicity.

Oral consent was agreed ahead of the interview. Then the participant was informed that he or she could take time in thinking and talking during the interview as there is no right or wrong answer and the aim of this interview was to hear the participant's experiential life in Finland. Furthermore, the participants could ask questions at anytime during the interview. The interviews were audio-recorded and some brief written notes were taken by the author for reflecting on the interaction. In fact, Holloway and Wheeler (2010) suggested the interaction that arises during interviews between researchers and participants may bring benefit to the participants with the opportunity to explore events in their lives.

Locations for conducting the interviews varied and were based upon the participants' choice and convenience. Six interviews were conducted in the education center in Tampere, two were in public spaces in Jyväskylä, two were in the author's home, and the last one was in a participant's home as she had given birth 2 months earlier.

The language used in the interviews included English, Chinese, and Finnish. In order to generate rich data, the participants were free to use any one of these three languages to express themselves better. English interviews were conducted with the participants from Africa and Ireland. Finnish interviews were conducted with Russian returnees and refugees from the Middle East. Chinese was chosen for participants from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. All the interviews were transcribed in the original languages (s); excerpts were translated into English by the author.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

Owen's (1984) thematic analysis is employed in examining the interview data of this study. Thematic analysis focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas within the data, which move beyond merely counting clear and exact words or phrases (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). Nevertheless, the thematic approach is the most useful in

apprehending the complexity of meaning with a word-based data set (Guest et al., 2012), as well as being the most fundamental and commonly used method of analysis in qualitative research (Boyatzis, 1998; Riessman, 2008).

Owen (1984) indicated three criteria for thematic analysis: recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness. Recurrence, criteria one, refers to at least two parts of the discourse that reflect the same thread of meaning, even though different words are used. The criteria repetition is an extension of criteria one, which is an explicit repeated use of the same wording phrase or sentence. Forcefulness, the last criterion, focuses on the vocal inflection, volume or dramatic pauses since they serve to stress and indicate the importance of a segment of discourse in oral reports. In written reports, forcefulness is conveyed by underlining, circling, or highlighting of words or follow-up phrases mentioned above. In this study, these three criteria provide holistic techniques to identify key themes derived from the data observed, and offering a systematic and transparent method in data collecting and analysis. The interpretations are supported by data in the next chapter.

The six-phase guide to doing thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) is applied in this study. By following the step by step and recursive process, the key themes in this study are able to apply flexibility to fit the research questions and data. Phase one is familiarizing with the research data in depth. The next phase is generating initial items (i.e., codes) that represent a list of identified features of the data and what is interesting about them. The third phase searches for themes which involve sorting the different codes into potential themes, as well as organizing all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes.

Recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness are the three criteria from Owen (1984) which contribute to the theme finding at this phase. For instance, anxiety, depression and pressure were present in the same thread of meaning categorizing into acculturative stress. Sighs and voice raising in the respondents' expression may point out the importance of a segment of the

discourse. Then the fourth phase reviews the preliminary themes and refines the candidate themes. The fifth phase is defining and naming themes that determine what aspect of the data each theme captures. The last phase is producing the report with reference to the data within and across themes.

This is theory- driven study as the five key themes are developed from the Berry's (1997, 2001) acculturation theory. The theoretical framework proposes several interrelated components which converge into the acculturation of new immigrants. Key themes of this study are identified in Table 2, which capture the important data item in relation to the fundamental theoretical frameworks, research questions, and represent some level of meaning within the data. Each key theme may influence by its diverse aspects, but these themes outline the specific dimensions of the acculturation while new immigrants acculturate to the new environment in Finland.

The primary analytical purpose is to investigate new immigrants' experiences in adjustment and adaptation, to identify the preference of acculturation strategy, to explore changes of the individual's own cultural schema that reflect in the research questions. The findings were analyzed according to the five key themes.

Table 2. Identified thematic items

Key theme	Item
Factors in pre-migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic questions (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, native language, nationality, etc.) • Purpose of resettlement • pre-preparation • Emotional status • Experience of living abroad • Knowledge about Finland
Attribution of acculturative stressor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of successfully adapted & poorly adapted • Stress source (e.g., receiving society, institution, intergroup & outgroup) • Interaction with Finns • Issues and challenges • Negative experience /discrimination • Emotional status (e.g., depression, dissatisfaction, crisis)
Social support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social activity involvement and engagement • Coping strategy • Resource for help and support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethnic / Co-ethnic groups Friends and relatives in hometown Finn- host population Family Finnish non-governmental organization
Acculturation strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derived from Berry's bidimensional model: intercultural interaction & cultural maintenance <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Acculturation b. Assimilation c. Separation d. Marginalization
Cultural learning towards transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral change • Individual growth • Impact

4. Findings

The five key themes present holistically pertaining to how these new immigrants addressed the difference, discomfort, difficulty, as well as coping strategy and adaptive changes that arose in the adjustment to the new cultural context. The first key theme is slightly refined for leaving the demographic aside, and the other 4 key themes remain. The results did not change the structure of the themes, but rather clarified their content and present a tangible outcome within the data. *The general expectation before moving to Finland* provides the idea and knowledge of the receiving environment that the immigrants had before entering Finland, plus the individual's preparation beforehand. *Attribution of acculturative stressor* refers to the stresses produced particularly in post-migration at the individual level that the new immigrants have perceived. *Social support* captures the resources and networks that new immigrants have in order to facilitate emotional maintenance and gain critical information for daily tasks in the unfamiliar environment. *Preference of acculturation strategy and the individual's cultural identity* captures the new immigrants' favorable strategies that impede or facilitate successful acculturation. Cultural identity approach is used in here to understand the choices of acculturation strategies. *Cultural learning towards transformation* reflects the insight gained by the participants through their observation and participation in the host culture. During the initial phase of adaptation, the participants modified their preconception and learned sociocultural skills in the new environment. By living in and engaging with members in the new culture, the participants recognized and identified positive changes in the unfamiliar environment.

Depiction of the codes (i.e., item) depends on information from the participants. In each section, direct quotations from the participants are provided in order to exemplify the themes. The interpretive analysis is iterative in order to seek better understating of how the themes represented the lived experiences of the new immigrants in Finland. However,

grammar mistakes commonly occurred in some expressions as Finnish language acquisition and proficiency is in process for the new immigrants. Despite the incorrect grammar, a detailed description of each of the five themes is presented.

4.1 The general expectation before moving to Finland

The expectation of the living environment before moving to Finland has certain influences on how adjustments are made to life in Finland and it affects the adaptation process. During the interviews with the eleven participants, the awareness of cross-cultural adaptation was not concrete or clear in the pre-migration period, and knowledge of Finland generally reflected only cold weather. To forced immigrants, the expectation of the living environment in Finland was expressed by participant E, a male from Somalia, who said “I knew Finland is an icy cold, peaceful country, no problem, no war”. Then participant D, a female from Afghanistan’s countryside, first expressed her excitement about family reunion before moving into Finland and how she was told by her father and relative who lived in Finland for over a decade.

Minua jännitti ennen muuttaa Suomeen, koska en ole nähnyt isäni 10 vuotta. En jännittänyt muuttaa suomeen (nauru). Tässä ei ole sota ja tytöille on helpompi elää, isi ja setä kertoi.

I was excited before coming to Finland, because I had not seen my father for 10 years. The excitement was not about moving here (laughs). My father and uncle told me here (Finland) there is no war and it is easier to live for girls.

The voluntary immigrants as well provided a similar portrayal of Finland. Participant I, from Ireland, also stated what he knew about Finland was nothing in particular, except the cold weather, ice hockey, and sauna. Participant A, a female from Hong Kong, expressed her idea of Finland was quite different. She expected the living environment would be like England where she had visited a few times. The classic tourist attractions like the Northern lights and Santa Claus took over the beautiful image of Finland more than the reality.

搬來之前我知道芬蘭不多，大概就是聖誕老人和北極光了。我以為這裡和英國差不多，英文會在所有官方文件上像香港一樣。

I knew not much about Finland, only Santa and the northern lights, that's it. I thought here (Finland) is like the United Kingdom and English is the language being used in every official document like Hong Kong.

Instead of great cultural distances, returnee F, a 36 year-old female from Russia, pointed out her strong family ties with Finland and her understanding of Finnish and Russian cultures being similar. Another returnee, G from St. Petersburg, shared a parallel opinion with participant F. Returnee F said:

Isini on suomalainen. Olin käynyt Suomessa monta kertaa kun olin lapsi. Isäni usein vei minut käymään hänen sukulaisien kylässä täällä. Minusta suomalainen kulttuuri ja venäläinen kulttuuri ovat melko samanlaisia (paussi) Ruoka, juhla, ilma, no..ei ole kovin eroa.

My father is a native Finn. I had come to Finland many times since I was a kid. My father often took me to visit his relatives here (Finland). To me, Finnish culture and Russian culture are quite similar (pause) Food, festivals, weather .Mm... not much difference.

It appeared that these 2 returnees take advantage of the low cultural distance than the other participants who came from another continent. Apart from the general concept of cold weather, they already knew and learned the Finnish customs more than the other immigrants prior to migration. The firsthand contact with close relatives from Finland had provided them a better understanding of Finnish history, traditions, values, and norms. In the initial phase of acculturation, their knowledge of Finland helped them adjust to the host environment faster than others. Besides that, the similarity in appearance and religion with Finns also helped them integrate into the host culture more easily than those with distinct physical features.

Identifying new immigrants' expectation and assumptions like the above are of critical importance in understanding the acculturation process. The fact of being correct or incorrect with cultural expectations and assumptions provided information concerning motivating factors for patterns of behavior and adopted beliefs. These two returnees who had more correct perceptions of the new cultural context seemed to demand less significant changes in behaviors and attitudes in order to fully engage members of the new cultural

milieu. On the other hand, the immigrants who had inaccurate perceptions were likely to require more adaptive changes in order to better navigate the cultural milieu and be more fully engaged. Nevertheless, on the basis of age, gender, education and socioeconomic status prior to migration, there were not much difference with the general expectations and assumptions between forced and voluntary immigrants, except for the two returnees.

4.2 Attribution of acculturative stressor

During the data collection process, it appeared the acculturative stress was shown in different forms and strongly correlated with the migrants' motivation for migrating, individual and cultural factors, and factors related to the immigrants' experience in the new cultural context. Throughout the interviews, the majority of the new immigrants thought of 'successfully' adapting to the host culture was by means of knowing the Finnish language well, getting a good job, and living forward; the meaning of 'poorly' adapting was conveyed as no income, without any work or study place. In regard to the stressors, both voluntary and forced immigrants shared parallel thoughts. *Finnish language deficiency* presents the primary stressor that causes low self-confidence in interacting with the host population. *Employment* was the next stressor, which consequently is affected by Finnish language skills. Then the annoyance and frustration in *Dealing with the Finnish medical system* arose for those participants who are not in a healthy condition. *Perceiving discrimination and prejudice*, which was studied in terms of the immigrants' rejection from the receiving society, was regarded as insignificant by the African immigrants. Moreover, the unanticipated seasonal affective disorder and the influence of social structure were mentioned in the excerpts.

Finnish language deficiency

Instead of external pressure from the host culture, the majority of the participants expressed that their Finnish language skills made them less confident to talk and unable to

express themselves well in interacting with Finns. Participant I, a male from Ireland said “I don’t feel stressed in interacting with Finns, just the language makes me not confident to talk.” The pressure from Finnish language proficiency caused internal stress within individuals. However, it is interrelated in many aspects, such as uncomfortable feelings and uncertainty about the future. First, Participant C, a female from Iraq, pointed out her worries for the upcoming internship in the shop.

Suomea on vaikea. Joskus minun pitää soittaa serkulle ja pyydän häneltä apua selittämään. Nyt työharjoittelu on tulossa, olen hermostunut minun kieli taso, ei asiakaan kanssa kaupassa.

Finnish is difficult. Sometimes I have to call my cousin for help in explaining. Now the internship is coming, I am worried about my Finnish skill, not with Finnish customers in the shop.”

To participant D, an 18 year-old female from Afghanistan, the stress showed a more complicated form than just lacking confidence. The internal pressure from Finnish language skills was not merely shown in her performance at the school, but also presented greater responsibility in the immigrant family. She first experienced stress at the school after changing the class from an immigrant’s preparatory class to a regular class. Then she expressed how she performed the responsibilities of the elder child in the family due to better Finnish language skills and obedience to her parents. She was like an information broker who was in charge of daily communication with the host culture and her family, although she did not like this responsibility.

Minulla oli hankala ajan. Olin stressaantunut peruskoulussa (paussi) Vaikka vastasin vaan opettajan kysymyksiin, minun luokkatoverit (suomalaiset) näyttivät ‘vau’ ja tuijottivat minua. En pitänyt siitä. Paras ystäväni oli Puolalainen koulussa. Kun hän oli poissa, tunsin kauheaa koulussa ja kun olin sairas, hän oli onneton koulussa. Sanoin äidilleni, että en pidä koulusta täällä, mutta äiti vain sanoi minulle yrittää tehdä parhaani.

Olen perheeni tulkki ja minun täytyy soittaa lääkärille, Kelalle tai sosiaalityöntekijälle kun vanhemmat pyytävät. Kun en onnistunut tekemään mitä isin pyysi, isäni sanoi minulle “Et oppi suomea hyvin”. Mutta kun onnistuin, hän ei sanonut mitään (paussi) Vaikka isäni on asunut Suomessa kauemmin kuin minä,

yli 10 vuotta. Hän on viisikymmentä nyt. Hän (isä) ei osaa Suomea niin hyvin kuin minä. Veljeni on vammainen ja siskolla on oppimisvaikeus. Hän (siskoni) puhuu vain omansa äidinkieltään koulussa.

I had a tough time and was stressed in the primary school. Although I just answered the teacher's questions, my classmates (Finns) said 'Wow' and stared at me. I did not like it. My best friend at the school was from Poland. When she was absent, I felt awful at the school and she was unhappy when I was sick. I told my mom that I don't like school here, but she just said try to do my best.

I am my family's interpreter and I have to call for making appointment with doctors, Kela, and social workers when my parents ask. When things did not work out as my father had required, he said to me "You have not learned Finnish well." But when things worked, he said nothing (pause) although my father has been living in Finland longer than me, over 10 years. He is fifty now. My Finnish skill is better than his. My brother is handicapped and my sister has a learning difficulty. She (my sister) only talks in her mother tongue in school.

Participant K, a 33 year-old female from Taiwan, who has been working in a Finnish pattern company for over two years in Tampere, Finland, articulated her uncomfortable feeling of communicating in Finnish. As the only foreigner in the company, she pointed out that she preferred to use English at work in order to avoid language ambiguity. To her, Finnish is used only for chit chat during coffee breaks.

我是公司裡唯一的外國人。之前在上芬蘭語課時，我發現那些不會講英語的人學芬蘭語比較快。所以我也試著在跟我同事聊天時把自己的英文的頻道關掉，而去模仿她們的對白和模式。但是在公事上，我就寧願只用英文，這樣講比較清楚不會含糊不清。我之前也會覺得挺有壓力的，不管在芬蘭語能力上或是工作表現上，總覺得不能自在的生活在這裡，因為連新聞都聽不懂。現在我相信這些都會透過時間來克服。

I am the only foreigner in the company. I realized in the previous language course that those who don't speak English learn Finnish quicker. So, I have tried to turn off my English channel and imitated my colleague's communication dialogs and patterns while I chat with them in the office. But at work, I rather use English first in case of any language ambiguity. I used to be stressed about my Finnish skill, my performance at work, and uncomfortable living style here since I could not understand well what the TV news was talking about. Now, I believe all these will be overcome through time.

In addition to the stress from language ability and handling mundane issues in Finnish, Participant E, a 34 year-old Hong Kong female, further pointed out the unstable emotion in

her first encounter with seasonal affective disorder.

我會說剛開始的壓力來自語言的文化衝擊和氣候。我來的時候是十月底，就像現在這樣灰灰的很沮喪的天氣。那時我常躲在廁所哭，也不知道為什麼哭，還在想我幹麼搬來這裡啊！我也以為這裡像英國一樣，英文是通用的且會在每個官方文件上，很顯然不是我想的那樣(嘆息的笑)。在我個人方面，我老公和我婆婆也不會在我芬蘭語學習上或是找工作上給什麼壓力，倒是我自己覺得和芬蘭人講話有壓力，因為我怕聽不懂他們講什麼，應該說是語言讓我有壓力不是芬蘭人。

I would say the initial stress came from the culture shock in language and weather. I arrived in late October, it's like now a very gray and depressing weather. At that time, I cried often in the toilet without a specific reason and began to doubt why I moved here! I thought here it is like England and English is used in every official document. Obviously, it's not like what I thought (laughs with sighs). Personally, my Finnish husband and mother-in-law don't give me any pressure to find a job or learn Finnish. I only feel stressful in talking with Finns, because I am afraid that I don't understand what they say. Language makes me stressed, not people.

The Finnish skill deficiency has abundantly shown how this primary stressor affects the individual's confidence to interact with the host population. Finnish language familiarity and competence were apparently critical for interactions in the new cultural context. Finnish skills impacted in all areas of the new immigrants' lives, including the academic setting in the Finnish class, working environment, and social relationships with friends and colleagues. Nevertheless, for the majority of new immigrants, Finnish proficiency served as a channel to understand the new culture environment, and more particularly was connected to their obtaining of employment.

Employment

Employment was revealed to be the second stressor to the new immigrants. The difficulties in finding an internship placement for professional training, the uncertainty of getting a proper job for a stable income, and perceived unequal reception into the labor market were all expressed. These issues have increased the acculturative stress in their daily lives. The frustration of getting an internship placement and being employed was expressed

among the majority of the participants. Finnish language skill consequently affects the ability of immigrants to regain their previous profession or pursue a career that they dream of in Finland. In reality, a few of them were forced to change their profession and restudy, and a couple of respondents expressed the possibility of being self-employed might be an alternative option as they think they will not be hired by Finnish employers. These doubts were expressed by one after another of the participants. First, Participant E, a male from Somalia, revealed his depression and the pressure of job hunting. The pressure was not merely associated with unemployment; it also appeared in terms of the tradition role of food provider in the family being under threat since he lost his job and a stable income.

Unlike most people, I started the Finnish course after losing my job at Nokia. No one expected Nokia would be like this, and now finding a new job is frustrating (sighs with emotion). At Nokia, I worked as a store keeper and we did not need Finnish language skills at work. But now, I need to learn Finnish and get the paper (professional certificate) for finding a new job. That's why I am here (adult education center) (sighs). My previous employment certificate at Nokia helped me the get the internship (pause) I don't like to stay at home doing nothing. I want to work!

After long searching and waiting for an internship placement, participants F and G, both returnees, stated if they could not get an internship first then it is impossible to get a job. These two female returnees did consider launching a shop together as an alternative solution as they think they will not be employed in any circumstances. Therefore, they will not be able to get mortgage from a bank and build their own 'home' in Finland. Besides that, they also expressed their understanding of unequal reception in the Finnish labor market was just like in Russia; immigrants are always the last option for employers.

Osallistuja F: Haluamme tehdä työtä suomalaisen kanssa. Olimme työharjoittelu yhdessä ja oli hauskaa aikaa. Vaikka olemme olleet aktiivisia, emme kuitenkaan saaneet harjoittelupaikkaa vasta meidän opettaja soitti pomolle. Joten se päättyi meidän pitkä odotus.

Participant F: We like to work with Finns. We were in an internship together and had a good time. Although we have been active, we still could not get an

internship placement until our teacher made a call to the boss. That really ended our long waiting for a reply.

Osallistuja G: Meidän opettaja kertoi meille, että puhumme suomea hyvin, mutta emme tiedä miksi se on niin vaikeaa meille saada työharjoittelun paikka. On parempi realisoida todellisuutta, että emme palkkaa. Meillä saattaa olla oma myymälä tai myymäläketju (työnsi toisiaan käsivarteen ja nauru).

Participant G: Our teacher told us that we speak Finnish well, but we don't know why it is hard for us to get an internship placement. It is better to realize in reality that we won't be hired. We might have our own shop or chain store (pushing each other's arm and laughing).

Osallistuja F: Kyllä, on sama juttu Venäjällä, me mieluummin palkata jonkun meidän perheen jäsenen tai sukulainen ensi, sitten paikalliset ja maahanmuuttaja tulee viimeiseksi.

Participant F: Yes, it is similar in Russia, we rather hire someone from our family members or relatives first, then locals and immigrants would come last.

Instead of waiting for work to come, the two returnees would prefer to take control of their employment as entrepreneurs since the entry into labor force market for immigrants is limited. In reality, participant H, a 46 year-old immigrant from China, expressed her plan of moving from central Finland to the capital city after the integration plan ends. She pointed out that the chance of being hired is tiny in such a small city, especially for those who have inadequate Finnish skills and lack a professional background. She believed the capital city offered more possibilities for her and her family since her daughters were educated in English when they lived in the Philippines.

The impact of Finnish-language deficiency and unemployment has significantly produced acculturative stress. The pressure caused by unemployment was a threat to integrating into the host environment and presented problems such as a lack of social network with the host population and low socioeconomic status. Although these new immigrants got financial aid from Kela during their unemployment period or integration plan, occupational identity and self-financed independence were impossible to achieve in reality. Being employed and attaining a stable income with its implication of socioeconomic status was

expressed in terms of building a ‘home’ in the new cultural environment.

Dealing with Finnish medical system

Dealing with the Finnish medical system presented the dilemma that new immigrants have who are not in healthy condition. Although this stressful source might not be considered as a big issue to a healthy person, it strongly leads to adjustment of living style which differs from their homeland. During the informal discussion with the new immigrants in the lunch break, the author was told that a friend of hers always buys antibiotics from Russia since this medicine is not allowed to be sold without a doctor’s prescription in Finland. Despite the physical pain that some of the immigrants already had in their premigration period, the participants stated their disappointment and depression in seeking a doctor’s diagnosis in Finland. Participant G, a 34 returnee from Russia, explained her situation below.

Suomessa on vaikea mennä lääkärille. On vaikea systeemi. Kun minulla on kipua, joskus tarvitsen odottaa 1,5 kuukautta tai 2 kuukautta. Se on pitkä odotusaika. Kerran, minulla oli selkäkipuja. Ystäväni oli minun tulkki ja hän vei minut terveystasemaan. Odotimme pitkäään aikaan siellä. Kysyin yhdeltä hoitajalta, milloin on meidän vuoromme? Koska olemme odottaneet jo pitkään. Sitten hoitaja vastasi jos et pidä sitten menee pois. Olimme sellainen vihainen ja shokissa. Sen jälkeen, ystäväni meni puhumaan jollekin, niin tapasimme lääkärin välittömästi ilman sairaanhoitajan tärkistuks ensin.

Seeing a doctor for medical help is difficult in Finland. This is a difficult medical system. When I have pain, sometimes I need to wait for 1.5 to 2 months. It is a long waiting time. Once I had back pain. My friend, who acted as my interpreter, took me to the health center. We just waited and waited for a long time in there. I asked one nurse, when is our turn since we have been waiting for a long time. Then the nurse replied if you don’t like it then go away. We were kind of angry and shocked. Afterwards, my friend went to talk to someone then we could see a doctor immediately without a nurse checking first.

Participant D, an 18 year-old female from Afghanistan, echoed participant G’s experience of long waiting for medical help. She expressed her upset in always taking painkillers as medical treatment although the medicine did not help much. She further talked about the different experience in comparison with visiting the doctors in her hometown.

Minulla on säännöllinen pääkipeää. Olen käynyt lääkärissä monta kertaa sen takia. Lääkäri aina sanoi minulle - ottaa Burana (särkylääke). Kun tarvitsen sairausloma todistus koululle, hoitaja sanoi minulle et voi saada sitä jos sinulla ei ole kuumetta. Kotimassa voimme mennä lääkärille heti, mutta tässä on pakko odota 1 kuukausi tai 2 kuukautta (huokaus).

I have regular headaches. I have seen doctors several times and the doctor always told me to take Burana (a painkiller). When I need a medical certificate for the school, then the nurses said to me you could not get that certificate if you don't have a fever. We could see a doctor immediately in my homeland, but here we need to wait 1 or 2 months (sighs).

Actually, the medical system in Finland has bothered many immigrants, especially the long waiting time to get a doctor's diagnosis. During informal chatting with the immigrants, one immigrant said that she was taught to overstate the sickness condition while making an appointment with the health center. In this way, she would have more chance to see a doctor quickly. Doctors in the health center habitually prescribe drugs by brand name like Burana which has made Burana a word listing in their dictionary, one immigrant joked about that. In spite of the medical system issues and problems that the immigrants mentioned, there is one vital issue in relation to acculturative stress and illness. Based on the description from participant D, the transition from childhood to adulthood, the burden of being adolescence in an immigrant family, and the stress from peers and adaptation all should be taken into consideration in order to give the correct diagnosis of illness.

Perceiving discriminations and prejudice

Perceived discrimination is positively correlated with acculturative stress (Tartakovsky, 2007). An applicable occurrence in producing acculturative stress is the presence of negative experiences and hostile attitudes from members of the majority group. Such stress might consequently impact on the minority's acculturation and affect their mental health. In the interviews, some participants expressed that they did not personally receive negative attitudes from the host population, but did hear someone around them who was mistreated on the streets by nasty and prejudicial words. On the other hand, a few participants

stated that they may have had such an experience, but just did not understand or realize what people said at that time.

Aside from the negative experience that returnee G encountered from the medical worker, participant H, a female from China, mentioned that the negative experience seems to happen less to Chinese than immigrants from Africa or the Middle East. She said that she was lucky not to have had such an offensive experience, but one of her classmates from Thailand did mention in the class that one Finnish woman had said some nasty words to her while she was walking on the street with her Finnish husband. Participant H verbalized her friend's experience.

我聽我的一個泰國同學說過。那時她和她芬蘭先生一起走在路上，然後就一個芬蘭女人態度很兇走到她前面講了一堆話。那時她剛來也不懂那女人講什麼，也是後來她先生解釋當時那芬蘭女人的話，她才知道發生了什麼事，她說那時的感覺是很糟糕的被對待了。

I heard this from one of my classmates from Thailand. A Finnish woman came in front of her with a rude attitude and said something nasty to her while she was walking with her Finnish husband on the street. She had just been in Finland for a short time and did not understand Finnish at all. So, she had no idea what the Finnish woman said till her husband explained it to her later. She said she felt awful and mistreated at that time.

Ethnic stereotyping seemed to play a critical element in this negative instance.

However, it also demonstrated one of the examples in relation to some participants who mentioned verbal abuse without the language ability to fully understand it. Nevertheless, Finns' attitudes towards immigrants varied locally and the ethnic hierarchy has not changed (Jaakkola, 2009). In addition to that, Somalis experienced more hostile attitudes than other immigrants. Participant E, a Somali male, who had lived in Kenya for 18 years, stated that his negative experiences were not directly bound up with discrimination. He said that such mistreatment and prejudice could happen in every big city, regardless of race. He articulated his position and informed further that it is not necessary to respond to every hostile attitude.

Surely, everyone could have such negative experience. It could happen in every big city. Personally, I don't want to cause trouble here (Finland). So, I usually just walk away if someone talks to me negatively and acts in a hostile manner on the street.

Participant J, a 26 year-old female from Congo, who had lived in Rwanda for 15 years, also believed her personal experience should not be considered as discrimination. She talked frankly about her helplessness and fear when some Finns yelled at her family on the street. On the other hand, she stated that she knew those people were drunk with irrational behavior. Therefore, she would not take it personally as an incidence of discrimination. She explained the incident.

I was driving back to home in Mikkeli. My father, mother and brother were all in the car. Then several guys blocked the road and did not allow me to drive through. These men yelled in Finnish "You go back to your country. You do nothing in here. I pay tax and you just eat." My mother came out of the car and talked to them in Kinyarwanda, and my brother called the police. Those people were drunk and blocked the only road to my home. We could not do anything at that time till the police asked them to move away.

These destructive encounters with the host population that might be considered discrimination against a minority did not significantly impact their process of acculturation. The two immigrants from Africa, who were seen in the lower ethnic hierarchy in Jaakkola's finding (2009), did not tag their experience immediately as discrimination. A possible reason that needs to be taken into consideration in explaining the outcome is that both of them lived abroad for 15-18 years before migrating to Finland. The suffering of war, the cultural experience of living abroad, and the tolerance as a personal trait all seemed to enhance their ability in dealing with hostile attitudes and being rejected.

4.3 Social support

The results revealed the majority of new immigrants preferred the social supports from co-ethnic and intergroups, especially forced immigrants from the Middle East. The intergroup

relationship represented a strong tie in offering or exchanging practical help and information about living in Finland. As newcomers are typically less familiar to the members of the host culture, their relatives and co-ethnic groups who have lived in Finland for several years become a major resource for seeking advice for adaptation and adjustment to the unfamiliar environment. For voluntary immigrants, the social support from Finns or Finnish organizations was less crucial since these participants either have a Finnish spouse or partner to support. Meanwhile, the participation in the host culture has a tendency to be more an individual's willingness and activism. First, participants B, C, and D, from Iraq and Afghanistan pointed out their social life with closed relatives and fondness of support from family and the same ethnic group. Participant B, a 20 year-old male from Iraq, stated his social life and the interaction with the host population tended to be observation mostly. He stated.

Minun sukulaiset ovat asuneet täällä vuosia ennen perheeni muuttaa Suomeen. Joten, mennään johonkin serkkuni kanssa usein. Olemme yhdessä ja samassa jalkapallojoukkueessa Lempäälä. Joskus pelaamme paikallisten kanssa (paussi) joo, oli kilpailussa suomalaisten kanssa (paussi) Mutta suurin osa ajasta, me vain katsella otteluja.

My relatives have been living here (Finland) for years before my family moved to Finland. So, I go out with my cousins often. We are in one football team in Lempäälä. Sometimes we play with locals (pause) Had competition with Finns once (pause) But most of the time, we just watch sports competitions.

Participant C, a 24 year-old female from Iraq, described a similar social circle with participant B. She informed that she did not know any Finns of her age, except one girl who was her cousin's best friend. Besides that, she is also a volunteer at the foreigners' helpdesk in the Tampere employment office.

Yleensä, minä hengailen serkkuni kanssa. Hän on asunut Suomessa jo 18 vuotta. Hänellä on yksi hyvä suomalainen ystävä. Joskus, tuo suomalainen tyttö tulee mukaan kun menemme ulos. Paitsi hän, en tiedä yhtään suomalaista joka on minun iässä. Olen myös vapaaehtoja ulkomaalaisten 'help desk' työvoimatoimistossa.

I usually hang out with my cousin. She has been living in Finland for 18 years,

and she has a good Finnish friend. Sometimes, that Finnish girl comes along with us when we go out. Apart from that, I don't know any Finns of my age. I am also a volunteer in the foreigners' helpdesk in the employment office.

Participant E, a male from Somalia, who has an uncompleted university degree in Kenya, elaborated his experience of making Finnish friends in pubs. His perception of making Finnish friends is hard due to their shyness. Nevertheless, he found one good friend who has a similar educational background as he has could support him better in the new environment. In such a way he set out the benchmark for social support from members of his own ethnic group seemed to experience great satisfaction in adaptation. Besides that, he said the relationship with relatives back in his hometown was merely monetary support.

When I worked at Nokia, sometimes I went out to local pubs to practice Finnish (laughs) You know Finns do not talk much, they only talk after having a drink. That's the moment of becoming a 'friend'. Once they were awake the next day, they didn't recognize me and just walked by without a word. Support from the hometown is none, they only ask for money (sigh with a laugh). Nowadays, I have a close friend from Somalia and I have invited him often to my home. He is well educated at university. I like him.

Apart from the preference of support from the same ethnic group, participant J from the Congo made a significant statement about the different support from the ethnic community and Finnish friends. She indicated that her needs differ from the co-ethnic group and her Finnish friends; Finns could help her adjust to the host environment, but co-ethnic groups knew better about the adjustment for adaptation. In addition to this, she also stated that making Finnish friends in a small city is much easier than in a bigger city in Finland. At that time, her family was the only black family in the church in Mikkeli. Therefore, it was easier to get attention and get contact with Finns than in Jyväskylä, she said.

My family, father, mother and brother lived in Mikkeli first. We were the only black family in the church. So, it was easy to get attention and make friends. They (Finns) always ask how I feel first, and then offer their suggestions when I require support. Unlike my friends (co-ethnic group), they just say directly what I should do. I do ask my friends for adaptation advice here, but not from Finnish friends.

For new immigrants to emerge in the host culture was not easy due to the language barrier. In addition, the two returnees further pointed out that making Finnish friends might also take account of the willingness of local Finns. Through the parents' interaction on the playing ground, participant F found a good contact in the neighborhood who is more valuable than relatives who lived far away. But participant G, another returnee, stated that making Finnish friends is challenging as she has no kids or pets now, and she thinks it is not polite to ask for the neighbors' phone number right away.

Osallistuja F: Voin soittaa isälle, äidille ja sukulaisille mitä tarvitsen. Kaikki sukulaiseni auttaa. Mutta hyvä yhteys naapurin kanssa on tärkeämpi (nauru). Koska isäni asuu Jyväskylässä ja sukulaiset asuvat Porvoossa, kaikki asuvat kaukana minusta. Minulla on 2 lasta. Kun minun lapset olivat leikkikentällä muiden lasten kanssa, yksi naapuri tuli juttelemaan. Hän (suomalainen nainen) kysyi minulta mistä tulitte ja miksi olemme täällä. Pitkän juttelemisen jälkeen, hän jätti hänen numero minulle ja kutsui meidät hänen kotiin. Nyt tämä naapuri auttaa minua paljon tässä ja minäkin autan häntä (paussi) hän on yksinhuoltaja. Joo, oli kerran, soitin hänelle (naapuri) ja pyysin vehnäjauhoja, sitten sain sen häneltä heti. Se on kuin vanha tapa Venäjällä (nauru) Voimme vain koputtaa naapurin oven kysymästä sokeria (nauru).

Participant F: I can call my father, mother and relatives for what I need. All my relatives help. But a good connection with a neighbor is more important (laughs). My father lives in Jyväskylä and relatives live in Provoo; all of them live far away from me. I have 2 kids. One neighbor came to chat with me when my children played in the playground with other kids. She (a Finnish woman) asked me where I came from and why I am here. After long chatting, she left her number to me and invited us to her home. Now, this neighbor helps me a lot and I help her too (pause) She is a single mother. Yes, there was one time, I just called her to ask for flour, and then I got it from her quickly. It is like the old habit in Russia (laughs) We can just knock on the neighbor's door to ask for sugar (laughs).

Osallistuja G: Kyllä, kaikki minun sukulaiseni täällä auttaa, mutta minulla ei ole yhtään suomalainen ystävä. Haluaisin sellainen ystävä kuin hänen (osallistuja F) naapuri (paussi) Mutta ei näyttäkö kohteliasta jos kysyn suora suomalaiselta, että voitko antaa sinun puhelinnumero minulle, entä osoite tai facebook (nauru).

Participant G: Yes, all my relatives here help, but I don't have any Finnish friends. I would like to have that kind of friend like her (participant F) neighbor (pause)

But it seems impolite to ask Finns directly can you give me your phone number, then address or Facebook (laughs).

Voluntary immigrants who moved to Finland because of multicultural marriage have received more or less support from their Finnish spouse and partner for adaptation.

Participant H, a 46 year-old mother, pointed out that her reliance on the same ethnic community is greater than her Finnish husband. She indicated because of the Finnish language barrier and years of living abroad, her trust in who speaks the same mother tongue and knows the Chinese norms would be the best for her to consult. She said.

我先生什也不知道，那些住在這的媽媽們比較知道哪裡可以找到好的鋼琴學校給我女兒。

Those mothers who live here know where a good piano school is for my daughter, my Finnish husband knows nothing about this kind of stuff.

Participant A, a 35 year-old female from Hong Kong, suggested that her emotional support is mainly from her religion and chatting online with close friends from the country of origin.

The interview with this participant took place in October 2014. At that time, serious protests on the streets concerning electoral reform had occurred for a month in Hong Kong. Therefore, her worries about the political stability in her homeland also reflected on the topic of residence when she chatted with her old friends.

我都是上網和我比較熟的朋友聊，當我心情不好時她們都會幫我。我朋友也叫我還是長久待在這別回去了，尤其現在香港在遊行抗議政府。不過，最主要的支持還是來自我的信仰，我沒什麼特別參加芬蘭人的活動，就教會囉。

I chat with my close friends in H.K via the internet. They help me when I am in a bad mood here (Finland). My friends encourage me not to return to Hong Kong and stay permanently in Finland as now there are protests against the central government. But my biggest support comes from my religion. Except for the church, I don't engage in much other activity with Finns.

Instead of seeking support from the ethnic community like the others, participant I, the 28 year old Irishman expressed that the social habits are similar between Finns and Irish.

But he might request advice rather from Finns than Irish due to the Irish sarcastic character. He would also consider taking the international Red Cross organization as an alternative option for support if it is necessary. Moreover, he stated his satisfaction with his current status and his laid-back attitude helped him in adjusting to the host culture without adaptive stress. He said.

The social habits are similar between Finns and Irish (pause) not particularly in drinking (laughs). I have a few good Finnish friends. I joined the kielifootball, which is a multicultural team and English is used there. There are 3 Irish in the team. We celebrate Saint Patrick's Day together, but I would not particularly seek advice or opinions from them as the Irish are sarcastic (laughs). Instead, Finnish females are more open to talk. My ex-girlfriend (Finnish) helped me when I moved to here with her. If I have to say where I prefer to get support, I would probably say the Red Cross as they know what they are doing (laughs).

In the scope and of social support for successful adaptation, both ethnic community and co-ethnic group play influential roles in the initial stage in adjusting to the new environment. The majority of participants have sought social and emotional support from their own family, relatives and co-ethnics. It also appeared that the social support comes from diverse aspects depending on the individual's needs or situation. For instance, returnee F expressed that a good neighbor is more valuable than relatives far away, refugee J from the Congo suggested that the need of support from co-ethnics and Finnish friends differ, and participant I from Ireland preferred to seek advice from Finns and the Red Cross. Overall, the relationship with Finns seems to be rather limited and the language barrier is generally thought of as the main issue causing weak relationships with Finns.

4.4 Preference of acculturation strategy and the individual's cultural identity

Based on the bidimensional model of acculturation from Berry (1997, 2001), two underlying questions were asked from the 11 new immigrants in regard to their attitudes towards intercultural contact and own cultural maintenance. Ten out of eleven participants revealed

their choice of integration strategy at this point, in which they continue to observe ethnic festivals or religious practice in order to maintaining their own cultural identity and characteristics. At the same time, these participants believed it is as valuable as maintaining relationships with Finns while living in the host culture. The only exception is participant F, one of the returnees, who revealed the tendency to assimilation. She articulated first the great similarity between Finnish and Russian cultures, and then she explicitly voiced her preference for the Finnish side with the Finnish lineage as the proof of self-identity. The bicultural environment she lived in had influenced her choice of acculturation strategy.

Integration strategy is the preferred strategy among these 10 participants. According to their opinions, the primary factor that influenced the degree of acculturation is language. The participants indicated that inadequate Finnish language skills hinder them greatly from adjusting to the host culture, and also prevents engagement in social activity with members of the host population. Nevertheless, they also declared some of the characteristics of their personality helped them overcome the difficulties and discomforts that they encountered in the new environment. These personality traits include being open-minded and active, having positive attitudes, and not being shy. On the other hand, the significant differences in appearance, politics, and religion from the dominant society presented a critical element for some immigrants to fully assimilate into the Finnish society. The 4 participants B, C, D and E, who came from a Muslim state, voiced separately that their distinct skin color and religion are involved and show a special consideration for individual's successful adaptation.

Cultural identity has presented a parallel approach to understanding acculturation strategy in the literature. Immigrants confront the difficulty of their identity reconstruction in order to fit in with the new society. The results revealed that all of the participants, both forced and voluntary immigrants, perceived their ethnic identity as their original roots and original residentship. Although a couple of them had lived outside of their motherland for

over 15-18 years and even have lived in Finland for three to six years, their original nationality was still a strong factor. For instance, participant E, a Somali, who had lived in Kenya for 18 years, identified himself as a Somali. A similar situation happened to participant J, a female who escaped from the Congo at the age of 5 and then lived in Rwanda for 15 years, and she regarded herself still as a Congolese. The female Congolese further articulated that she has taken Finland as her home and she might express herself as a Finn after getting a Finnish passport. A voluntary immigrant, participant H, said “即使拿了芬蘭護照我還是中國人啊! I am still Chinese even though I have a Finnish passport! ”. She considered that getting a Finnish passport in return for giving up her Chinese passport had no influence on her cultural identity. The Finnish passport is only a beneficial instrument for family traveling. Then participant I from Ireland stated that it does not make any difference having both a Finnish and Irish passport as they are both in the EU. However, on the issue of obtaining a Finnish passport, returnee F argued that she should obtain a Finnish passport before other immigrants since her father is a native Finn. Returnee F, who has a Finnish father, stated that her Finnish side comes first. Then she spoke about her anxious feeling when she heard one classmate wearing an Islamic headscarf who claimed she is Finnish with a Finnish passport. Participant F emphasized her Finnish lineage should make her more qualified to gain a Finnish passport than others. She expressed her position.

Olen keskellä, ehkä enemmän suomen puolella. Venäjä on kaunis and hyvä maa, mutta Suomi on enemmän lämminsydäminen minulle. En tiedä (paussi) Minun sisko aina sanoo hän on Venäjän puolella, ja minä olen Suomen puolella. Kurssilla, eräs nainen, jolla oli huivi päällä (paussi) Hän kertoi, että hän on asunut Suomessa 16 vuotta ja hänellä on suomen passi. Hän sanoi, että hän on suomalainen. Minä hermostuin heti kun kuulin sen. Minä ajattelin, että minulla on suomalainen verta vartalossa (osoitti hänen verisuonen käsivarteen) Minun isi on suomalainen. Minulla ei ole suomen passi, mutta hänellä on!

I am in the middle position, maybe more on the Finnish side. Russia is a beautiful and nice country, but Finland is more warm-hearted to me. I don't know (pause) My sister always says she is on the Russian side and I am more Finnish. There was one woman in my course who had a veil covering her head (pause) She told

that she has been living in Finland for 16 years and has a Finnish passport. She said she is a Finn. I got anxious immediately when I heard it. I think I have Finnish blood in me (pointed her vein in the arm) My father is Finnish. I don't have a Finnish passport, but she has!

Another returnee, G, articulated that her appearance is like a Finn. Therefore, it is much easier for her to be seen as a Finn than those people from exotic countries. On the other hand, to claim herself as being a Finn, she interpreted it as a family reunion in Finland.

Sama, nyt olen keskellä. Ehkä kun pikkusisko ja äiti muuttavat Suomeen, sitten voin sanoa olen 100 % of Suomalainen. Minä odotan (nauru).

Same situation here, I am in the middle position now. Maybe when my little sister and mother move to Finland, then I can say I am 100% Finnish. I will wait (laughs).

Overall, the integration plan that these new immigrants have involved seemed to be an influential factor in explaining why integration strategy is preferred among immigrants. The Finnish for foreigner course, the professional training course, and internship in Finnish organizations have provided guidance for these new immigrants to adopt the basic values of the host society. It is stated that integration can only be chosen and successfully pursued by immigrants when the receiving society is open and all-encompassing in its orientation toward cultural diversity (Berry, 2000 as cited in Berry, 2001). At this point, the integration plan has shown its contribution in the initial phase of acculturation.

4.5 Cultural learning towards transformation

All through the interviews with the new immigrants, many of them stated that they have encountered a variety of cross-cultural circumstances that revise or enrich their understanding of the new culture. By these firsthand and close contacts with the new culture and members of the receiving society, the majority of the participants pointed out that the awareness and development they have obtained have led them towards further insight into the host environment. In other words, each of these unique experiences contributed to a process of

learning more about various and diverse aspects of the new culture, as well as their own native culture. Each experiential component seemed to leave an indelible mark in the process of acculturation. Over time, the cumulative effect of cultural learning moment provided greater insight into the new culture along with the transformation of cognition and social behavior. Participant J, a 24 year-old female from the Congo, articulated first her appreciation of the low hierarchy in Finland, then she found her behavior changed in greeting strangers and neighbors in comparison with her original culture. Apart from one's own changes, she also expressed her joy in seeing the transformation in her husband. Her husband's original cultural schemas regarding personal role have been affected by the host culture and showed his contribution in terms of housework. The positive change really pleased her, as she expresses it below.

When I studied in Rwanda, I would immediately run away when I saw my teachers. Teachers are powerful there. But here (Finland), teachers are so friendly and helpful. However, people here seem busy and not so sociable. When I lived in the refugee camp in Rwanda, people know each other and greeted each other. Even later when I lived in the city for studying, the greeting habit is still the same. But here (Finland), people don't greet each other much. I don't even know my neighbor. Nowadays, I also notice that I have changed and stopped asking people how are you, instead I just stand still without saying anything. After the baby was born, my husband has begun to cook here and helps me a lot. In my culture, men normally just watch TV and do nothing. But now he has Finnish friends and he heard what Finnish men do and learned it. I am really happy for it.

Participant F, a 36 year-old returnee, shared her observation and personal experience in the new cultural context which leads to behavior change especially in the mother's role.

Täällä (Finland) on rauhallinen ja ihminenkin on rauhallinen. Venäjällä ihmiset tekevät asioita nopeasti. Nyt olen edelleen tehdä minun juttuja nopeasti (paussi) Ehkä kun saan työtä, niin voin elää rauhassa kuten suomalainen (nauru). Täällä on myös erittäin turvallinen lapseni. Kun tyttäreni opiskeli Venäjällä, soitin hänelle usein ja kysyin missä hän on. Pelkään näitä huonoja ihmisiä vievät hänet pois tai tekevät jotain paha hänelle. Mutta täällä lapsi voi leikkiä rauhallisesti ja turvallisesti. Äiti voi kävellä lastenvaunut kadulla ilman ongelmia (hymyile tyytyväisenä).

Here (Finland) it is peaceful and people are peaceful too. In Russia, people do

things quickly and the path of living is just about speed. Now, I still handle my stuff quickly (pause) Maybe after I get a job, then I can live peacefully like a Finn does (laughs). Here it is also very safe for my kids. When my daughter studied in Russia, I called her often to ask where she is. I am afraid those bad guys might take her away and do something harmful to her. But here, kids can play peacefully and safely. Mothers can walk with a pram on the streets without problem (smiles with satisfaction).

Participant G, the female returnee, also described the low hierarchy manifested in calling the teachers by first names, which was a total contrast to what she was taught in school and family. Moreover, she also found the adjustment she made in the relationship with neighbors turning weaker in comparison with her previous living style in Russia.

Suomessa voin kutsua opettajaa hänen etunimen tai ‘sinä’. Mutta Venäjällä, meidän täytyy käyttää ”Te” kohteliaassa kielenkäytössä. Se on minulle vaikea vaihtaa tätä tapaa. Minulle opetettiin koulussa ja vanhempani sanoivat käyttää vain ”Te”. Opettaja täällä kertoi minulle, että voin kutsua hänet etunimellä. Olen yrittänyt, mutta joskus se ei ole helppoa vaihtaa vanha tapa (nauru). Sitten Venäjällä voimme koputtaa naapurin oveen sokeria tai jauhoja pyyntöä varten. Mutta Suomessa on erilainen tapa, minun täytyy soittaa ensin, jos minulla on naapurin numero (nauru).

I can call the teacher by her first name or just use ‘you’ in Finland. But in Russia, we need to be in courtesy way by using “You”. It’s hard for me to change this habit as I was taught in school and my parents only use the courtesy ‘You’. The teacher in here (education center) told me that I can call her by her first name. I have tried, but sometimes it is not easy to replace the old habit (laughs). Then in Russia, you can just knock on your neighbors’ door for sugar or flour. But in Finland it is different, I need to call my neighbor first if I have the neighbor’s number (laughs).

Speaking of the low social structure hierarchy, both participant J and G were aware the changes between teacher and student’s role. In their cultures, it appeared that the power distance in role schema between teacher and student was from up descending to the bottom. Such behavior of calling teacher’s first name is prohibited and disrespectful. With respect to context and procedure schemas, they were taught to address teacher with title and greet with nodding head when seeing teachers at school. In such situation, calling a teacher’s first name might not be comfortable (i.e. emotional schema) and felt such behavior against their cultural

norms. In this, the contrasts between cultures are striking. Over time, participants J and G adjusted their behaviors and the original culture rule is left behind gradually for fitting in the host cultural environment.

With adequate contact with members of the new culture in primary school, participant D, the 18 year-old young female from Afghanistan expressed her understanding of friendship as being different from her original culture. The Islamic headscarf she wore seemed to represent an obstacle in making Finnish friends at school. Therefore, the meaning of friendship is also different as she expected. She indicated the veil as representing her religion and identity, which she would like to preserve. Over time, she spoke about her improvement in taking courage and the lesson being punctual.

Minulla ei ole yhtään hyvää suomalainen ystävä täällä (Finland). Tiedän, että jotkut eivät pitäneet minusta koska minulla on huivi päällä koulussa, mutta se on minun uskontoni. Kyllä, jotku kysyvät suoraan miksi minulla on huivi päällä koulussa. Minä vastasin hänelle, se on mun uskontoni ja minä haluan pitää sen. Voi olla (paussi) ystävyys on erilainen täällä kuin kotimaassa. Sitten ehkä täsmällisyys (paussi) luokani opettaja joskus avasi luokan oven, mutta joskus ei. Oli kerran, en voinut päästä sisään kun ovi oli lukossa, vaikka tulin vain 2 minuuttia myöhään, mutta opettaja oli varoitti minua etukäteen sitten. Olen yrittänyt ei mene kouluun myöhään (paussi) Sitä on parantanut (nauru). Joo, olen rohkeampi kuin ennen (nauru). Oli kerran, pidin paras ystäväni puolalaisen käden ja kertoi hänelle, että meidän on mentävä eteenpäin (paussi) Hän oli hämmästynyt silloin (nauru). Myös ehkä nyt on maahanmuuttajan kurssilla, joten olen rohkeampi (nauru).

I don't have any good Finnish friend here (Finland). I know some people did not like me because I have the veil covering my head at school, but that is my religion. Certainly, someone asked directly why I wear this veil. I answered them it is my religion and I would like to keep it. Mm..it could be why the friendship is different here comparing with my original culture. Next maybe is the punctuality (pause): sometimes my teacher opened the classroom door, but sometimes she did not. There was one time, I was 2 minutes late and the classroom door was locked. I did not get in, but the teacher had warned me earlier. I have been trying not to be late to school (pause) I have made improvements with it (laughs). Mm.. I am more courageous than before (laughs). There was one time I held my best friend Polish girl's hand and told her that we have to go forward (pause) She was amazed at that time (laughs). Also, maybe now this is an immigrants' course, so

I'm more brave (laughs).

In addition to the behavior changes, a few of the immigrants also found the prevailing norms in the original culture may not be truthful. Prior to living in Finland, Participant A, a 35-year old female from Hong Kong, viewed various aspects of her culture as being ordinary without a great deal of emphasis on the reasoning behind a certain tradition. Through the internship at the day care center, interaction with Finnish educators and members of the host culture, participant A found shortcomings in the traditional norms on comparison of grades and giving compliments. Therefore, she developed an increased appreciation of equality that replace her original norms and value in education. In addition to that, she learned to enjoy the peace and silence in Finland. She has converted what people think about unproductive time in terms of doing nothing to enjoying peaceful moment for herself.

中國人很挑剔的! 在香港我們有這種說法; 小朋友是不能誇獎的, 因為小時候誇獎, 就怕他們長大就不乖或者不好。我們也都是在互相比較, 沒什麼誇獎人的。在我們的教育裡比較就很明顯, 好的聰明的在一班, 成績壞的在一班。但是在芬蘭教育是平等的, 他們不會放棄每一個學生, 即使成績很差。像我現在在實習的幼兒園, 小朋友就常被鼓勵誇獎, 大人會很大方誇獎小朋友, 反之亦然, 小朋友也會誇獎大人, 那才是真的尊重和平等! 我也學會比較不會去互相比較, 而是去感謝、讚美、以正面回應。我還學會了 relax (笑), 在香港是有壓力的, time is money, 坐在沙發上什麼事都不做是浪費時間的, 是沒生產力的。不過, 現在我可以真的坐在椅子上看一本書和有自己平和步調。

Chinese are so picky! We have such a saying in Hong Kong; no compliment to kids, otherwise they won't grow up well-behaved. We always compare with others and don't praise people much. The comparison is clear in our education; smart students are in one class, then those with bad grades in another class. But in Finland, the education is equal; they don't give up on any student even though the grade is bad. In the day care center where I have field training now, kids are encouraged all the time. Adults are generously giving compliments to kids and vice versa. That is really respect and equality! Also, I have learned to appreciate, be positive and praise others instead of making comparisons between people. I have learned to relax as well (laughs). It is always stressful in H.K, time is money, sitting on a couch without doing anything is considered as wasting time, not productive. But now, I can really sit down to read a book and have my own peace.

The 'calm and peaceful' character among the host population was spoken about by the several participants. Participants A, F, G, H, K who used to live in cities, all expressed that they felt now emotionally more peaceful and calm than living where they came from. Besides that, participant K pointed out her personal appreciation of quiet Finns since she is a quiet person too. Therefore, she would not be seen as less sociable as she was in her hometown. She further appreciated the Finns' mutual respect at work.

自己是比較沉的人，在台北念書或是工作時常被認為太安靜或是不擅於社交的人，我也覺得自己好像活在父母或是朋友的期待下。但是，似乎在芬蘭他們比較接受不同的個性。在這裡，我不會再和之前一樣被認為安靜的人。我的同事都對我挺友善的，也會等我把提案講完不會中途打斷。我還挺高興這轉變的（笑）。

I am a quite calm person. In my hometown, I was seen as an unsociable person and often was quiet at work or social occasions. I also felt that I needed to live in accordance with parents and friends' expectations. But it seems that people in Finland accept diverse characters. Here, I would not be seen as the quiet person as in my culture. My colleagues are friendly towards me and always wait for my suggestions without interruption. I am pleased about the changes (laughs).

Through cultural adaptation and learning, these acculturating immigrants have gradually shaped their generalized knowledge of their original culture in order to function effectively in the new cultural context. Their unique experiences not only have contributed to various aspects of development in the process of acculturation, but also have become the impetus for the construction of cultural schemas. The eight PSI schemas that Nishida (2005) proposed were performed one after the other according to the statements of the participants. For instance, the low hierarchy and greeting dissimilarity in the context schemas, the mother's behavior changed and the husband's assistance in housework in the role schema, the taboo of giving compliments to children and friendship difference in the fact and concept schema, the growth of courage in personal schema, the relationship with neighbors in both context and procedure schema, and the push factor of being entrepreneur and perceived discrimination in strategy schema. Each cultural schema does not act individually, and the

interrelation among each of the cultural schemas was presented vividly. After ample exposure and contact with the new cultural environment, these newcomers began to recognize the similarities and differences that occur in their experiences. Gradually, they modified their original cultural schemas in order to fit better into the new cultural context. Overall, the progress of cognition and social behavior changes in acculturation process may bring pressure and challenge to the original culture, but it seems that positive growth was mostly presented among the majority of the immigrants. This outcome corresponds to Kim's (2001) stress-adaptation-growth model, which carries out the cycling tension of a forward and upward psychological movement towards greater adaptation and growth.

5. Discussion

This exploratory study was conducted in order to investigate new immigrants' acculturation in Finland. This study sought the perspectives of new immigrants to explain the initial process of acculturation, particularly from those who either have been involved in the official integration plan or had at least one year of the Finnish for foreigners course. Based on the findings, this chapter discusses further how these new immigrants acculturate and it is divided into two sections. In the first section, this study shows its support with theories and relevant studies on culture contact and change. In order to have a better understanding of the complexity of acculturation, four dimensions are presented for navigating the whole picture of the experiences among the new immigrants. These four dimensions are: 1) Acculturative stress and social support, 2) The preceding factors affected the process of acculturation, 3) The preferred acculturative strategy, and 4) Transformation of one's own cultural schemas. The second section points out the conflicting findings challenging theories pertaining to discrimination, educational level and socioeconomic status. The themes from the findings are iteratively discussed in order to seek better understanding of the lived experiences of new immigrants in Finland.

The existing acculturation literature has addressed groups of individuals from different cultures who come into constant contact with each other that results in changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups consequently (e.g., Redfield et al., 1936, Kim, 2001). This current study supports previous findings and extends the current literature's capacity to clarify and understand the new immigrants' experiences, especially with regard to the individuals' experience in Finland.

The findings from this study illustrate that the participants experienced all sorts of cognitive and behavior changes and subsequent stress in the initial phase of acculturation in

order to function more effectively in the new cultural environment. The development of adaptive change and modification of original cultural schemas are consistent with the previous theoretical propositions and empirical findings that describe individuals' experiences in the acculturation process (e.g., Nishida, 2005; Padilla & Perez, 2003). The supportive outcome of the four dimensions is discussed in the following section.

Dimension 1- Acculturative stress and social support

Acculturative stress was identified in a number of factors in this sample; Finnish language deficiency, employment, and dealing with the medical system. Surprisingly, discrimination was considered a less significant issue in this sample. A brief discussion of discrimination is conducted below; further discussion and evaluation about why discrimination was less significant than what was indicated in theories can be found in the section concerning conflicting findings. Nevertheless, the first identified stressor is Finnish language deficiency. The participants notably expressed their low self-confidence in interacting with the host population. Inadequate Finnish language skills significantly promoted acculturative stress, especially appeared as the internal stress of individuals. Though there is no clear external pressure to learn the language as told by the participants, the immigrants informed explicitly about how inadequate Finnish language skills impact critically on their opportunities of getting an internship or a job, and also on perception of an unequal reception in the labor market. Despite the status of entry, both women and men in this sample seem to experience fairly similar levels of acculturative stress concerning employment. Three out of eleven participants have had more than two years' working experience in Finland, and all of them used only English at work. Only one of the three participants is able to continue her previous profession as a patent specialist in Finland. In the same fashion, the remarkable impact of Finnish-language deficiency together with

unemployment has generated a quite different level of acculturative stress among the participants.

Employment was identified as the second stressor after Finnish language skills. Immigrants appear to be vulnerable in the Finnish labor force market. Immigrants are more affected by unemployment than native born workers. According to the Ministry of the Interior in Finland, the unemployment rate of foreigners living in Finland was 24% compared with the general unemployment rate of 9% in 2011. Somalis, Iraqis and Afghans had a rate of over 50%. The reason for this high unemployment rate among immigrants is a result of discrimination and language skills (Yle news, 2012). Inadequate Finnish skills are generally blamed as an obstacle to be employed and language skills are also often used as an excuse by employers to turn down foreign job applicants. These points were shown in the returnees' utterances. Their long waiting for internship placements and perception of an unequal reception in the Finnish labor market are all reflected in the challenge of being employed. The language skills, professional background, work experience and formal education are surely one's resources to enter the labor market. Participant K is the only person with a high education among all the participants and with working experience as a patent specialist who benefitted from this resource in working as a Chinese patent specialist in a Finnish company. Nevertheless, she pointed out that she still uses English at work due to inadequate Finnish skills.

The third identified stressor was the problematic issue of dealing with the Finnish medical system. The long waiting times in seeking a doctor's diagnosis and adjustment of medicine practice were expressed. According to the latest Finnish health system reforms in March 2005, for non-urgent examinations and treatments in hospitals, an assessment by a doctor or other health professional should be offered within 3 days after patients contact health centers. Then recommended hospital treatments, including elective surgery, should be

provided within 3-6 months (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 2005). However, it is unclear whether this implementing of reforms and improvements will be maintained in the longer term (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2005). Nonetheless, the migration process can be stressful, and can affect the mental health of migrating individuals and their families. As culture has an important factor in the presentation of illness, it is important that cultural differences should be appreciated and understood to attain a correct diagnostic impression and treatment plan (Bhugra, & Becker, 2005).

The last identified stressor is perceived discrimination. Researchers have stated that perceived discrimination is positively correlated with acculturative stress (Tartakovsky, 2007), and the role of discrimination is important in the relationship between how immigrants acculturate and how well they adapt (Sam, & Berry, 2010). However, the personal experiences from the Somalis and Congolese were expressed as insignificant incidents in terms of encountering discrimination and prejudice in Finland. The two immigrants from Africa, who were seen in the lower ethnic hierarchy in Jaakkola's finding (2009), did not tag their experience immediately as discrimination. Such a contradiction against the theoretical frameworks will be discussed in the latter section on the conflicting findings. Nevertheless, it has been argued that prejudice is likely to be less prevalent in a culturally plural society, but it is by no means absent (Berry, 1997). It also refers to Bond and Smith's (1996) results with regard to lower host conformity pressure in the societal valuing of individualism. Apart from an example of oral mistreatment was verbalized due to ethnic stereotypes; the perceived unequal reception in the labor market was articulated from the returnees. Again, the employment issue traces back to the previous discussion on the second identified acculturative stressor. Finnish language deficiency and discrimination were the major issues (Yle news, 2012). The language barrier and closed nature of the labor market were the issues most immigrants faced. However, a similar situation was found the returnees' descriptions.

The returnees indicated foreigners are the last consideration for employers to hire in Russia. The push factor of being rejected by the labor market may lead to another direction - that of being an entrepreneur. On the other hand, the acculturating individuals also have positive experiences in the receiving environment. Several participants articulated their experiences such as feeling safer and more peaceful, receiving equality and mutual respect, and being better off regarding the political situation than in their countries of origin. One finding indicated these positive occurrences in the new culture have produced a cheerful effect that may balance to some extent the impact of the acculturative stressors (Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991).

Social support has been widely studied and its role in adaption to acculturation has also been supported (Berry, 1997). Mixed reviews were offered by the respondents regarding their social relationships with Finns and other ethnics. Social support from the family, relatives and co-ethnic groups dominated the social environment among most of the new immigrants in this study, especially among the forced immigrants. In the initial phase, newcomers searched for adaptive advice from their ethnic communities and intergroups not just because of Finnish language deficiency, but also due to the similar perspectives based on allied values and norms. The voluntary immigrants in this sample all have a Finnish partner who offer help to them to adapt into the new environment. Williams (2010) suggested that immigrants tend to adjust to the host culture more easily if their spouses represent the culture. On the other hand, these voluntary immigrants sought emotional comfort from close relatives and friends back in their hometown, from co-ethnic groups, and religion when acculturative stress was strongly presented. For the most immigrants, links to their heritage culture with the ethnic group and intergroup were a way of reducing acculturative stress such as sharing ethnic food or chatting in their mother tongue, and sharing material and information. For some, links to members of the host population are more helpful, particularly in adapting to

the new environment and understanding the host culture. As one respondent indicated, the needs from Finns and co-ethnic groups are different; Finns cannot provide adaptive advice while co-ethnic can. Therefore, it is much depending on various needs of individual. The general sentiment was that the relationship of new immigrants with Finns was limited and relatively weak, though the motivation for social interaction with the host population appeared in some respondents. The Finns' willingness, lacking proper instruments (e.g., pets and common topics), and Finnish language deficiency constrained the new immigrants in building relationships with the members of the larger society. Though the supportive relationships with both cultures are most predictive of successful adaptation (Berry, 1997), the majority of the participants seemed more satisfied with social support from co-ethnic and intergroup than members from the larger society. At this stage, for the new immigrants, the co-ethnic group's relations were the most salient and powerful source of social support in the initial phase of acculturation, and friends, relatives, and family members were the most significant sources of emotional support and relationship satisfaction. Yet the results showed parallel outcomes with Sandel and Liang's (2010) findings: association with co-ethnics appeared to correlate positively with greater satisfaction and adaptation.

Dimension 2 - The preceding factors

The first research question addressed how the preceding factors are related to the degree of acculturation. Berry (1997) stated the preceding factors including age, gender, level of education and socioeconomic status, cultural distance and personal factors. Each factor is critically emerged in the process of acculturation. The following section discusses these 5 preceding factors and their impact and influence in detail.

Age. Age has a negative impact on the achievement of successful acculturation. It is presented clearly by the youngest participant, who responded she is the interpreter of her

family, even though her father has lived in Finland 10 years longer than her. On the other hand, the transition from childhood to adulthood put a heavy burden on the adolescents born of immigrant parents. Apart from the conformity stress from peers in school, the change of social structure in terms of ‘handling parents’ communication with officials would also raise the level of acculturative stress from time to time. In fact, when the children of immigrant parents undertake a parenting role by being a translator and information broker in the family, it is labeled as dissonant acculturation (Portes, Guarnizo, & Landolt, 1999). This regular headache, as the participant expressed it, is consistently exhibited in the disruptive effect on psychological and physiological well-being (e.g., Glass & Bieber, 1997; Van Leeuwen, Rodgers, Régner, & Chabrol, 2010). On the other hand, the oldest participant, the 46 year-old female from China, may not be able to acquire the Finnish skills as fast as the youngest participant, but her university degree with experience of living abroad seemed to demonstrate better skills in problem solving and resource finding. In such a case, this echoed Berry’s (1997) suggestion regarding education as a personal resource in itself and possibly contributing to better adaptation. Though age might help the youngest participant to adapt to the environment and learn the language faster, the subsequent risk of dissonant acculturation or culture conflict between immigrant parents and the host culture cannot be neglected.

Gender. The role expectation of gender norms and values may not only generate stress, but may also lead to fruitful cultural learning in different scenarios. In the utterances, one unemployed male immigrant was insecure and stressed because the traditional role of food provider in the household was under threat; then another man changed gradually in terms of helping with the housework in Finland. The transition of the social structure and traditional role in own culture presented conflicts and modifications in the new cultural context. The female returnees and voluntary immigrants from Asia did not sense a change of gender norms and values from themselves or from their spouses. They seemed to follow their

traditions of cultural norms; they are happy to share daily tasks with their spouses and be financially independent if they could find a job. Likewise, the level of acculturative stress from unemployment appeared to be similar regardless of gender.

Level of education and socioeconomic status. On the subject of influence of level of education and socioeconomic status, some discrepancies are found against Berry's (1997) suggestion. Berry (1997) proposed that education may accustom migrants to features of the society into which they settle; it is like pre-acculturation to the language, history, values and norms of the new culture. Except for returnees, it appeared that both forced and voluntary immigrants did not respond to the suggestion well in this sample. Such a discrepancy in the findings appears to be contradictory against the proposition of the theoretical framework. This conflict in the findings will be discussed further in the section on conflicted findings. Nevertheless, the contribution of education for better adaptation is notable in this sample; it provided better problem solving and resource finding skills for a number of participants, especially the oldest participant, as mentioned previously. Besides that, it also offered other interrelated resources, such as internship placement and support networks to some of the participants.

Cultural distance. As a result, the two returnees from Russia did take advantage of low *cultural distance* with a better understanding of Finnish history, customs, value and norms. Besides that, the similarities such as appearance and religion speeded up their adjustment in comparison with those new immigrants from a greater cultural distance. For the participants came from a large distance, the dissimilarity in language, religion, and distinct skin color may require more efforts in order to adapt to the new environment successfully, but none of them expressed that they are oppressed linguistically, religiously, politically, and culturally into a dominant model. The 4 participants who came from a Muslim state stated their religion and distinct skin color are involved and show a special concern for individual's

successful adaptation. However, there was no significant sign leading to poor adaptation caused by the negative attitudes of the host population. Only one participant, who practices veiling, described her problem in making friends with Finns at school. She stated the veil may possibly be the reason why the friendship is different in Finland comparing with her original culture. In a related issue, Croucher (2009a) concluded that the veil is a religiously and politically significant artifact in a study of French-Muslim reactions to the law banning religious symbols in French public schools. From this point of view, the veil presented an object that explains why the friendship is unlike her original culture and a problem in making friends with Finns. However, inadequate Finnish skills and personality may also play influential roles in the socializing and interacting with members from the dominant culture.

Personal factors. Two factors were strongly presented in the utterances: personality traits and cultural experience. In terms of personality traits, being open-minded, active, and not shy were described by the participants as helping them overcome the difficulties and discomforts in the new environment. Being open-minded enabled these new immigrants to minimize their resistance and to maximize their willingness to attend to new and changed circumstances. Kim (2001) stated openness incorporates other similar concepts such as flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity. In addition to that, these personality traits can be seen as an adaptive drive in an individual's personality that channels stress away from effects of acculturation and toward learning and growth in a new culture. Moreover, these personality traits seemed to provide a positive direction that led to the preferred integration strategy among the new immigrants in this study. This outcome supports Ramdhonee and Bhowon's (2012) finding that openness to experience and agreeableness emerged as significant predictors of integration strategy and acculturative stress. It was concurred in many studies that cultural experience leads to increased cultural open-mindedness. In the latter discussion of perceiving discrimination, which was one of the identified acculturative stressors, two

African participants illustrated a positive correlation between time spent outside of one's own culture and their intercultural sensitivity.

Dimension 3 - The preferred acculturation strategy

The second question in this study addressed the preference of acculturation strategy among the participants. Integration was found to be the favorite acculturation strategy. Apart from one returnee who gravitated towards assimilation, the majority of respondents expressed their preference for integration. Integration appears to be a consistent predictor of more positive outcomes than the three alternatives of assimilation, separation, or marginalization (Berry, 1997). The preferred integration strategy certainly shows its positive relation with the integration plan that the new immigrants have been involved with. Furthermore, it also points out the wish of the new immigrants pursuing it and the willingness of the dominant society to allow it. Researchers have declared integration strategy to be the most adaptive strategy that has been carried out in multicultural societies and it is associated with better psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Berry 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010). Integration incorporates many of the other 3 protective factors (Berry, 1997): first, willingness for mutual accommodation (i.e. absence of prejudice and discrimination, dominant society changing school curricula). The absence of discrimination expressed by two African immigrants seemed to tell how mutual accommodation has been achieved. And the one year preparatory course that participant D had for young immigrants in upper secondary school also appeared to be one example of school curricula changing. The second and third factors that Berry proposed including involvement in two cultural communities (i.e. having two social support systems) and being flexible in personality. As shown above, these new immigrants agreed the importance of keeping contact with one's original culture and the host culture. The social support had supplied different needs in reducing acculturative stress and facilitating the new

environment, despite the support from the co-ethnic group or Finnish spouse. Being open-minded and not being shy were both mentioned in the participants' utterances as well, which were shown in the previous section on personal factors. Consequently, the integration strategy that the new immigrants selected has provided positive feedback to the integration plan, regardless of whether the mutual accommodation was fully or partly presented due to the perception of an unequal labor force market that returnees mentioned.

The acculturation strategies are related to health outcomes of immigrants. Berry (2001) stated the four stages of acculturation strategy are correlated to how members of the ethnic groups handle acculturative stress; above all integration is associated with a low level of stress, and assimilation is linked with an intermediate stress level (Berry et al., 1987; Berry, 2003). These new immigrants expressed clearly both the importance of cultural maintenance and intercultural contact of their acculturation attitudes. On the cultural maintenance aspect, these new immigrants continued to observe ethnic festivals and religious practice. On the intercultural contact aspect, the motivation for social interaction with the host population existed in some expression (e.g., being a volunteer at the foreigners' helpdesk in the employment office), although the relationship with Finns was relatively limited. The Finnish language deficiency was named as the primary problem which affected the degree of acculturation and hindered social involvement with the host environment. Meanwhile, the activation of social interaction with Finns evidently showed a direct link to the first identified acculturative stressor- Finnish language deficiency.

Following the approach of self-identified cultural identity, a better understanding of the preference of acculturation strategy was provided. The majority of respondents identified their birth nation as ethnic identity despite the length of resettlement and cultural experience. For the majority of the immigrants, ethnic identity presented a clear connection and belonging with their heritage culture that was the continuance of their own culture's values

and practices. The foremost response in this sample provided solid proofs that having a Finnish passport does not replace one's original ethnic identity; it merely provides legitimacy to claim citizenship. With respect to the Finnish citizenship, it appeared a more complex issue to returnees. One returnee defended her Finnish lineage should make her more qualified to gain a Finnish passport than others. Then a special interpretation is expressed from another returnee who would claim herself as a Finn when her family reunited. On the other hand, researchers have demonstrated that a strong ethnic identity is positively associated with mental health outcomes (Phinney, Horenczyk et al. 2001; Smith, Silva 2011), and low levels of ethnic identity are associated with depression and loneliness in the process of acculturation (Roberts et al., 1999). Nevertheless, Berry (2001) pointed out that when integration strategy is chosen, immigrants pursue support from ethnocultural groups to participate as an integral part in the dominant society while some degree of cultural integrity is maintained. Taking all into consideration, this result indicated a clear relationship among integration strategy, acculturative stress, and the support of co-ethnic groups. Additionally, this result helps us understand why the social supports from co-ethnic group and intergroup were preferred when integration was selected among the new immigrants.

Dimension 4 - Transformation of one's own cultural schemas

The third question in this study aimed at exploring the transformation that has taken place among the participants. Throughout the statements from the participants, changes are inevitable and occurred in contrast to original cultural schemas. These transformations apparently did not merely impact the individual's recognition of original culture; they also correspondingly brought about individual development on a progressive level of adaptive attainment. Through firsthand contact with the host culture, the cumulative effect of cultural learning has provided great insight into the new culture along with the transformation of

cognition and social behavior. After ample exposure and continuous contact with the new cultural environment, many original cultural schemas were challenged. The PSI schemas of one's own culture evidently showed the reconstruction and interrelation with each other over time. Likewise, self-schemas are components of the self-concept that are central to self-identity and self-definition (Markus, 1977). Thus, cultural identity investigation presented the essential self-identity of self-schemas which help the understanding of the choice of acculturation strategy and the association with mental health. Overall, these refinements of the immigrants' original PSI are supportive of Nishida's cultural schema theory (2005). Though the individuals' original cultures were challenged, the results show positive development of communication behavior for social interaction. The majority of new immigrants built up on the basis of the underlying processes and individuals' encounters with the host culture, and then they adopted the basic values of the larger society and performed appropriate behaviors. At this early stage, the new immigrants have not appeared to move on a path up the mountain of intercultural transformation as Kim (2001) proposed at stress-adaptation-growth dynamic. But the new immigrants were stimulated by a pushing and pulling cyclical tension between stress and adaptation that produces an appearance of subtle growth in most of them. As a result, the individuals' transformations of cultural schemas were modified depending on the cultural context (e.g., giving compliments to children, relationship with neighbors), individual background (e.g., punctuality, stressful situation), and societal characteristics (e.g., low hierarchy and equality in Finnish society).

Overall, this finding has presented a significant understanding of new immigrants' initial process of acculturation in Finland, particularly in individuals who have been involved in the official integration plan. These changes in the new immigrants' values, attitudes, and behaviors showed varying patterns across individuals. These new immigrants have experienced a process of change in a wide-ranging view while they were exposed to Finnish

culture. Despite the cumulative stress (e.g., inadequate language skills, unemployment) that impact the individual's mental well-being, it is important to bear in mind that many people have undergone and continue to experience the effects of acculturation and most have survived and have been able to function in a productive way (Berry, 2003).

Conflicting Findings

Some discrepancies against the theoretical proposition occurred in this. A brief discussion of conflict finding was discussed in the first section. This second section discusses further and evaluates the discrepancies. The two discrepancies include: 1) acculturative stress caused by prejudice and discrimination was described as insignificant according to respondents from Africa 2) previous educational level and socioeconomic status were less beneficial to acculturation. Several factors are identified to evaluate the discrepancies in the following section.

Discrimination was less significant

Researchers believe people who have physical features which mark them as being apart from the mainstream society may experience prejudice and discrimination (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Padilla & Perez, 2003). In addition to that, perceiving discrimination is positively correlated with acculturative stress and has a significant negative effect on one's well-being (Tartakovsky, 2007). However, acculturative stress caused by prejudice and discrimination was described as insignificant according to respondents from Africa. First, participant E, the Somali male who had lived in Kenya for 18 years, stated mistreatment and prejudice could happen in every big city, regardless of race. Then participant J, a 26 year-old female from Congo, who had lived in Rwanda for 15 years, also believed her personal experience should not be considered as discrimination. The plausible

reasons to explain this discrepancy against the theories is: cultural experience, strong ethnic identity, and personality.

Cultural experience. These two Africans who have had an international experience seemed to have less cultural stress when exposed to a new cultural conflict and negative encountering with the host population. The individual's previous cultural experience seemed to present a persuasive element to respond to the prejudice and discrimination within the host population. Factors as the length of living abroad and the presence of a bicultural environment in the early period apparently enriched their competence in responding to prejudice and discrimination in the host environment. The valuable nature of cultural experience has driven them away from the acculturative stress that was caused by physical feature of skin color (e.g., Padilla & Perez, 2003) and low position in the hierarchy of Finnish attitudes towards immigrants (Jaakkola, 2005). By going further to examine the early presence of bicultural background in these two participants from Somalia and the Congo, who had lived abroad for over 15-18 years prior to entering Finland, their experiences are associated with the existing literature of "Bicultural identity integration" (BII) from Benet-Martinez and Haritatos (2005). The researchers construct BII describing bicultural identity which appears to protect the extent to which bicultural individuals feel that the ethnic and mainstream aspects of their identity are more compatible rather than difficult to integrate.

Strong ethnic identity. The two Africans who had both lived outside of their homelands for 15-18 years still identified their birthplace as their individual cultural identity. Their identity reconstruction is not affected by the length of residentship but by their original roots. The original nationality was a strong factor in this. In addition to their cultural experience, one finding also indicated that ethnic identity among African Americans has been found to protect against internalizing and externalizing mental health symptoms (Smith, Levine, Smith, Dumas, & Prinz, 2009). On the other hand, it gave the impression that ethnic

identity might be a protective feature against mistreatment of prejudice and stereotype when the respondent from China expressed that the Chinese are unlikely to encounter as much discrimination as others in Finland. Bhugra (2004) suggested that if cultural identity is not well formed and concept of the self is poorly defined, then it is likely higher rates of inappropriate behaviors and feelings as well as withdrawal from reality may well emerge from the impact of stressors. As a result, this study is supportive of Umaña-Taylor and Updegraff's (2007) finding which demonstrated ethnic identity is a protective factor against mental health symptoms.

Personality. The previous experience of suffering from wars and the individual's cultural experience seemed to provide a positive aspect to their personality. Tolerance and being open-minded in personality traits have alleviated the effects and consequences of social rejection. Openness also incorporates other similar concepts such as flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity, and these mentioned personality traits can be seen as the adaptive drive in an individual's personality that channels stress away from effects of acculturation and toward learning and growth in a new culture (Kim, 2001).

Previous educational level and socioeconomic status were less beneficial

Researchers suggested that an individual's acculturation is positively associated with their level of education and socioeconomic status (Beiser et al., 1988; Berry, 1997). On the subject of influence on the socioeconomic status, the highest educated participant with a master's degree obtained the specialist work through the internship. That symbolized stable income and occupational status. However, the others who either had a university degree or upper secondary diploma, not much difference or benefit was revealed in relation to their previous educational level and socioeconomic status. The most plausible reason for this

situation is because most of the participants were still involved in the integration plan and their economic status in this period was subsidized by the social insurance institution Kela.

In acknowledgement of Berry's suggestion (1997) that educational level may accustom migrants to features of the new resettlement environment, it appeared that both forced and voluntary immigrants did not respond to the suggestion well in this sample, except for the returnees. Except for moving home and buying tickets and other mundane things prior to migration, knowledge about the resettlement environment was hardly ever examined by the majority of the immigrants. Apart from the returnees, both the forced and voluntary immigrants articulated a similarity with respect to inadequate knowledge of the new host environment prior to migration. Thus, on the basis of educational level, both of these two groups stood in a similar position in lacking assessment of the new environment prior to their migration.

6. Conclusion

The study set out to investigate new immigrants' acculturation in Finland. Additionally, this paper has brought an inclusive investigation of acculturation on both forced and voluntary immigrants, as well as returnees who have been engaged in the official integration plan in Finland. Participants' experiences in adjustment and adaptation, the preferred acculturation strategy, and adaptive changes of the individuals were all explored and identified in this study. This chapter outlines five key conclusions, which summarize the findings and discussion of this study.

First, stress tended to be particularly severe during the initial phase once the migration takes place. Finnish language deficiency and employment were identified as the two primary stressors. Language barriers heavily contributed to distress, depression and anxiety in the new environment. The respondents explicitly expressed low self-confidence in interacting with the host population. The lack of Finnish language skills limited their socialization with the host population and involvement with the dominant culture. Besides that, these new immigrants were aware that unemployment was one of the important factors influencing their psychological well-being and impeding their integration in the resettlement. Self-sufficiency through employment can provide a stable income, occupational status, indicator of security, and social networks within the larger society. These new immigrants believed that employment is a source of security and self-gratification which gives them pride and hope for a better future. Unemployment indicates not only the inability to fully integrate into the labor force, but also leads to low socioeconomic status which prevents these new immigrants from building a 'home' in the new environment. In terms of discrimination, the presence of negative experiences and hostile attitudes from members of the majority group was less significant for the two Africans. The plausible reason for it is because of the individual's culture experience, strong ethnic identity, and personality. Nevertheless, perceiving unequal

reception in the labor market was a more crucial issue for unemployed workers. On the subject of social support, the new immigrants got more informational, technical, material and emotional support from the ethnic groups and intergroups to help their functioning in the new environment. The relationship with Finns is weak and Finnish language deficiency is seen as the main factor. Nevertheless, co-ethnic groups and intergroups were the most salient and powerful source for coping with acculturative stress and gaining relationship satisfaction.

Second, the results revealed the preceding factors that Berry (1997) suggested were clearly related to the individual's adjustment in a varying pattern and generated a different level of acculturative stress across individuals. Each factor showed its positive influence on facilitating and learning various aspects of the new culture (e.g., low cultural distance). But on the other hand, each factor revealed its relation to the others and appeared to have a negative impact on generating multiple acculturative stresses that impact on an individual's well-being (e.g., dissonant acculturation). Nevertheless, these factors, as well as psychological and sociocultural outcomes, are likely to be influenced by both societal-level and individual-level variables (Ward, 1996). This study is supportive of previous findings, with a couple of discrepancies. First, educational level and socioeconomic status in this sample supported less than a general expectation from Berry's suggestion (1997). The reason for this discrepancy is because education did not accustom the majority of new immigrants to features of the new resettlement, and then the socioeconomic status in the integration plan and unemployment period required financial aid from the social insurance institution Kela. Second, discrimination, which is considered in relation to acculturative stress, was less critical and stated to be insignificant. The plausible reasons for this are the contribution of the immigrants' cultural experiences, strong ethnic identity, and tolerance and openness in personality traits. In the social life aspect within the host environment, the outcome indicated the relationship with the host culture was limited and weak. Intergroup and co-ethnic groups

were more preferred; the informal social network with Finns was motivated by the individual's various needs and willingness from members of the larger society. Nevertheless, language fluency bears a clear relationship to sociocultural adjustment (Ward, 1996).

Third, integration strategy was preferred among all the new immigrants in this sample. The integration plan that the new immigrants were involved in may influence the choice of acculturation strategy and provide an additional clue to examine the relationship further, but moreover, it may infer that the receiving society is open and all-encompassing in its orientation toward cultural diversity while integration is successfully pursued by immigrants (Berry, 2000 as cited in Berry, 2001). Although integration strategy is preferred, it must be borne in mind that acculturative transition is not always easy, and these new immigrants face ongoing challenges that are not easy to overcome. On associated matters of ethnic identity, the majority of the new immigrants rather claimed their original nationality first due to lacking legal proof of Finnish citizenship. Ethnic identity and the individual's cultural experience are found to be a protective feature against prejudice and ethnic stereotypes. Nonetheless, individuals have the capacity to alter identity; neither culture nor identity is static. Individuals are commonly influenced by other human groups around them; they are in a continuous process of adaptation and changes (Helman, 1994).

Fourth, the individuals' transformations of cultural schemas were modified variant upon the cultural context, individual background, and societal characteristics. Berry (1997) declared acculturation is one of the most complex areas of research in cross-cultural psychology. This study has found the positive psychological consequence refers to feeling safer and peaceful, equality and mutual respect, and better off political situation than those in their country of origin. In addition, this study presented the negative psychological effects included multiple stressors that affect the mental health of individuals (e.g., dissonant acculturation, unemployment). On the sociocultural outcomes, the present study has shown

that the individual's growth (e.g., courage), increased understanding of self and original culture (e.g., giving compliments), and acquiring appropriate sociocultural skills needed for living in the new sociocultural milieu.

Finally, returning to the general sentiment from the new immigrants, it is now possible to state that acculturation is a more arduous but profound process. The individuals encountered many distressing problems and difficulties in coping with the new cultural context. They learned to handle the stressful situations through different channels and adaptive changes were made in their life in Finland. The individual variables, the characteristics of the original and receiving society, and the resources and social support networks behind the process continually impact the way how the new immigrants acculturate to the new cultural environment. As long as constant contact between individuals of differing cultural origins takes place, changes occur over time within individuals and in society at large. Overall, this study supports the notion that it would be incorrect to characterize acculturation as a static state. The researchers also point out that the four acculturation strategies are neither static, nor are they an end outcome in themselves; they can change depending on situation factors (Sam, & Berry, 2010). Since the acculturation is not a static state, the overall picture of acculturation strategy can be implied as a hot air balloon. The wind currents influencing the hot air balloon to move resembles how the preceding factors affect the process of acculturation. By utilizing the hot air balloon image, the concept of acculturation strategy and its influencing factors can be easily presented. Nevertheless, it shows another form of self-reflection that helps immigrants understand what they are undergoing, why they feel so stressed, and what direction they need to move on towards the process of acculturation. The utilization of the hot air balloon for introducing the concept of acculturation strategy will be discussed in detail for further practical training in the chapter 8.

7. Evaluation of the study

This study aimed to explore new immigrants' acculturation in Finland. This study summoned the perspectives of the new immigrants to explain the initial process of acculturation, particularly from those who either have been involved in the official integration plan or had at least one year of the Finnish for foreigners course. Moreover, this study extends the current literature's capacity to understand refugees, immigrants, and as well as returnees' experiences in the initial phase of acculturation in Finland.

Guba and Lincoln's "responsive constructivist evaluation" (1989, as cited in Patton, 2002) led in the study. This method permitted the author to be especially sensitive to the differing perspectives of various participants, to identify issues and concerns based on direct personal observation and face to face contact with the participants, to collect data and report finding with those differing perspectives clearly in mind. Moreover, this study has followed a systematic process and has achieved authenticity in terms of fairness in depicting constructions in the sociocultural and psychological aspects from the 11 participants.

The study, based on the participants' responses to the semi-structured questions in the interviews, provided a thorough and culturally competent description of the initial process of acculturation. One potential limitation of the study is the nature of the sample, which was composed of 11 participants from 8 countries and aged from 18 to 46. Of the eleven participants, all are located in the Pirkanmaa region and Central Finland. None of the respondents came from Lapland or the Helsinki area or came from the continents of North America and East Europe. Age in this sample could also impact the outcome: none of them begin acculturation in the retirement. Kim (2001) declared age to be a significant factor in cross-cultural adaptation because of its close linkage to openness to change. Older immigrants may not have an open personality structure due to their original cultural identities

and old cultural habits which have become solidified. Thus, this sample may contain features that impact the transferability of these findings.

A second potential limitation of the study is the new immigrants have not been observed over time to measure the effects of acculturative stress. Though the Finnish language deficiency may constrain their expression fully, a very complex acculturation was found from the participant D to exemplify this. This 18 year-old female from Afghanistan illustrated how acculturative stress was accumulated and presented in her life. In spite of her Finnish language skills, she exhibited a disruptive effect on her psychological and physiological well-being. Next she undertook the parenting role by being a translator and information broker in the family which was illustrated as the model of dissonant acculturation. She has carried a burden since her parents and children within the family could not acculturate to the Finnish culture at the same pace. Then she encountered conformity stress at school. She chose to wear a veil in order to represent her religion and identity, and this seemed to constrain friendship building with Finns. The last but not least is the risk of adolescents born of immigrant parents may experience conflicts between their parents' cultural values and those of the host culture. Thus, longer observation may help to identify potential confusion with language and explore further the impacts and problems in the process of acculturation. However, it is still possible that researchers or interpreters may influence the participants' responses.

A third potential limitation of this study is the differences in cultural norms and values, which are probably the most common issue that cross-cultural interviewing has faced. When different norms and values govern an individual's perspective and cross-cultural interactions, such a variable adds its challenge in the face to face interview. Based on the nationality, there are 8 nations involved. Thus, these differences across nations allowed room for interpersonally different interpretation. For example, participant J, a female from the Congo,

expressed first that she had no negative experience in Finland. But when she talked about her life in Mikkeli, she suddenly described her encounter of been blocked on the road on the way home. According to her statement, she did not think those Finns, who yelled at her with prejudicial words on the street discriminated her and her family. She interpreted it simply as a group of drunken people who behaved badly.

Overall, the methodology used in the data collection was very positive in providing the participants with an opportunity to utter their responses in a wide-ranging manner. In general, the interviews with these participants went smoothly, except to catch the same timeline for interview with new immigrants from Africa. But the outcome of the data collection was fruitful. The small group interview session either formally or informally also created a positive synergy in generating rich data. In addition to the semi-structured questionnaires used in the interviews, the presence of the interviewer's role as an 'insider' with 'outsider' experience also fostered rapport with those participants from the adult education center. By the stimulation of the author's experience in Finland, most of the participants were more willing to yield much information and their opinions and experience in the process of acculturation.

8. Directions for further studies and training

This study has investigated new immigrants' acculturation in Finland, particularly from the perspectives of newcomers who have participated in the integration plan. This study answered some questions and raised a couple of others that have direct implications for future studies. The first and second suggestions point out further studies that could be conducted, and the third suggestion provides a possibility for the practical training of new immigrants. By utilizing the hot air balloon image, the concept of acculturation strategy can be easily explained to immigrants coming from different backgrounds. Immigrants can also understand the process of acculturation better instead of letting acculturative stress take a central position in their lives.

First, the results of this study revealed that integration strategy is the preference among new immigrants. Naturally, the integration plan that the new immigrants were involved in might play a remarkable influence on the process of acculturation. However, a question on whether there is divergent preference in acculturation strategies between public and private life spheres like Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver (2003)'s finding or not is unknown. Therefore, a rigorous study examining the possible distinction of acculturation strategy in the private and public environment could be the basis of the next investigation.

Second, changes of original cultural schemas produced by exposure to a new culture can be observed through three different levels. Marín (1992) proposed three levels; the most superficial level (e.g., meaning of holidays, food), the most intermediate level (e.g., language preference, ethnicity of friends), and finally the most basic level (e.g., belief in justice, the value of the family). At this point, the superficial level and intermediate level are found, but not in the basic level of the individual's core values. Together with the length of residence and involvement with the host culture over time, changes in the basic level may be possible

to find. Thus, a longitudinal study of acculturating immigrants should be taken into consideration for further assessment of core belief and values.

Third, one specific method of reducing acculturative stress is to provide easy accessible knowledge of acculturation strategy to new immigrants. The information and skills needed in order to facilitate the host culture is provided in the Finnish course and professional training, and as well through intercultural interaction. However, the cause-and -effect relationship with psychological outcome of acculturation is absent. After getting familiar with the theoretical frameworks, the author believes in the possibility to use the hot air balloon to present the concept of acculturation strategy that Berry (2001, 2003) proposed and with its associated findings on acculturative stress. First, the wind currents influencing how the hot air balloon moves just like how preceding factors (i.e., age, gender, educational level, etc.) affect the acculturation process and choice of acculturation strategy. Second, the envelope refers to acculturation strategy. Then the two strings connecting between the envelope and basket represent the two fundamental aspects: intercultural contact and cultural maintenance. Fourth, the basket holds four stages of acculturation; integration, marginalization, assimilation, and separation. Finally, the sandbags hanging outside the basket symbolize how minority groups may use four stages to handle acculturative stress. By utilizing the hot air balloon image (Appendix C), the concept of acculturation can be easily presented to new immigrants with different backgrounds. It may also provide a better understanding of what they have undergone in the new cultural context. This method is practical and can be used for future training.

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4. Where else have you lived? Where do you consider ‘ home’?
5. How would you describe your personal experience in Finland to this point? (e.g., frustrated in learning Finnish / finding a job, People are open-minded to me, Using U-curve for assistance)
6. In what ways have your experiences in Finland been similar/different to experiences in other countries where you have lived?
7. How does your experience in Finland impact the way you feel and behave? (e.g., talking without gesture, low hierarchy, the concept of family..)
8. Are you stressful while interacting with Finns? If yes, please tell your experience and how you dealt with it.
9. Do you have personal negative experiences in encountering the Finnish culture? (e.g., discrimination and insult)
10. Do the pressure and negative experiences you received have any impact on the adaptation process? How?
11. What kind of resources do you have for coping with the stress and the unfamiliar culture? (e.g., ethnic community, family members)
12. Do you get support (or pressure) from your relatives/peers/friends in hometown for adapting to Finnish culture?
13. Do you get support from own family members / ethnic community/other Finnish association in Finland (e.g., Red cross)? Which one is preferred? (Inter-group/out-group)
14. Do you think Finland will accept you as a Finn?
15. What helps or hinders you into Finnish society? How and why?

	Help	Hinder
Appearance		
Personality (e.g., openness, shy)		
Language acquisition		
Politics and religion status		
What else?		

16. Have you found any behavior changes in yourself? What kind of positive change occurred to you?
17. What impact or learning was caused by the changes after moving to Finland?
18. Berry’s Acculturation Model ; intercultural contact and cultural maintenance

a) Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's identity and characteristics?

b) Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with the larger society?

	positive	negative
positive	INTEGRATION	ASSIMILATION
negative	SEPERATION	MARGINALIZATION

Appendix B: DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

Participant A: a 35 year-old female from Hong Kong. She arrived in Finland in October 2010 because of marriage to a Finn. She speaks English, Cantonese and Chinese. Before moving to Finland, she worked as a team supervisor in the stock market and part-time beauty consultant. She has finished one year of the Finnish language course and half a year of pre-training of practical nursing. At present, she is in field training in a care center and is waiting for the next practical nursing course recruitment.

Participant B: a 20 year-old male from Iraq. He came to Finland in 2010 to join his family. His native language is Arabic. Before moving to Finland, he was a high school student. Aside from Iraq, he lived in Syria for 1.5 years. Now, he is on a sales course and the integration plan for him will end in the summer of 2015.

Participants C: a 24-year-old female from Iraq. She arrived in Finland in October 2011. She came to Finland with her family as refugees. Turkmen is her native language. Before moving to Finland, she was a high school student. Aside from Iraq, she was in Turkey for 6 months with her family in waiting for United Nation's permission of refugee document. At present, she is on a sales profession course. The integration plan for her will finish in November 2014.

Participant D: an 18 year-old female from Afghanistan. She arrived in Finland in 2008 with her mother, sister, and brother in order to reunite with her father. She speaks Persian and Dari. She was in a one year immigrant's preparation course in primary school before joining the normal curriculum with local Finns in grades 8 and 9. Her application to vocational school did not succeed. Therefore, she is on the sales profession course instead.

Participant E: a c.40 year old male from Somalia. He came to Finland as a refugee in 2008. He speaks Swahili, Arabic, Greek, and English. Aside from Somalia, he lived in Kenya for 18 years, where he finished his 2nd year studies at the university. He worked as a driller before moving to Finland. His integration plan and Finnish course took place after he was laid off. He used to work as a storekeeper at the Nokia Company. Nowadays, he is learning Finnish and on the sales profession course.

Participant F: a 36 year-old female from Russia. She arrived in Finland in 2012 as a returnee; her Russian husband and two children came along with her. Her father is a native Finnish who lives in Jyväskylä now. The Finnish language is unfamiliar to her, but the Finnish culture is quite familiar since she has visited Finland many times to visit her father's relatives since she was a child. She speaks Russian and has a business and administration degree at a university in Russia. Now she is a student on the sales profession course. The integration plan for her will end in the summer of 2015.

Participant G: a 34 year-old female from Russia. She arrived in Finland in 2012 with her husband as a returnee. Her aunt and grandparents were originally from Finland. She was unable to learn Finnish language from her relatives as it was forbidden in the Soviet Union.

She speaks Russian and has a university degree. Before moving to Finland, she was an accountant. At present, she is on the sales profession course. The integration plan will end in the summer of 2015.

Participant H: a 46 year old female from China. She arrived in Finland in 2013 with her Finnish husband and 2 daughters. Before moving to Finland, the family lived in China for 10 years and the Philippines for 5 years. They regularly visited Finland in summer time while living abroad. She speaks Chinese and English. Her integration plan will end in 2016.

Participant I: a 26 year-old male from Ireland. He moved to Finland in 2011 with his Finnish girlfriend. He began the integration plan in 2013. His native language is English and educational level is high school. Before entering the integration plan, he got a 2 year contract job in construction work. The integration plan for him ends in 2016.

Participant J: a 24 year-old female who was born in the Congo. She had left the Congo at the age of 7 and then lived in Rwanda for 15 years. Her native language is Kinyarwanda. Before moving to Finland, she was a 2nd year student of economics and business at a Rwandan university. In 2012, she arrived in Mikkeli, Finland with her parents and a brother. Now she lives in Jyväskylä with her husband and their first baby. She is on maternity leave from the integration plan now.

Participant K: a 33 year-old female from Taiwan. She arrived in Finland in December of 2010 because of her Finnish spouse. She had one year abroad as an exchange student in Austria. While the first year of the integration plan took place, she acquired her current work in a patent company through internship. So far, she has worked for this company for nearly 2.5 years. In the niche market of the patent industry, she is the only Chinese certificated patent specialist working in Finnish company.

Appendix C: UTILIZING A HOT AIR BALLOON IMAGE FOR THE CONCEPT OF ACCULTURATION STRATEGY

