

Adaptation of Venezuelan Refugees In Colombia

Hajar Soltan¹, Saba Safdar¹, Marina Martínez², & Jorge Palacio Sañudo³

¹University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, Canada

²Universidad de la Costa, Barranquilla, Colombia

³Universidad del Norte, Barranquilla, Colombia

CPA 2022 Conference

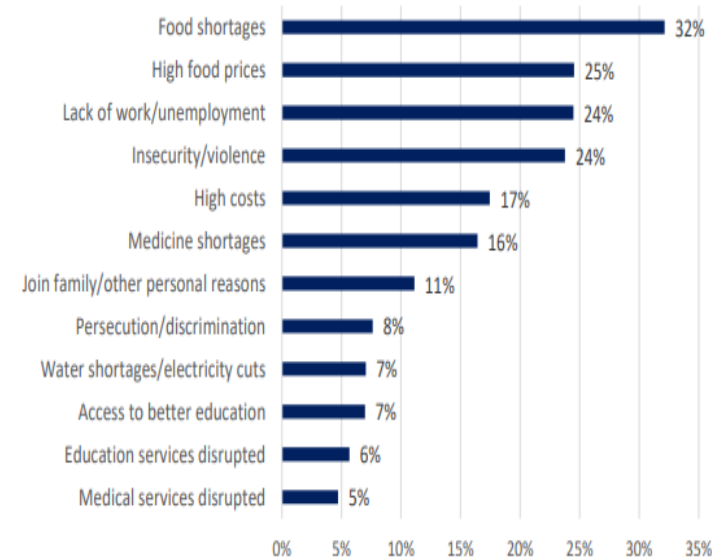


State of Crisis

Approximately 5.4 million Venezuelan citizens flee the nation, seeking refuge in nearby countries

(UNHCR, 2020).

Main drivers of migration



Refugees in Colombia



75 percent of Venezuelans are without employment contracts (Dempster et al., 2020).



Limited access to primary healthcare, vaccinations, childbirth, and health emergencies (Doocy et al., 2019).



Uninsured and precluded from referrals (Guarnizo-Herreño & Wehby, 2021).



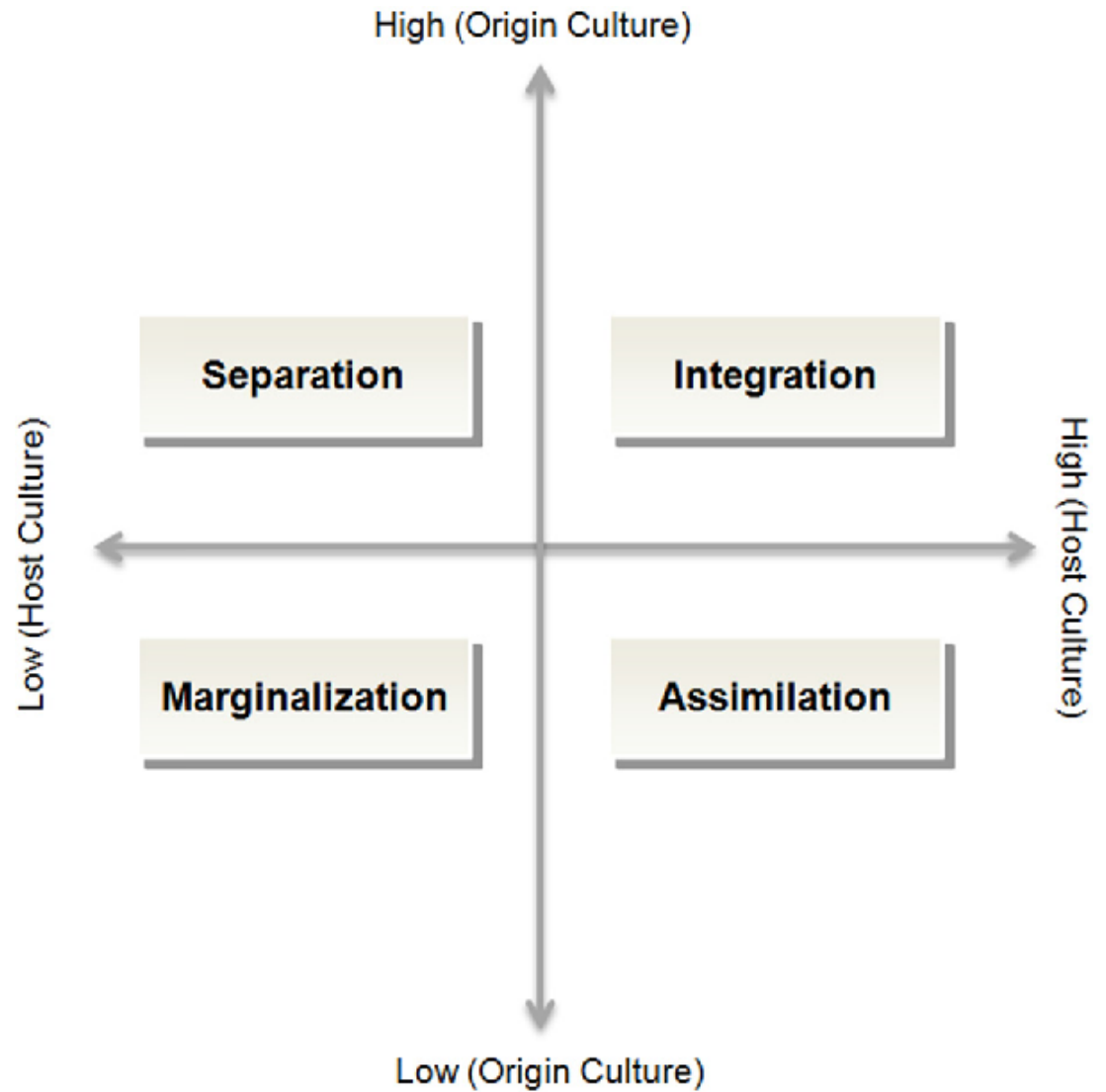
Acculturation



“Acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members”
(Berry, 2005).

Acculturation Orientations

(Berry, 1997, 2005)





Acculturation Orientations

- Integration
- Assimilation
- Separation
- Marginalization

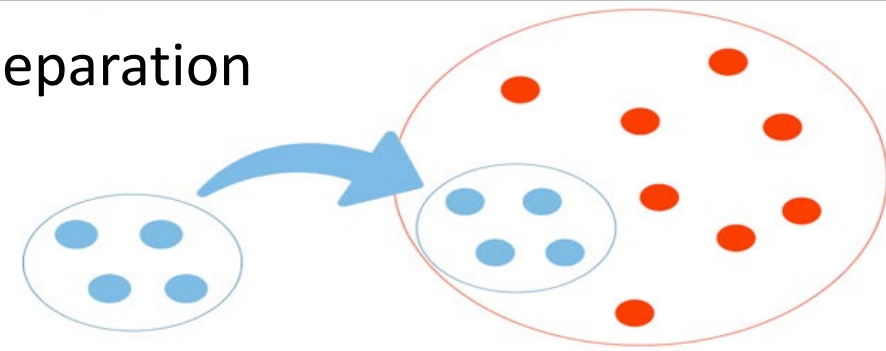


Adaptation Outcomes

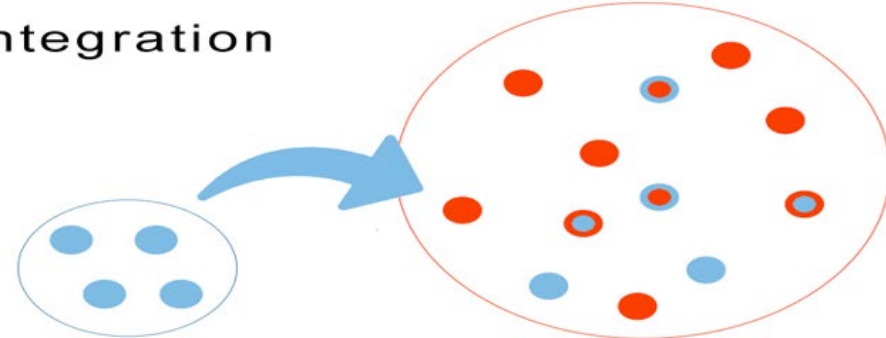
- Psychological
- Sociocultural

(Ward & Kennedy, 1999).

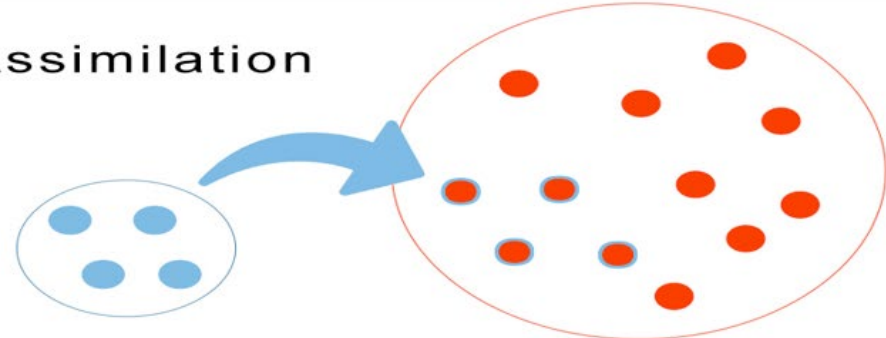
Separation



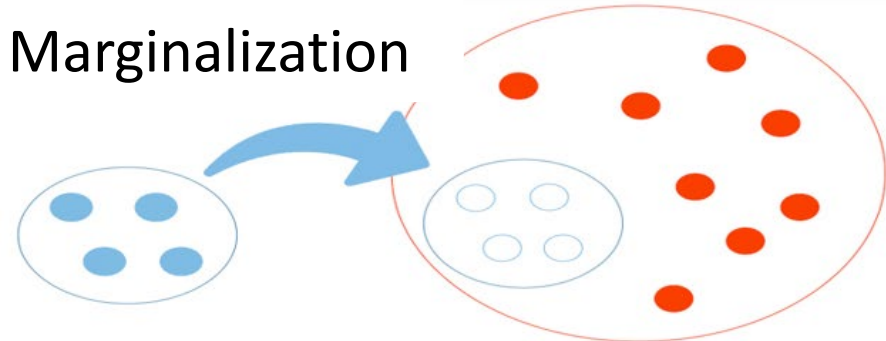
Integration



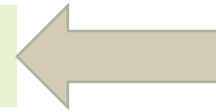
Assimilation



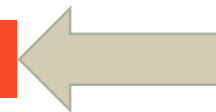
Marginalization

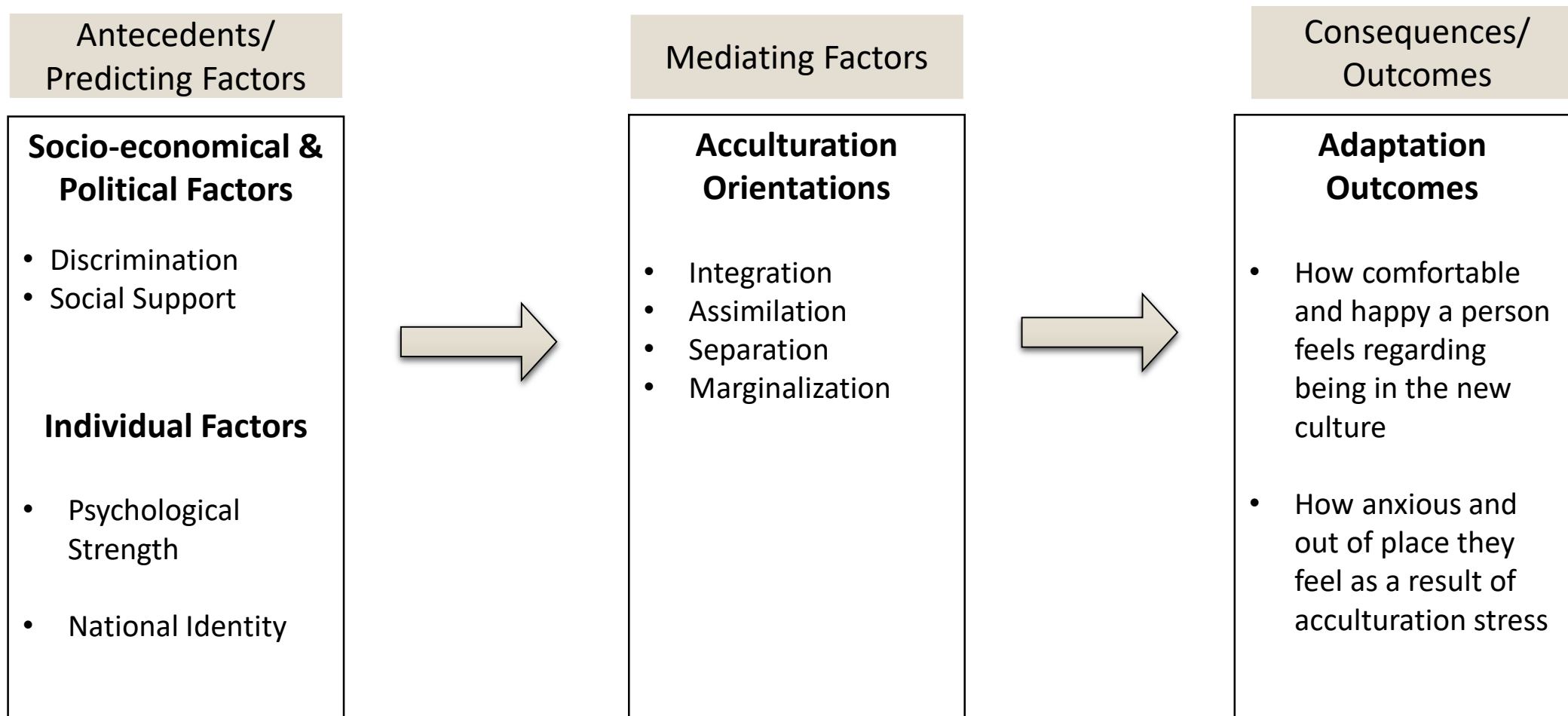


Associated with better adaptation outcomes (Berry, 2007)

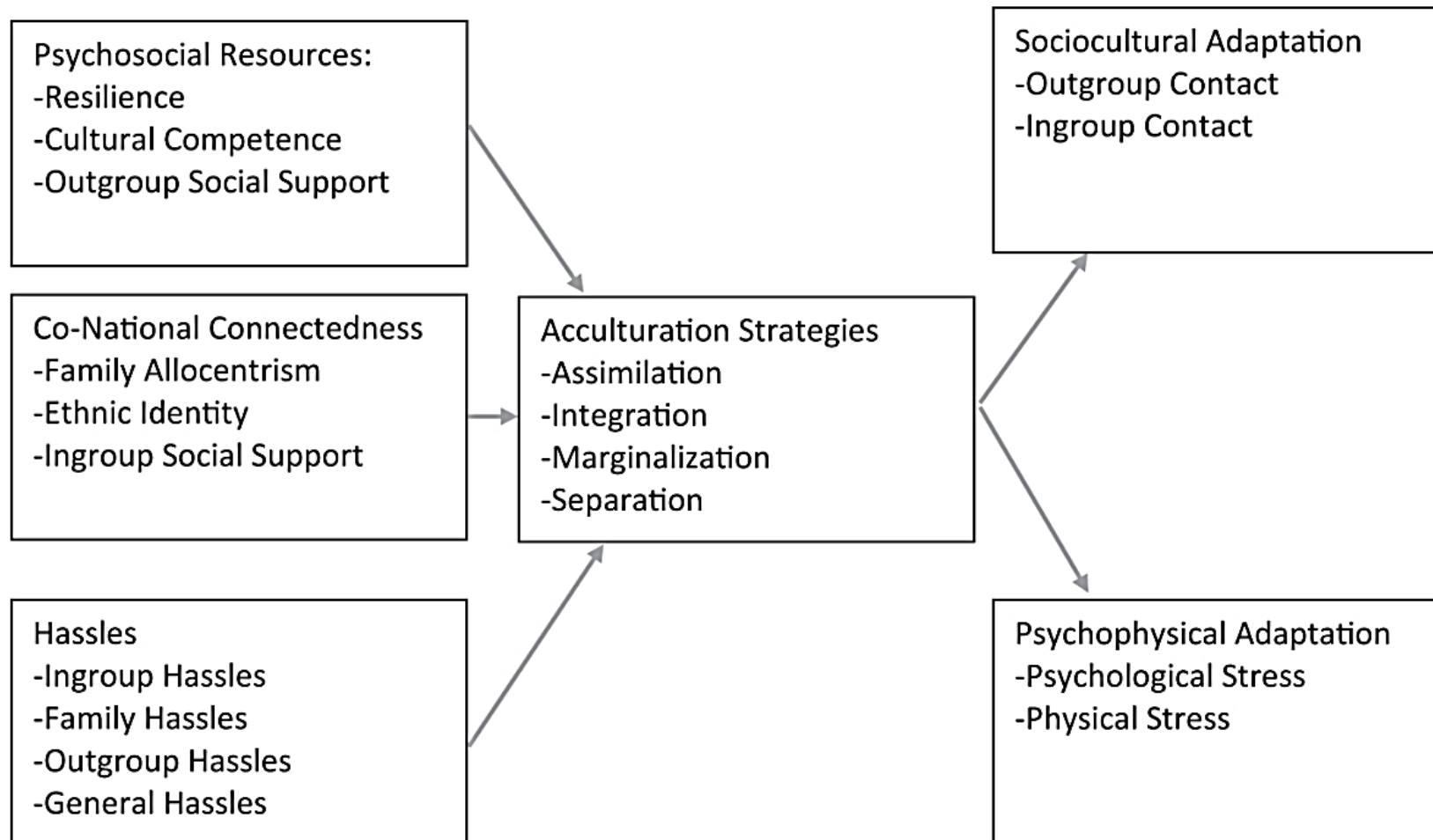


Associated with least favorite adaptation outcomes (Berry, 2007)





The Multidimensional Individual Difference Acculturation (MIDA) model (Safdar & van de Vijver, 2019)





Overview of Present Research

Aimed to examine the relations between some of the sociocultural and psychological factors influencing cultural adaptation of Venezuelan refugees living in Colombia.

We also examined how some of these relation were mediated by the acculturation attitudes introduced by Barry's bidimensional model.



Predicting Variables

Individual Factors

- Psychological Strength
- National Identity

Socio-economical & Political Factors

- Discrimination
- In-group Social Support
- Out-group Social Support

Mediating Variables

Acculturation Orientations

- Integration
- Assimilation
- Separation
- Marginalization

Outcome Variable

Cultural Adaptation

- How comfortable and happy a person feels in regard to being in the new culture
- How anxious and out of place they feel as a result of acculturation stress

Research Questions:

1. What would be the influence of sociocultural and individual factors on adaptation of Venezuelan refugees?
2. What would be the mediating role of acculturation orientations (i.e., host and ethnic orientations) on the relation between psychosocial variables and adaptation of Venezuelan refugees?

Hypothesis 1. Refugees with higher Psychological Strength (H1a), National Identity (H1b), Outgroup Social Support (H1c) and Ingroup Social Support (H1d) will have significantly higher reports of Psychological Adaptation. Refugees with higher Perceived Discrimination will exhibit significantly lower levels of Psychological Adaptation (H1e).



Hypothesis 2. Orientation towards Venezuelan culture mediates the relation between Ingroup Social Support and Psychological Adaptation. In other words, those who report high degrees of social support from their heritage culture are more likely to endorse ethnic orientation and report higher levels of Psychological Adaptation.

Hypothesis 3. Orientation towards Colombian society mediates the relation between National Identity and Psychological Adaptation. In other words, those who report high degrees of National Identity are more inclined toward the Colombian society and report higher levels of Psychological Adaptation.



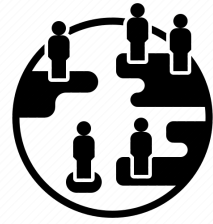
Hypothesis 4. Orientation towards Colombian society mediates the relation between Outgroup Social Support and Psychological Adaptation. In other words, those who report high levels of social support from members of the larger society, are more inclined toward the Colombian society and report higher levels of Psychological Adaptation.

Hypothesis 5. Orientation towards Colombian society mediates the relation between Perceived Discrimination and Psychological Adaptation. In other words, those who experience higher levels of discrimination are less inclined toward the Colombian society and therefore report lower levels of Psychological Adaptation.



Participants

676 Venezuelan refugees in Colombia
116 employed in formal employment, 333 in informal employment, 143 who were unemployed
74 undergraduate university students
18-75 years old with the mean age being 31.5 years
Male = 344 Female = 326



Demographic
Information



Psychological Strength
(Diaz et al., 2006)



National Identity
(Gagnon & Bourhis, 1996)



Discrimination
(Barrette et al., 2004)



Social Support
(Zimet et al., 1988)



Acculturation
Orientation
(Demes & Geeraert, 2014)



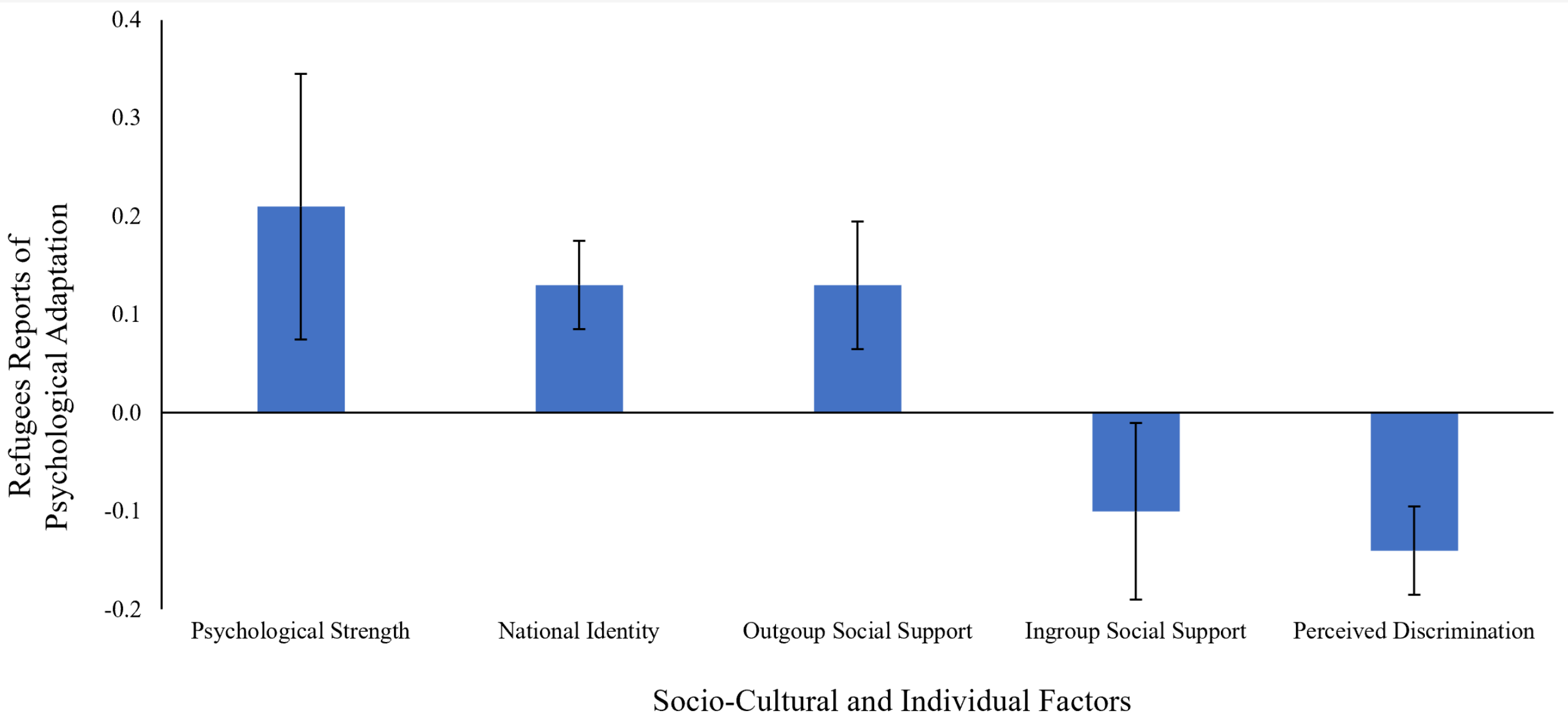
Adaptation
(Demes & Geeraert, 2014)

Measures

Results

Length of residence in Colombia, Psychological Strength, National Identity, Ingroup and Outgroup Social Support as well as Perceived Discrimination were all significant predictors of Psychological Adaptation; together explaining 26% of the variance in Psychological Adaptation

Regression results using Psychological Adaptation as the criterion			
Predictor	<i>b</i>	<i>b</i> 95% CI [LL, UL]	Fit
(Intercept)	3.71**	[3.03, 4.39]	
<i>Demographic Factors</i>			
Sex	-0.10	[-0.23, 0.04]	
Age	-0.00	[-0.01, 0.00]	
Length of residence	0.08**	[0.05, 0.11]	
Psychological Strength	0.21**	[0.08, 0.35]	
National Identity	0.13**	[0.08, 0.17]	
Outgroup Social Support	0.13**	[0.07, 0.20]	
Ingroup Social Support	-0.10*	[-0.19, -0.01]	
Perceived Discrimination	-0.14**	[-0.19, -0.10]	
			$R^2 = .263^{**}$ 95% CI [.20,.31]

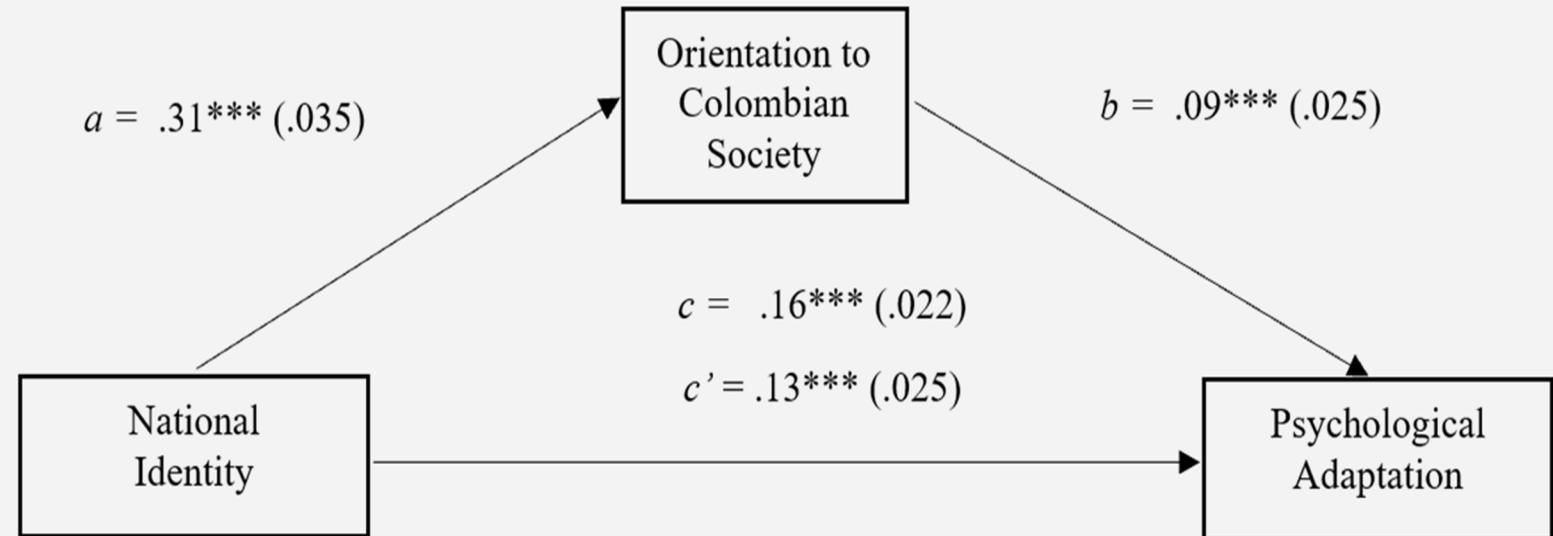


Mediation Results

Orientation towards Colombian society mediated the relation between **National Identity** and **Psychological Adaptation**

Model Summaries for Mediation Analysis H3

Model	F	P	R2
National Identity predicting Host Orientation	(4,663) = 37.88	<.001	.186
National Identity predicting Psychological Adaptation	(4,661) = 29.24	<.001	.150
National Identity and Host Orientation predicting Psychological Adaptation	(5,660) = 26.69	<.001	0.168

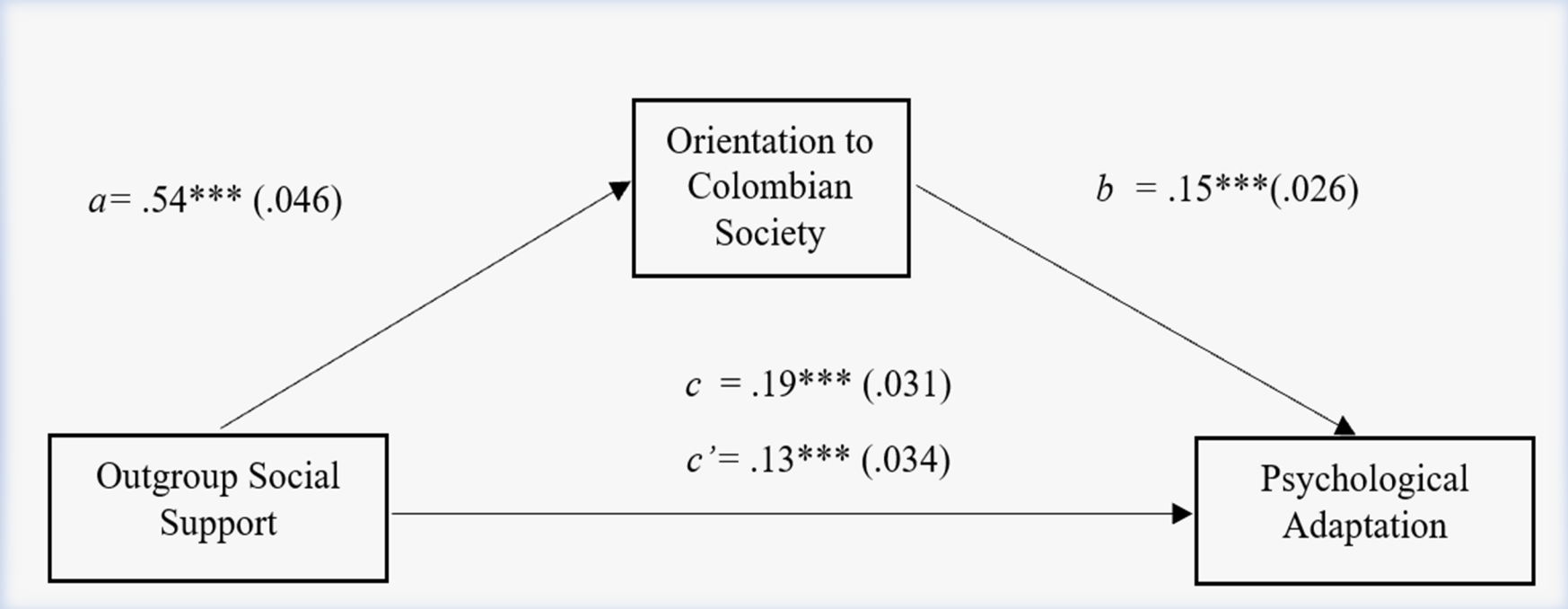


Mediation Results

Orientation towards Colombian society mediated the relation between **Outgroup Social Support** and **Psychological Adaptation**

Model Summaries for Mediation Analysis H4

Model	F	P	R2
Outgroup Social Support predicting Host Orientation	(4,637) =54.24	<.001	.254
Outgroup Social Support predicting Psychological Adaptation	(4,635) = 26.70	<.001	.144
Outgroup Social Support and Host Orientation predicting Psychological Adaptation	(5,634) = 24.50	<.001	0.162

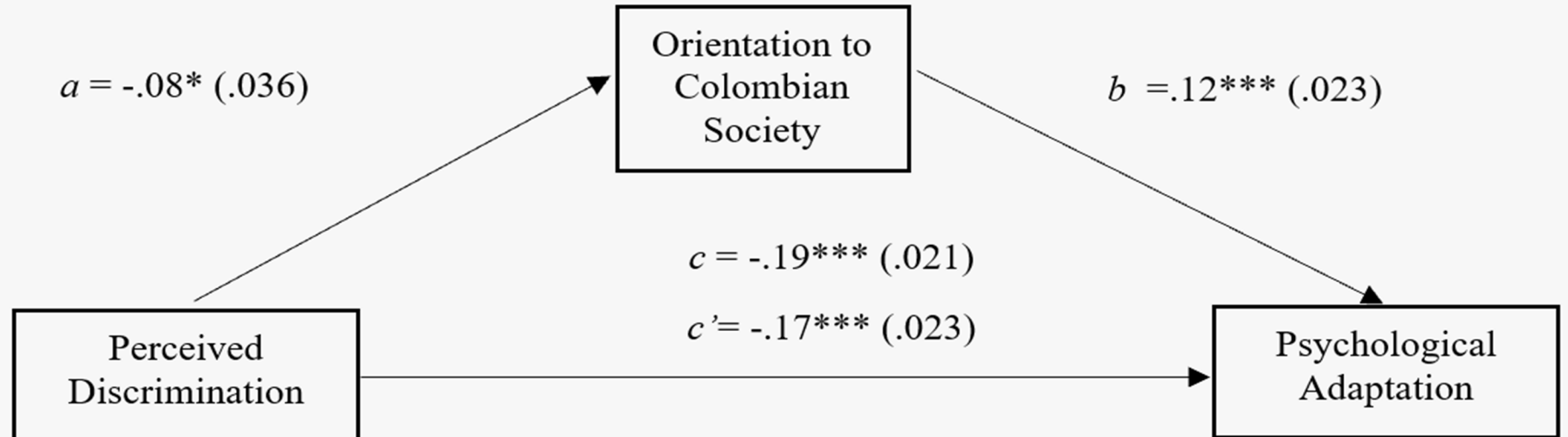


Mediation Results

Orientation towards Colombian society mediated the relation between **Perceived Discrimination** and **Psychological Adaptation**

Model Summaries for Mediation Analysis H5

Model	F	P	R2
Perceived Discrimination predicting Host Orientation	(4,656) = 17.93	<.05	.099
Perceived Discrimination predicting Psychological Adaptation	(4,654) = 37.12	<.001	.185
Perceived Discrimination and Host Orientation predicting Psychological Adaptation	(5,653) = 36.39	<.001	0.218



Discussion

Participants with **higher Psychological Strength, lower perceived discrimination, higher National Identity and higher Outgroup Social Support** have better adjustment to the Colombian society



Psychological Strength reduces acculturation stress and symptoms of depression and anxiety among refugees

(Birman et al., 2014).



Receiving higher levels of social support from the host society can considerably minimize the acculturative stress and help with managing the adversities of resettlement

(Kok et al., 2017).



National identification has positive consequences for immigrants' labor market outcomes and their educational attainments

(Altschul et al., 2006; Nekby & Rodin, 2007) .

Perceived discrimination was positively linked with negative psychological and sociocultural outcomes

(Lindert et al., 2008)



Conclusions

Community interventions providing:

- opportunity for social connections between members of the host and ethnic groups
- facilitation of refugees' psychological strength and their better understanding of the host society



Thank You

Hajar Soltan

✉ *hsoltan@uoguelph.ca*