
Acculturation Strategies and Attitudes of African Immigrants in the South of Spain: Between Reality and Hope

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This research is based on the work of Berry, Bourhis, Piontkowski, and their colleagues on general immigrant acculturation attitudes. The main purpose is to show that the division of the general acculturation attitude into different areas provides more complete information on the acculturation process undergone by immigrants. A new acculturation model, Relative Acculturation Extended Model, (RAEM) has been designed and tested. The model establishes seven areas of acculturation and differentiates among the acculturation strategies adopted (real situation) and the acculturation attitudes preferred (ideal situation) by immigrants. Eight hundred thirteen African immigrants (residents in the south of Spain, Andalusia) who responded to a questionnaire participated in the study. The results show that the general acculturation attitude is one of integration; however, the strategies adopted and the attitudes preferred vary depending on the areas of acculturation considered.

Keywords: *acculturation attitudes; acculturation strategies; areas of acculturation; immigrants*

Research on the psychological acculturation process since the acculturation model formulated by Berry and his colleagues (Berry, 1990; Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989) has mainly focused on three elements: acculturation attitudes, that is, how immigrants wish to maintain their own identity and at the same time relate to other groups in the host society; the specific changes in their conduct or way of life in the new society; and finally, the stress caused by acculturation in terms of the difficulty experienced by individuals when confronted with their new situation. This study develops the first of these elements, acculturation attitudes, because the conceptual analysis made on this variable in the model has had and continues to have a strong influence on theory and research in this area, not only in North America but also in Europe.

In his conceptual matrix of acculturation attitudes, Berry proposes two independent attitudinal dimensions: whether immigrants consider their cultural identity and their customs sufficiently valuable to keep them in the host society and whether the relationships with other persons or groups in the host society are sufficiently valuable to seek and stimulate. The combination of the responses (yes or no) to these two dimensions produce a classic model (see Berry, 1990; Berry et al., 1989) in which the four possible attitudes of acculturation adopted by immigrants may be observed: *integration* (yes, yes), *assimilation* (no, yes), *separation* (yes, no) and *marginalization* (no, no).

One of the most important and consistent results of studies using the Berry et al. (1989) model, mainly in Canada but also in other countries and with different ethnic groups (e.g., Campani & Catani, 1985; Koscic, 2002; Neto, 1993, 2002; Oriol, 1985; Partridge, 1988; Roccas, Horenczyk, & Schwartz, 2000; Sam, 1995; van Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1998; Zick, Wagner, van Dick, & Petzel, 2001), is the preference by minority groups studied for integration and their rejection of marginalization (see Berry et al., 1989; Berry & Sam, 1997; and Krishnan & Berry, 1992, for a summary of some of these studies).

Authors' Note: *This work was possible thanks to a project financed by the Spanish General Bureau of Scientific and Technical Research under the National Social and Economic Studies Program (SEC99-0425), 1999 to 2002.*

However, each ethnic group, for reasons inherent in their culture and above all, because of the historical and social conditions of their own immigration, adopt or prefer different acculturation options (e.g., assimilation or separation). Likewise, within each immigrant group, there are different dispositions, that is, intergroup variations related to various psychosocial indicators (e.g., age, time of residence, education, knowledge of the language of the host country, reasons for and conditions of immigrating, etc.), that influence the acculturation attitudes preferred by those groups (see Krishnan & Berry, 1992, for a review of the main body of research on this subject). The most recent research attempts to extend the principles of Berry et al., introducing some psychosocial variables, which may be influencing the acculturation options that immigrants adopt, and, the most important, taking into account the perspective of the host populations. Although there are some contributions in this sense, two of them have been especially useful in our study: the interactive acculturation model by Bourhis et al. (Bourhis & Bougie, 1998; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997), also carried out in Canada, and the more recent work of Piontkowski et al. (Piontkowski & Florack, 1995; Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, & Obdržálek, 2000; Piontkowski, Rohmann, & Florack, 2002) in a European context (studies carried out in Germany, Switzerland, and Slovakia).

In both cases, the results of research show that the option most preferred by immigrants in the host society is integration—the same as with the Berry model—but it may also be inferred from them that the specific peculiarities in each country (in terms of immigrant and host groups, culture, regulations, dominant ideologies, etc.) make the acculturation process different in each of them and for each contact group.

It is therefore our opinion that the psychosocial literature on the acculturation process of immigrants presents certain important shortcomings. First, these models usually include only general acculturation options in an ideal situation, that is, the option that immigrants prefer in the new society or what the natives would prefer that they do. The real situation—what the immigrants really do in the host society—is usually measured through certain behavioral indicators (e.g., linguistic practices, membership in associations, friendships, etc.) but not by asking the immigrants themselves what acculturation options they are actually using. Second, although some authors state that the acculturation process does not occur in the same way in different areas of life (Berry,

1990; Berry & Sam, 1997; Bourhis et al., 1997; Eshel & Rosenthal-Sokolov, 2000; Horenczyk, 1996; Sue, 2002; Trimble, 2002), these areas, when they are taken into account, are generally very restrictive (e.g., rental of housing, employment, etc.). Finally, none of those authors studies the acculturation options adopted in reality and the acculturation options ideally preferred by contact groups for each of the areas considered. We may therefore say that taken as a whole, the results of these authors confirm the need to carry out studies on the acculturation process in different societies, studying different ethnic groups and separating the acculturation process into different areas.

This study is framed in precisely this perspective and was performed in a part of Spain with a high, mainly African, immigration rate. The volume and social relevance that the migratory reality has acquired in Spain in recent years justify the need for studying the acculturation processes of immigrant and host populations using a model adapted to the social context in which they occur, a context that is clearly different from Canada, USA, or some European countries where acculturation models have been developed. Therefore, a new acculturation model has been developed and tested (Relative Acculturation Extended Model [RAEM]; see Navas et al., 2005, for a detailed analysis of the model) that attempts, on one hand, to collect some contributions from the above-mentioned models and, on the other, to incorporate new aspects from our own research.

RAEM

First, this model makes a distinction between acculturation strategies and attitudes, that is, between the real situation—the acculturation strategies the immigrants say they have put into practice in the host society—and the ideal situation—the options they would choose if they had the chance. Second, the RAEM considers that there is not just a single acculturation option (strategy or attitude), as in some traditional models (Berry et al., 1989), but that the adaptation process is complex (different options might be preferred and adopted at the same time) and relative, because the same strategies may not be adopted or the same options are not preferred when the interaction of the persons with others of different cultures occurs in different areas (e.g., in the area of work vs. that of religious beliefs). Third, and related to the above, in the

RAEM, seven areas of acculturation are distinguished that go from the most peripheral to culture—for example, work or employment (work procedures), the economic area (consumption habits and family economy), and political system and government—to those more central to, or the “hard core” of, their culture (e.g., family relations, religious customs and beliefs, ways of thinking, and principles and values), passing through intermediate elements (e.g., social relations and friendships).

The model predicts and verifies (Navas et al., 2005; Navas et al., in press) that the same acculturation strategies are not used nor are they the same options preferred when the interaction between immigrants and the host society occurs in the peripheral areas (e.g., work or economic) as when it affects the more private (e.g., family relations) or ideological or symbolic (e.g., beliefs and religious beliefs) areas. In the first case, both the strategies adopted (real situation) and preferred attitudes (ideal situation) are assimilation or integration. However, in the private or more central areas, immigrants prefer separation, and this is also the option that is carried out in practice in the host society.¹

Finally, some behavioral indicators are included in our study (linguistic practices, political participation or association, use of communications media, place of residence) for the purpose of validating the acculturation strategies that immigrants state they have adopted (real situation) in certain areas. The literature on the acculturation process has proposed some of those indicators as consequences of adopting a specific option for acculturation in the host society (Berry et al., 1989; Krishnan & Berry, 1992).

Thus, this work has twin main purposes: on one hand, to study the acculturation process in the host population of African immigrants in a region in the south of Spain (Andalusia) characterized by a high immigration rate, especially African, from both the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa; on the other, to demonstrate the separation of acculturation into different areas and the distinction between acculturation strategies adopted (real situation) and acculturation attitudes ideally preferred (ideal situation) by contact groups—two of the main characteristics of the RAEM—providing richer and more detailed information on the immigrant acculturation process in comparison with that offered by existing general acculturation models. To do this, the general acculturation attitude (a measure adapted from the classic model by Berry et al., 1989) and the acculturation strategies and attitudes (real and

ideal situations) are explicitly compared by the acculturation areas proposed by the RAEM.

According to psychosocial literature on the subject, we would expect the general acculturation attitude to be one of either integration or assimilation. However, the RAEM predicts that these preferences will change, just as the options for acculturation adopted and put into use, depending on the area of acculturation being dealt with (peripheral or central): maintaining assimilation or integration in the peripheral areas but changing to separation as we near the more central or private areas.

METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

In this study, the sample is conditioned by a population size difficult to estimate because a considerable part of the immigrants in Andalusia are there illegally (that is, they have no documents or permits legalizing their residence in Spain). The location of immigrants, many of them not even in the census, is also a complicated task because of their geographic mobility and the substandard housing they occupy. All of this makes access to the population and random selection of persons to be interviewed very difficult. Therefore, any estimate of the sample size must be made using only official government data (Spanish Ministry of the Interior, 2003). In Andalusia, the region where the study was carried out, the percentage of foreigners with valid residence permits is 2.77% of the total population, of which 30.7% are African. Similarly, 3.9% of the total number of workers are foreigners legalized in Andalusia, and 31.6% of that figure are African (Spanish Ministry of the Interior, 2003).

However, as mentioned above, these data do not reflect illegal aliens in Andalusia (e.g., those without a residence or work permit). If the data from the census of the population that actually lives in Andalusia are taken into account, the percentage of immigrant population rises to 4.95% of the total population (Spanish Ministry of the Interior, 2003; National Statistics Institute, 2003).

Based on the official data from the population census, sampling was done by fixed proportional quota by place immigrants are from and by sex. A total of 813 interviews were conducted. If a random selection had been possible in our sample, the sample error would

have been $\pm 3.4\%$ for a 95% level of confidence, but because the selection of the subjects for interviews was through various immigrant and proimmigrant associations, it was done by quota (nonprobabilistic sampling).

Sample populations were mainly from Morocco (70.6%) and Senegal (10%). The rest of the people selected were from countries such as Nigeria (3.3%), Mali (1.9%), Mauritania (1.1%), Ghana (1%), and other African countries (e.g., Guinea, Togo, Ivory Cost, etc.; 12%). Distribution by sex was 610 male (75%) and 203 female (25%). The mean age of samples was 31.07 years, with a standard deviation of 7.4. Seventy-four percent of the participants were legal aliens (with residence permit, job, education, etc.), 15% pending finalization of the legalization process, and 11% illegal. Seventy-three percent of the participants had been in Spain for 1 to 5 years; the rest had been there for 6 or more years.

MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

The participants answered a questionnaire prepared by the researchers for this study. The questionnaire included several different scales and items to measure general acculturation attitudes, specific acculturation attitudes and strategies, behavioral indicators, and sociodemographic variables.

To measure general acculturation attitudes, two questions, based on the Berry acculturation model and adapted from Piontkowski and Florack (1995), were asked. These items were "people of my country should try to live in Spain according to their customs" and "people of my country should try to participate fully in the life of this society." Participants had to indicate, using a 5-point scale, the degree of their *agreement* (5) or *disagreement* (1). By combining the answers to these two questions, each participant was situated in a different type of strategy: integration, assimilation, separation, or marginalization (see Navas et al., 2005).

Four questions were used to measure specific acculturation strategies and attitudes (by areas of work, economic, political, social, family, and religious beliefs and customs and ways of thinking). The indicator of the acculturation strategies used (real situation) by African immigrants was obtained from the combination of the scores for two questions in each of the specified areas. In the first one, the respondent had to indicate "to what extent do you keep your own culture" in each of the specified areas. In the second

one, he or she had to indicate "to what extent have you adopted the host culture" in each of the specified areas.

The acculturation attitudes indicator (ideal situation) shown by immigrants was obtained by combining the score from two questions that are similar to those above. In the first one, the respondent had to indicate, "if you could choose, to what extent would you like to keep your own culture" in each of the specified areas. In the second one, he or she had to indicate, "if you could choose, to what extent would you like to adopt the host culture" in each of the specified areas. The answer scale for each question was from 1 to 5 (*not at all, a little, somewhat, quite, a lot*).

The behavioral indicators were evaluated with several items referring to linguistic practices at work, in the family, and with friends ("What language do you speak the most during the day in each of the following areas?"), the ethnic composition of the area in which the respondent currently resides ("In the area where you live, your neighbors are . . ."; answers from 1 = *all Spaniards* to 5 = *all immigrants*), participation in associations (Spanish or from his or her home country), participation in the Council of the Mosque, political participation in the host society (unions or Spanish political parties), and the use of communications media (Spanish or from his or her home country).

PROCEDURE

The questionnaire was given individually by 51 researchers, union workers, proimmigrant associations, and immigrants (all of them trained in using the questionnaire to collect data). The fieldwork took 5 months. All of the questionnaires were given in Spanish by interviewers who knew the mother tongue of the participant (in case it was necessary to clarify the questionnaire).

DATA ANALYSIS

The indicator of each acculturation attitude or strategy (general or specific) was arrived at by combining the scores on the two questions mentioned (5-point scale). Following Berry's (1989) model, the first question referred to keeping one's own culture and the second to the adoption of the host culture. Scores less than 3 points on both questions would indicate the adoption of a marginalization strategy/attitude (not keeping own customs and not adopting the

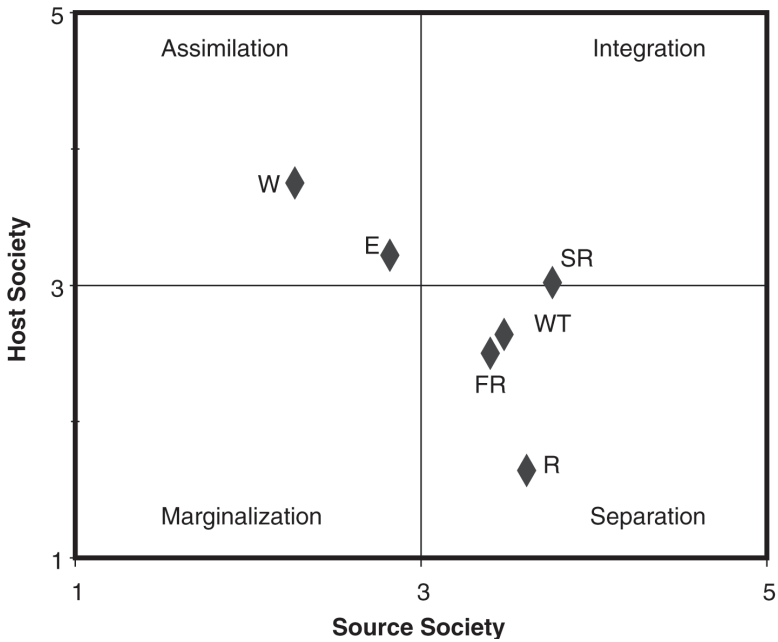


Figure 1: Specific Acculturation Strategies by Area (Real Situation)

NOTE: W = work; E = economic (consumption habits and family economy); SR = social relations and friendship; FR = family relations; R = religious beliefs and customs; WT = ways of thinking (principles and values).

customs of the host society). If the score on the group was more than 3 on the first of the questions and less than 3 on the second, the strategy/attitude would be separation (keeping without adopting). If the score on the group was less than 3 on the first and more than 3 on the second, the strategy/attitude would be assimilation (adopt without keeping). And finally, if the score in the group of the two questions was more than three, the strategy/attitude would be integration (keeping and adopting). This classification can be seen graphically in Figures 1 and 2.

Data analysis, of both general and specific (to each area) acculturation attitudes and/or strategies, consisted of the deviation from the mean with regard to a score of 3 in both questions. In the case of behavioral indicators, the percentages were analyzed on the basis of the acculturation strategy shown in each of the areas presented.

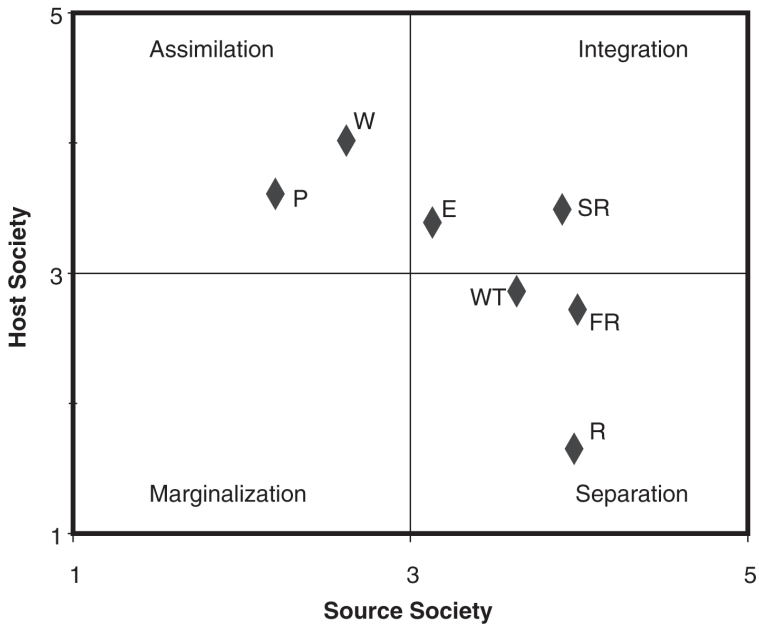


Figure 2: Specific Acculturation Attitudes by Area (Ideal Situation)

NOTE: W = work; E = economic (consumption habits and family economy); P = political and government system; SR = social relations and friendship; FR = family relations; R = religious beliefs and customs; WT = ways of thinking (principles and values).

RESULTS

GENERAL ACCULTURATION ATTITUDE

The average scores on the two questions used to measure the general acculturation attitude are more than the mean value of 3 (3.47 and 3.79, respectively), and the deviations from that value (3) are statistically significant ($t_{812} = 10.69, p < .001$; and $t_{812} = 21.02, p < .001$, respectively), which indicates a tendency of the participants toward the option of integration. These results are corroborated by the distribution of bivariate frequencies: 61% of the persons interviewed stated they keep the customs of their home society along with full participation in the host society; 25% of the participants expressed an attitude of assimilation; 8%, separation; and 7%, marginalization.

SPECIFIC ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES AND ATTITUDES

Acculturation Strategies: Real Situation

The deviation from the mean for the sample in the two questions on acculturation strategies (real situation) for each area can be seen in Table 1. These differences are statistically significant in both questions for all the areas, with the exception of the *social* area (social relations and friendships) in the question on adoption of the host culture. These results are classified by acculturation option in Figure 1, where the values obtained for each area in both questions are visually represented as a scatter chart (X axis refers to the home culture and the Y axis refers to the host culture).

The results show that African immigrants say they have put the separation strategy (real situation) into practice in the areas of family relations, religious beliefs and customs, and ways of thinking (principles and values). In the areas of work and economy (consumer habits and family economy), this strategy changes to assimilation. Finally, with regard to the area of social relations and friendships, there is no single strategy, and participants are half-way between integration and separation. The area of political system and government was not considered in the real situation, as foreigners cannot choose the political system.

Acculturation Attitudes: Ideal Situation

Deviation from the mean for the sample in both questions on acculturation attitudes (ideal plane) for each area may be seen in Table 2. The differences are statistically significant in all areas. This indicates that a clear option is desired in each area. These results are classified by acculturation option in Figure 2, where the values obtained in each area in both questions are presented graphically in a scatter chart (the X axis refers to the home culture and the Y axis refers to the host culture).

The results show that if they could choose (ideal situation), African immigrants would prefer separation in the areas of family relations, religious beliefs and customs, and ways of thinking (principles and values). In the technology or work and political system and government areas, the preference is for assimilation. Finally, with regard to social relations and friendships and

TABLE 1
One-Sample Test (Value 3) of Acculturation Strategies by Areas: Real Situation

<i>Area</i>	n	M	SD	t	df	p
Maintains home culture						
Work	782	2.27	1.19	-17.024	781	.000
Economic (consumption habits and family economy)	803	2.82	1.09	-4.664	802	.000
Social relations and friendship	808	3.76	0.96	22.312	807	.000
Family relations	769	3.40	1.24	8.950	768	.000
Religious beliefs and customs	793	3.61	1.27	13.593	792	.000
Ways of thinking (principles and values)	787	3.48	1.13	11.873	786	.000
Adopts host culture						
Work	784	3.75	1.10	19.176	783	.000
Economic (consumption habits and family economy)	790	3.22	1.04	5.887	789	.000
Social relations and friendship	807	3.05	1.04	1.349	806	.178
Family relations	754	2.50	1.10	-12.499	753	.000
Religious beliefs and customs	780	1.64	1.03	-36.768	779	.000
Ways of thinking (principles and values)	788	2.64	1.14	-8.897	787	.000

TABLE 2
One-Sample Test (Value 3) of Acculturation Attitudes by Areas: Ideal Situation

<i>Area</i>	n	M	SD	t	df	p
Would like to maintain home culture	805	2.20	1.10	-20.614	804	.000
Political and government system	772	2.62	1.29	-8.19	771	.000
Work	797	3.13	1.16	13.215	796	.001
Economic (consumption habits and family economy)	810	3.90	0.95	27.164	809	.000
Social relations and friendship	785	3.99	1.02	27.319	784	.000
Family relations	792	3.97	1.20	22.897	791	.000
Religious beliefs and customs	780	3.63	1.14	15.559	779	.000
Ways of thinking (principles and values)						
Would like to adopt host culture	801	3.61	0.98	17.606	800	.000
Political and government system	791	4.02	0.96	29.845	790	.000
Work	796	3.39	1.03	10.852	795	.000
Economic (consumption habits and family economy)	809	3.49	0.98	14.258	808	.000
Social relations and friendship	776	2.72	1.13	-6.877	775	.000
Family relations	778	1.65	1.07	-35.171	777	.000
Religious beliefs and customs	768	2.86	1.13	-3.511	767	.000
Ways of thinking (principles and values)						

economy (consumer habits and family economy), participants clearly prefer integration, which combines keeping their own culture along with adoption of the host culture.

Thus, it may be said that distinguishing acculturation areas not only provides more complete information on the strategies adopted and attitudes preferred by immigrants in the host society, but this information is also different and contradictory with regard to what was expressed in the general acculturation attitude questions (which, for most of the participants, is integration).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACCULTURATION STRATEGIES AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

The percentage of immigrants who say they have put into practice the behavior (or behaviors) related to each acculturation strategy predominantly adopted in the group is shown in Table 3, which compares immigrant responses on the real situation and their behavior in each acculturation area. Not all of the areas are related to a kind of behavior taken into account in this work, and therefore some of them do not appear in the comparison.

Assimilation, the strategy most adopted in the work area is related to use of the Spanish language at work in almost 65% of the sample. In the social relations and friendships area, the strategy most adopted is between separation and integration. This means that most African immigrants have some or many friendships among persons from their home country and have frequent contact with them. However, some of them (the integrated ones) also have a like number of relationships with Spaniards, and others do not (separated). These results agree with the behavioral indicators concerning use of language with friends (41% of the sample speak their own language in this situation, and 51% also speak Spanish) and with ethnic composition of the neighborhood of residence (28% say they live in neighborhoods where "almost all immigrants" live, and another 24% live in a neighborhood where approximately the same number of natives and immigrants live). The majority strategy of separation in family relations agrees with the use of own language with the family (almost 79% of the sample). The language is only one element in family relations, but in our opinion, the fact that the home language is kept for communication with the family implies the intention of conserving cultural heritage and transmitting it to the children. Finally, the strategy adopted in

TABLE 3
Acculturation Strategies and Attitudes More Used by Area and Behavioral Indicators

<i>Area</i>	<i>Acculturation Strategies More Used</i>	<i>Behavioral Indicators</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Work	Assimilation	Use of Spanish at work	65
Social relations and friendship	Separation	Immigrant neighbors (all or most)	28
	Integration	Use of original language with friends	41
		Immigrant and Spanish neighbors	24
Family relations	Separation	Equal use of two languages with friends	51
Religious beliefs and customs	Separation	Use of original language with the family	79
		Participation in Mosque council	20

the area of religious beliefs and customs (separation) is related to the degree of participation in an institution that is very important to Muslims (87% of the sample practice this religion), the Council of the Mosque. However, only a little more than 20% of those interviewed say they participate in this organization. Although this percentage is relatively low, it is rather important, considering that only persons of high standing can belong to the Council of the Mosque and that, furthermore, women may not belong to it.

DISCUSSION

The division of the acculturation process into different areas proposed by the RAEM provides much richer, more detailed information about the acculturation options (adopted and desired) of immigrants with regard to that offered by traditional models. Compared to the general integration acculturation attitude, which frequently appears in the literature (Campani & Catani, 1985; Kotic, 2002; Neto, 1993, 2002; Oriol, 1985; Partridge, 1988; Roccas et al., 2000; Sam, 1995; van Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1998; Zick et al., 2001) and is also confirmed in our own work, when immigrants are asked about acculturation options adopted and desired in each of the areas considered in the RAEM, the options are different.

The strategies shown by immigrants vary from assimilation in the more peripheral or public areas (e.g., work) to separation in the intermediate areas (e.g., family relations) and in the most symbolic, ideological, or private (e.g., religion, ways of thinking). In all of them, the strategy adopted coincides with the option desired (ideal situation). In the economic and social areas, a strategy of assimilation is expressed in the first and separation in the second, but the acculturation attitudes (desires) tend toward cultural synthesis, that is, keeping customs and friendships from the home country while adopting some cultural aspects and making contact with persons in the host country (integration). This last justifies the distinction made in the RAEM between real and ideal situations in the description of the immigrant acculturation process. The difference in options in one and another situation in certain areas may reflect the impossibility of putting this process into practice in the way immigrants desire. The reasons for this may range from lack of resources to institutional obstacles or negative attitudes of the native population (Bourhis et al., 1997).

In our opinion, these results show the need to reconsider the widely accepted results in psychosocial literature concerning acculturation attitudes, the preference of minority groups for integration in the host societies (e.g., Berry & Sam, 1997; Krishnan & Berry, 1992). The desire may exist on a general level or in certain specific areas, but our work shows that the division into areas sheds light on different acculturation strategies and preferences, and most of them have nothing to do with integration but rather with assimilation and separation.

This new acculturation model, the RAEM, includes important matters concerning the acculturation process that have already been previously recognized by some authors. Horenczyk (1996) points out that individuals tend to adopt different acculturation options in different situations and suggests that acculturation of the members of a minority group are better defined as a composite profile than as a single choice. Berry and Sam (1997) state that although there may be a general preference for an acculturation strategy, it varies depending on the area the person is in. Bourhis et al. (1997) also consider different areas in their model—keeping the culture, endogamy or exogamy, employment, housing rental—of acculturation attitudes, both for immigrants and for the mainstream population. In any case, we believe that the main contribution of the RAEM is not so much the idea of division by areas as is making those areas operable, along with the combination of real and ideal situations in the different acculturation options (strategies and attitudes).

Our results coincide partly with the predictions and results of other authors who distinguish between the hard core and the “peripheral core” of the home culture (Schnapper, 1988) or between the spheres of private and public actions of immigrants (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004; Berry & Sam, 1997). The culture is kept to a greater degree in the first with regard to the second. According to these positions, different cultures transmit a specific moral and a system of values that directly affect behavior, especially with regard to the social and family area—marital norms, concept of honor, relations between the sexes, and so on—and constitute the hard core of the culture. This is very hard to change, even after having lived for years in the host society. On the other hand, certain areas of life, such as work or consumer habits, located in the peripheral core of the culture, are not directly linked to the concept of sexual and family roles, which permits immigrants to establish a dichotomy between their work life and family—between the public

sphere and the private, this last being where tradition is kept most. In this sense, Horenczyk (1996) states that a person belonging to a minority group may adopt, for example, a separation strategy with regard to the choice of mate, assimilation insofar as dress, and integration in cooking preferences or in celebration of certain holidays.

The RAEM considers the acculturation process a selective or relative adaptation in which each person makes his own cultural synthesis, taking or rejecting elements of both cultures. At the same time, this takes place in a certain context (with the corresponding norms, ideologies, and mainstream discourse, prejudice, and tolerance toward minority groups, etc.) from which the person is not isolated. This context influences both the acculturation strategies adopted (real situation) and attitudes desired or expected for the future (ideal situation). Thus, a limitation of this work—although not of the model, in which they are included—was the absence of data on the host society the immigrants have come to, on their perceptions of the strategies adopted by the immigrants, and on their desires or preferences (attitudes) for these immigrants in each one of the areas studied. We are convinced that the consideration of both the societies in contact, both in the real and ideal situations, and with regard to the different areas in which the acculturation context may be divided, constitutes the key to obtaining a more precise evaluation of the intergroup relations in a given context. This will make it possible to offer suggestions for intervention depending on the specific area in which problems arise.

Note

1. The results found with the relative acculturation extended model are also extended to the strategies (real situation) that the natives perceive that immigrants put into practice as well as to the options that they prefer for the immigrants (ideal situation). However, this article deals only with the results obtained for the immigrant population.

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