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Status Loss in Relation to Immigrants' Integration and Adaptation in India

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Master Thesis – Applied Social Psychology

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January 2022
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Abstract

We examined the relationship between status loss and integration and adaptation of immigrants in India. Perceived acceptance and negative meta-stereotyping were expected to mediate this relationship. An online questionnaire was shared in various Facebook groups for immigrants in India (like expats, refugees and international students). The total sample consisted of 214 first generation immigrants from 49 different countries. We found that status loss was not directly, but indirectly related to poorer integration and adaptation through negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance, which partly supports our hypotheses. Status loss predicted more negative meta-stereotyping, which in turn predicted less perceived acceptance. Next, lower perceived acceptance predicted a lower host country orientation and less psychological adaptation. Thus, status loss (as well as perceived acceptance and meta-stereotyping) is a construct that is important to be taken into consideration for developing immigration and integration policies, and by people who work with immigrants. Future research should focus on the link between status loss and immigrant's integration and adaptation in experimental and longitudinal research (and non-western contexts) as well.

Keywords: status loss, perceived acceptance, meta-stereotyping, integration, psychological adaptation

Status Loss in Relation to Immigrants' Integration and Adaptation in India

Whenever we go to Afghanistan they tell us '*Oh you have come back from your country?*' and when we are in India, we are asked '*when are you going back to your country?*'. We are neither recognized as Afghans nor Indians - what can be more pathetic than this? (Ghosh, 2018, p. 1).

- *Shri Narendra Singh, Afghan refugee in India*

India is the second most populated country in the world with 1.37 billion inhabitants (United Nations, 2019a). It is a very diverse country with around 5.1 million immigrants (United Nations, 2019b), and many different cultures, religions, and languages. As most research on immigration is done in Western countries (e.g., Western Europe and North America) (Solano & Huddleston, 2021), it is relevant and important to focus on non-Western countries as well like India. In addition, developing countries host more than one third of the world's immigrants (OECD/ILO, 2018).

A concern of many receiving countries is whether immigrants integrate and adapt well. Research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2018) shows that insufficient integration can lead to many negative consequences, such as economic and political costs, and it may negatively affect social cohesion and the perception of immigrants. Factors that influence integration and adaptation are therefore important to examine and gaining this knowledge can contribute to the development of integration and immigration policies.

Previous research has shown that acceptance and meta-stereotyping are two factors that are important and related to the experiences of immigrants (Beerling, 2018; Gordijn & Hasham, 2020; Wendel, 2021). Immigrants may feel that the host society does not accept them for being culturally different or think that they see them in a negative way. It is very likely that this might have some sort of effect on their integration and adaptation. For

example, when immigrants expect to be seen negatively by host members they may avoid interacting with them (Finchilescu, 2005). Next to this, another relatively new concept called status loss may play a role here. Immigrants may feel like they have lost the status they had in their home country when their education, occupation, or qualifications are not accepted or recognized by the host country. For example, research has found that approximately 45% of highly educated immigrants (in EU/OECD countries) are overqualified for the jobs that they have in the host country or are even unemployed (OECD, 2018). In addition, the degrees of immigrants are often not valued as highly as the ones of native members on the labour market. We think status loss could be related to acceptance and meta-stereotyping. For example, when a doctor immigrates to another country where his or her qualifications are not recognized and therefore has to look for a lower status job (e.g., a taxi driver), this could be perceived as not being accepted or as being negatively seen.

Therefore, in this research we focus on immigrant groups in India, such as people who move to India for economic reasons or as refugees. To what extent do immigrants integrate and adapt to the Indian culture? Does it relate to feeling accepted and stereotyped? Could this be predicted by changes in status they may experience? We aim to answer these questions.

Integration and Psychological Adaptation of Immigrants

When people immigrate to another country, they may easily find their way in this new society but they could also face difficulties adapting to the host country. Adaptation is defined as the extent to which an individual or a group is able to change and respond to a new environment (Berry, 1997; Searle & Ward, 1990). These adaptations can be either short-term or long-term. A distinction is made between psychological and sociocultural adaptation (Searle & Ward, 1990). Psychological adaptation is the way people experience their new environment with regard to their well-being. If people adapt well (psychologically), they feel happy. Whereas people that do not adapt well, feel uncomfortable and unhappy in their new

environment. Immigration experiences influence how immigrants psychologically adapt to their new environment (Berry, 1997). Sociocultural adaptation refers to how people manage to interact effectively, find their way and feel like they fit in within the new society.

Related to immigration and adaptation is the concept of acculturation, which refers to the kind of contact that immigrants have with people in the host country. According to Berry (1997), there are different ways in how immigrants may acculturate to their host country. These are called acculturation strategies. Acculturation strategies depend on two factors: first, whether an individual values maintaining one's ethnic identity and characteristics, and second, whether they value maintaining relationships with the host society. In other words, whether one is oriented towards the home country and/or the host country. Based on these two factors there are four different acculturation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. In case of integration, people are both oriented towards the host society and maintain their own ethnic identity. Assimilation is when people only value to maintain relationships with the host society, and do not show interest to maintain their identity and characteristics of heritage. Separation is when people highly value to preserve their ethnic identity, but are not involved in relationships with the host society. Marginalization is defined as neither being oriented towards the home country nor the host country.

There is evidence that adopting an integration strategy has positive outcomes for the mental health of immigrants (Berry, 1997; Berry & Hou, 2019; Scottham & Dias, 2010). For example, Scottham and Dias (2010) found in a study with Brazilian immigrants in Japan that those immigrants who were integrated experienced both positive well-being and low acculturative stress levels, while the other strategies were less effective. Moreover, in a study by Berry and Hou (2019) on acculturation orientations and psychological well-being of immigrant groups in Canada, it was found that having multiple identities (e.g., Canadian identity combined with ethnic and/or religious identity) was associated with higher levels of

life satisfaction and mental well-being. Therefore, immigrants who adopted the integration strategy had better well-being outcomes than when an assimilation, separation or marginalization strategy was adopted. The question is what influences whether immigrants integrate and psychologically adapt well within the host society.

The Relation between Perceived Acceptance, Meta-Stereotyping and Psychological Adaptation

For integration to succeed, immigrants must have the feeling that they are free to choose how they want to acculturate and are accepted as being culturally different (Berry, 2001). Therefore, the host society needs to be open and should not constrain or force anything upon members of immigrant groups. On the other hand, immigrants also have to want to maintain their own ethnic identity. When integration strategies are used and the host society is accepting of culturally different people, immigrants may adapt better to the host country (Berry, 1997). More importantly, it appears that immigrants themselves must perceive that they are being accepted by the host society in order to adapt well.

Perceived acceptance by the host society can be defined as feeling respected and valued and being treated positively for who you are and to which (ethnic) group you belong. It is conceptually different from actual acceptance, as it is about how people perceive that they are accepted which may or may not be an accurate representation of the reality. If people do not feel accepted or even excluded this could affect their psychological adaptation and willingness to integrate in society (Otten et al., 2018; Cvetkovska et al., 2020; Wendel, 2021). On the other hand, research suggests that when minority immigrant groups perceive more acceptance from the host society, this is associated with more positive attitudes and acculturation orientation towards the host society, which then accounts for better psychological and sociocultural outcomes (Te Lindert et al., 2008; Te Lindert et al., 2021).

Feeling accepted by another group is likely to be related to the extent to which people feel they are seen in a positive way. Thoughts that people believe that another group have of their group are called meta-stereotypes (Gordijn et al., 2017; Vorauer et al., 1998). Indeed, research shows that perceived acceptance and meta-stereotypes are related to each other (e.g., Beerling, 2018; Gordijn & Hasham, 2020; Wendel, 2021). In a study among students who studied abroad, perceived acceptance predicted more positive meta-stereotyping (Gordijn & Hasham, 2020). Likewise, Beerling (2018) found that a specific form of social exclusion, namely language exclusion, was related to more negative emotions and negative meta-stereotyping. Wendel's study (2021) supports this idea as well as their findings show that low perceived acceptance predicted less positive meta-stereotypes. In the current context, if immigrants think that the host society sees them positively they have positive meta-stereotypes, whereas negative meta-stereotyping gives people the feeling that the host society sees them negatively.

The distinction in positive and negative meta-stereotypes is relevant, as research has shown that negative meta-stereotyping can have negative effects on well-being (Gordijn et al., 2017; Hinton et al., 2019). Having negative meta-stereotypes was found to be related to negative emotions, lowered self-esteem and more loneliness (Gordijn & Boven, 2009; Gordijn, 2010; Vorauer et al., 1998). People are also less likely to disclose themselves to members of the host society when they believe that they are seen negatively (Imai, 2017). As a result, this makes it relatively difficult to develop strong or significant relations with people from the host society.

Furthermore, negative meta-stereotypes predicted negative expectations about a potential interaction with members from the outgroup, e.g., black participants felt less happy about a potential interaction with a white person (Gordijn et al., 2008). Thus, negative meta-stereotypes may negatively influence intergroup contact. Vorauer and colleagues (1998) argue

that feeling stereotyped by the out-group may threaten an individual's self-concept during interaction with an outgroup member, and in turn may lead to avoidance of intergroup contact. Similarly, negative meta-stereotypes might increase intergroup anxiety, hereby trying to stay away from outgroup members (Finchilescu, 2005, 2010). In contrast, positive meta-stereotypes predicted more anticipated enjoyment of future interactions with outgroup members, due to more positive expectations (Vezzali, 2017). People may believe there are lower chances of being rejected and are therefore more interested in contact with outgroup members.

The question is when people are likely to rely on meta-stereotyping. Research found that people who feel powerless or are in a lower power position are more likely to use meta-stereotypes (Lammers et al., 2008; Vorauer et al., 2006). This effect was explained through perspective taking, i.e., people with lower power had a higher tendency to take the perspective of the outgroup on their own group (Lammers et al., 2008). Assuming that immigrants have a lower power position or may feel powerless, it could be suggested that immigrants are more likely to rely on meta-stereotypes.

Based on this, we suggest that when immigrants perceive lower acceptance from the host society, they may also think they are seen more negatively. Further, we argue that such negative meta-stereotyping can negatively influence integration and adaptation, since it is related to negative well-being, not disclosing oneself to the host society, and even avoiding contact with the host society. This could lead to less significant relationships with host members and lower participation in the host society and thus, to less adaptive acculturation strategies like separation or even marginalization. Some evidence for this idea has been found. For example, Matera and Catania (2021) found that negative meta-stereotypes of international PhD students in Italy were related to higher apprehension in communicating with host members, which in turn predicted lower psychological adjustment, lower self-

disclosure and lower contact intentions with Italians. This suggests that negative meta-stereotypes may hinder international students from integrating and adjusting well.

Furthermore, Wendel (2021) found that immigrants who felt their group was negatively stereotyped by the German society, were less oriented towards the host country and more oriented towards their home country. Moreover, their psychological adaptation was also lower.

But what influences whether you feel accepted by the host society? We suggest that status could play a role here. Especially if immigrants experience that their status is either lower or higher in India than in their own country, this may predict whether they feel accepted or not.

Experienced Change in Status

People who immigrate to another country have a certain perceived social status in their country of origin. When they leave their country, this status might change. The experienced change in status might be negative when people lose their status (i.e. status loss). This might happen, for example, when their education, occupation, or qualifications are not accepted or recognized by the host country. Experienced status loss may have negative consequences when immigrating to another country. The opposite is also possible. People may experience status gain when their status is increased due to immigrating to another country where they have more opportunities or access to higher education or higher status jobs. Further, when an immigrant's status (e.g., because of their prosperity, occupation or education) in their own country is seen as low, whereas this status in the host country is seen as relatively high, this may feel like status gain as well.

Status loss may have negative consequences for perceived acceptance and meta-stereotyping, and hence for how immigrants feel. There has been some research showing direct relations between status loss and well-being, as well as more indirect effect through

perceived acceptance and meta-stereotyping. First, Wendel (2021) examined the relationship between status loss and acculturation and psychological adaptation. They found that immigrants who lost their status acculturated more poorly to the host country. Status loss had a negative relationship with host orientation, which suggests that immigrants who lost their status were less likely to be oriented towards the host country. Furthermore, status loss was negatively related to psychological adaptation, which indicates that losing one's status may negatively affect adaptation to the host country.

These findings are comparable to research on immigrants' downward social mobility. Status loss is often called downward social mobility and status gain upward social mobility. When immigrants experience downward social mobility, this is related to experiencing negative emotions, and higher chances of poor health and depression (Alcántara et al., 2014; Euteneuer & Schäfer, 2018; Vaquera & Aranda, 2017). Hence, this suggests that immigrants who experience status loss are at increased risk for developing mental health problems. Moreover, changes in social status could be a postmigration stressor (Ahmed & Rasmussen, 2020). This can be explained by the expectations immigrants have of their life after immigrating. For example, immigrants might expect to get hired for a job they are qualified for in the host country. These expectations are not met when they actually find themselves underemployed, which can be stressful and psychologically damaging. Together this suggests that downward social mobility (which can be seen as conceptually similar to status loss) is related to poor mental health outcomes for immigrants. Therefore, in line with Wendel (2021) and the research on downward social mobility, we hypothesize that when immigrants in India experience status loss, they will integrate and adapt more poorly to the Indian society.

Secondly, in Wendel's study (2021) a negative relationship was found between status loss and perceived acceptance, implying that status loss was associated with less perceived acceptance by the host country. For this reason, we expect that immigrants who experience

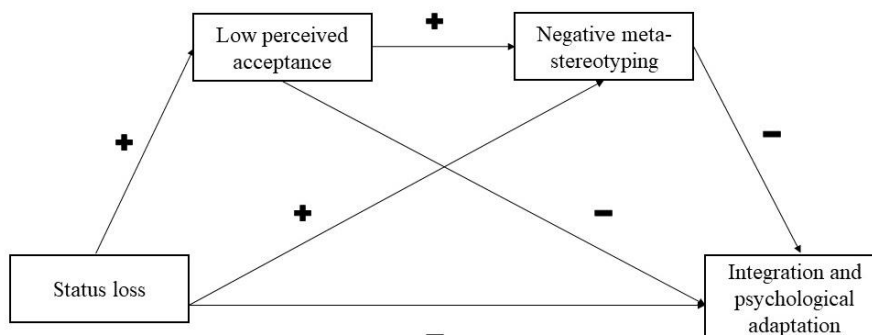
status loss feel less accepted by the Indian society. Moreover, from Wendel's (2021) results it further seems that status loss predicts less integration and less psychological adaptation through negative meta-stereotyping. In addition, previous research found that perceiving less acceptance predicts more negative meta-stereotyping (Beerling, 2018; Gordijn & Hasham, 2020; Wendel, 2021). That is why we hypothesize that status loss indirectly leads to lower integration and psychological adaptation through low perceived acceptance and negative meta-stereotyping.

Hypotheses and Research Model

We expected that when immigrants in India experience status loss, they will integrate and adapt more poorly to the Indian society (*Hypothesis 1*). Second, we hypothesized that experiencing status loss is related to feeling less accepted by the Indian society (*Hypothesis 2*). Third, we hypothesized that immigrants in India who feel less accepted are more likely to have negative meta-stereotypes, and therefore integrate less and adapt more poorly to the Indian society (*Hypothesis 3*). Finally, we hypothesized that experiencing status loss indirectly leads to lower integration and poor psychological adaptation through low perceived acceptance and negative meta-stereotyping (*Hypothesis 4*). Therefore, a sequential mediation model is proposed (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Sequential Mediation Model



Method

Participants and Research Design

The participants sample exists of first generations immigrants in India, such as expatriates, economic immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers or international students. Beforehand, we aimed to recruit participants mainly through refugee organizations, besides using Facebook groups and the social network of one of the researchers. However, getting in contact with these organizations turned out to be very difficult. In the end, most people were recruited through several Facebook groups for expatriates, foreigners in India and international students (e.g., 'Expats in India', 'Nederlanders in India' or 'Bangladeshi Students Association Of West Bengal, India'). In addition, some people were recruited through the social network of one of the researchers.

People were able to participate when they understood either English or Hindi and if they were at least 18 years old. Furthermore, people had to be at the age of 12 or older when they moved to India and had to be living in India or were planning to live in India for at least 1 year. According to a power analysis (Schoemann et al., 2017), we needed at least 195 participants to be able to test our hypotheses. In total 363 people intended to participate, but 97 people were not selected because they did not fulfil the pre-registered inclusion criteria (see this [link](#)). Through analysing our data we found that 52 participants answered less than 50% of the questionnaire ($n = 42$) or answered more than one attention question incorrectly ($n = 10$) and were therefore excluded. Participants did not receive compensation for taking part in the study.

The final sample consisted of 214 individuals (72.4% female, 27.6% male; 43.9% were between 25 and 34 years old, 29.9% were between 35 and 44 years old). Our sample was very diverse with people from 49 different countries from all over the world (see Appendix A). For example, the largest groups were from The United States (12.1%), The

Netherlands (7.9%) and Spain (7.5%). The participants lived in different regions in India, but most came from the South (46.7%), and lived in urban area's (88.8%). Most of our participants were expatriates as 45.8% relocated to India because of their job. Moreover, 16.8% of the participants relocated for education, 13.1% for reunification with a family member, only 3.7% for asylum seeking, and 20.6% selected other (e.g., accompanying partner for work to India, marriage/love). Participants moved to India in a wide range of years, from as early as 1986 to as recently as 2021.

The study consisted of a questionnaire (adapted from Wendel's' (2021) study) which measured the following variables: experienced change in status as predictor variable, orientation towards host and home country (to measure integration) and psychological adaptation as dependent variables, and perceived acceptance and negative meta-stereotyping as mediating variables. The questionnaire was written in English and translated in Hindi by one of the researchers. However, the Hindi version was not used as all participants were proficient in English.

Procedure

This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences at the University of Groningen before data collection started. The questionnaire was designed in Qualtrics (<https://www.qualtrics.com>). The study was presented as a questionnaire to gain insight into the experiences of immigrants in India.

First, participants had to sign the informed consent in which it was emphasized that their participation is voluntary, their responses are confidential and that they could stop with the questionnaire at any moment. When participants agreed to participate, a few demographic questions were asked, also to make sure we would only include participants that met the inclusion criteria. That is, demographic questions were asked regarding their gender, age range, country of origin, residence in India, duration of stay in India and reasons for

immigration. After this, experienced change in status was measured, followed by perceived acceptance, meta-stereotyping, psychological adaptation and home and host country orientation (integration) respectively. For exploratory reasons, contact with other people and stereotyping were measured as well.¹ We included three attention checks throughout the questionnaire. Lastly, the participants were debriefed, had the possibility to send questions, complaints or receive further information by emailing the researchers and were thanked for their participation. See Appendix B for the entire questionnaire.

Measurements

Experienced Change in Status

To measure experienced change in status (i.e. status loss or status gain) we used the same measure as Wendel (2021): a figurative social ladder developed by Kraus et al. (2010). The ladder consists of 10 rungs that each represent where people stand in society regarding their perceived social status. It was explained that people who stand at the top of the ladder are the best off “have the most money, highest degree of schooling, the best jobs, and the most respect”, whereas at the bottom of the ladder are people who are the worst off “have the least money, little or no education, no jobs or jobs that no one wants and the least respect”. Participants had to imagine that the ladder represented how society in both their home country and India was set up. First, they had to rate their position or their family’s position on the ladder when they lived in their home country relative to other people in their country. Next, they had to rate their current position in India relative to other people in India. Participants had to answer on a 10-point Likert scale (1= *at the bottom of the ladder*, 10 = *at the top of the ladder*). The perceived social status in India is subtracted from perceived social status in home country, so that a positive score indicates status loss, a negative score indicates status gain,

¹ However, we ended up not using these exploratory variables for our analyses. Next to this, two other variables (perceived social status and perceived cultural distance) were measured for the Master thesis project of Imsumenla Pongener.

and a score of 0 indicates no change in status. Thus, scoring higher means experiencing more status loss.

Perceived Acceptance

To measure perceived acceptance we used two items adapted from Wendel (2021) (e.g., “In general, I feel accepted by the Indian society” and “In general, I feel excluded from the Indian society”) and three items adapted from Wiley et al. (2013) (e.g., “I feel respected by the Indian society”). All items were measured with a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*) and the scale had a Cronbach's α of .87. Two items were reverse recoded.

Meta-Stereotyping

Meta-stereotyping was measured by asking participants to indicate whether they thought that people in India think that people from their country are *honest, competent, warm, educated, kind, trustworthy, wealthy, intelligent* (e.g., “In general, I think that people from India think that people from my country are warm”, Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$). The traits were taken from Fiske and colleagues (2002) and two added traits by Wendel (wealth and education; 2021). The total scale consists of 8 (stereotypical) traits that were based on competence, warmth, morality, wealth and education. They had to answer on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*) and scoring higher refers to more positive meta-stereotyping. For negative meta-stereotyping this was recoded so that scoring higher refers to more negative meta-stereotyping.

Psychological Adaptation

A scale by Demes & Geeraert (2014) was used to measure psychological adaptation. The scale consisted of 10 items (e.g., “I'm nervous about how to behave in certain situations” or “I'm curious about things that are different in India”, Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$) measured with a

7-point Likert scale (1 = *never*, 7 = *always*). There are 6 (negative) items that were reverse coded. A higher score indicates better psychological adaptation to India and India's society.

Home and Host Country Orientation (integration)

We used two other scales adapted from Demes & Geeraert (2014) to measure integration. One scale measured 'home country orientation' with 4 items (e.g., "I hold on to my home country characteristics", Cronbach's $\alpha = .70$). The other scale measured 'host country orientation' with 4 items (e.g., "I do things the way Indian people do", Cronbach's $\alpha = .82$). Both scales were measured with a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). A higher score on each scale indicates a stronger orientation towards the home or host country orientation.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

We first examined the correlations between all variables (see Table 1). It was found that status loss significantly relates to less perceived acceptance ($r = -.193$) and more negative meta-stereotyping ($r = .246$). Furthermore, perceived acceptance is significantly related to less negative meta-stereotyping ($r = -.314$), more psychological adaptation ($r = .630$) and higher host orientation ($r = .295$). Negative meta-stereotyping is significantly related to less psychological adaptation ($r = -.154$) and a lower home orientation ($r = -.166$). In addition, psychological adaptation is significantly to a higher host orientation ($r = .340$).

Together, this suggests that status loss is significantly related to our mediators, but not to any of our dependent variables. However, perceived acceptance and negative meta-stereotyping do have some significant and strong relationships with our dependent variables. The two indicators of integration, home and host country orientation, are not significantly related to each other ($r = .10$). Most of the relations are in the expected direction (positive or negative), but it is surprising that negative meta-stereotyping is negatively related to home

orientation (suggesting that more negative meta-stereotyping orients people away from their home country).

When looking at our sample we see that most of our participants come from a higher status country (or they see India as a lower status country than their home country). This also means that most of our participants experience status gain, instead of status loss. To be exact, 64% of our participants experience status gain, 18.2% experience status loss and 17.8% experience no change in status.

Table 1

Intercorrelations Between Study Variables, Means and Standard Deviations

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------------------------|---|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Status loss | - | -.19** | .25** | -.08 | .05 | -.03 | -1.13 | 2.03 |
| 2. Perceived acceptance | | | -.31** | .63** | 0.05 | .30** | 5.20 | 1.18 |
| 3. Negative meta-stereotyping | | | | -.15* | -.17* | -.03 | 2.83 | .88 |
| 4. Psychological adaptation | | | | | -.13 | .34** | 4.59 | 1.11 |
| 5. Home orientation | | | | | | .10 | 4.92 | 1.14 |
| 6. Host orientation | | | | | | | 4.87 | 1.22 |

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Main Analyses

Hypothesis 1

First, we hypothesized that experiencing status loss would predict lower integration and lower psychological adaptation of immigrants in India (*Hypothesis 1*). We tested by means of a simple linear regression whether status loss predicted psychological adaptation. However, no significant effect was found ($b = -.042$, $t = -1.11$, $p = .27$, 95% CI [-.116, .033], $F(1, 207) = 1.23$, $R^2 = .006$). We further tested two indicators of integration: home country orientation (as an indicator of lower integration) and host country orientation (as an indicator

of higher integration). However, for both home orientation ($b = .026, t = .68, p = .5, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.051, .103], F(1, 204) = .46, R^2 = .002$) and host orientation ($b = -.016, t = -.39, p = .7, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.099, .066], F(1, 203) = .15, R^2 = .001$) we also did not find significant effects.² Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

Hypothesis 2

Further, we hypothesized that experiencing status loss would predict lower perceived acceptance (*Hypothesis 2*). Indeed, a simple linear regression revealed that status loss predicted perceived acceptance ($b = -.11, t = -2.87, p = .005, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.189, -.035], F(1, 212) = 8.22, R^2 = .037$). This suggests that the more status loss immigrants will experience, the less accepted they feel in India. Thus, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Hypothesis 3

Next, we hypothesized that immigrants who feel less accepted would integrate less (i.e., have a higher home country orientation and a lower host country orientation) and adapt more poorly through negative meta-stereotyping (*Hypothesis 3*). This hypothesis was tested with a mediation analysis using model 4 in the SPSS macro PROCESS 4.0 written by Hayes (2018).

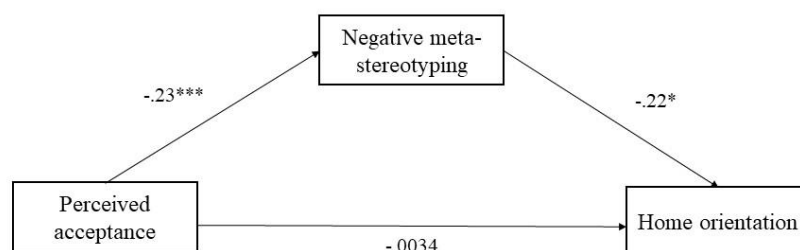
We first tested the model for *home orientation*. The overall model approached significance ($R^2 = .028, F(2, 203) = 2.87, p = .059$). Perceived acceptance significantly predicted less negative meta-stereotyping ($b = -.23, t = 4.65, p < .001$). Negative meta-stereotyping significantly predicted less home orientation ($b = -.22, t = -2.29, p = .023$). The direct effect of perceived acceptance on home orientation was not significant ($b = -.0034, t = -.048, p = .96$). However, the indirect effect of perceived acceptance on home orientation

² If we use the status in home country and status in India separately to predict our dependent variables, then we find no significant effects either. Thus, neither their perceived social status in their home country nor their perceived social status in India is directly related to the integration and psychological adaptation of immigrants in India.

through negative meta-stereotyping was significant ($b = .05$, LLCI = .0013, ULCI = .11). See figure 2. This suggests that even though there is no direct effect of perceived acceptance, perceived acceptance indirectly seemed to increase home orientation because it decreased negative meta-stereotyping. This is a surprising finding and in the discussion we will further explore why we may have found this effect. However, note that this indirect effect relies on correlations, hence no causal inferences can be made.

Figure 2

Testing Mediation of Perceived Acceptance on Home Orientation by Negative Meta-Stereotyping

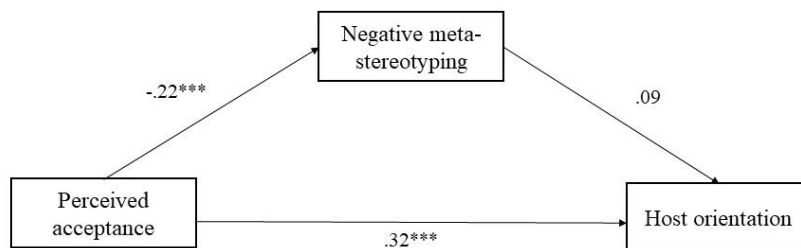


The overall model for *host country orientation* was significant ($R^2 = .091$, $F(2, 202) = 10.07$, $p < .001$). It was found that perceived acceptance significantly predicted less negative meta-stereotyping ($b = -.22$, $t = -4.39$, $p < .001$). However, negative meta-stereotyping was not significantly related to host orientation ($b = .09$, $t = -.93$, $p = .35$). The direct effect of perceived acceptance on host orientation was significant ($b = .32$, $t = 4.47$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, we found that the total effect of perceived acceptance on host orientation without negative meta-stereotyping in the model was significant ($b = .31$, $t = 4.39$, $p < .001$). The indirect effect of perceived acceptance on host orientation through negative meta-stereotyping was not significant ($b = -.02$, LLCI = -.067, ULCI = .029). See figure 3.

Together this suggests that perceived acceptance predicts a higher host orientation and less negative meta-stereotyping. Thus, perceived acceptance seems to contribute to integration, since it predicts higher host orientation. However, negative meta-stereotyping does not mediate the relation between perceived acceptance and host orientation, which does not support Hypothesis 3.

Figure 3

Testing Mediation of Perceived Acceptance on Host Orientation by Negative Meta-Stereotyping

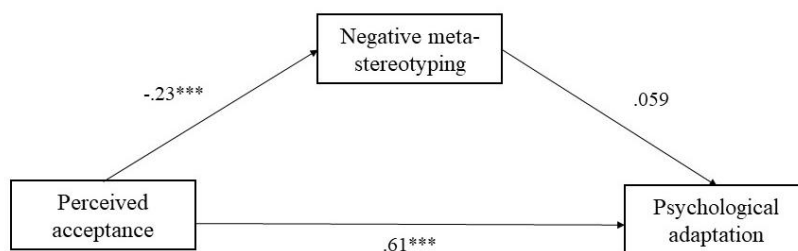


The overall model for *psychological adaptation* was significant ($R^2 = .40$, $F(2, 206) = 68.36$, $p < .001$). Perceived acceptance significantly predicted negative meta-stereotyping ($b = -.23$, $t = 4.69$, $p < .001$). Negative meta-stereotyping did not predict psychological adaptation ($b = .058$, $t = .81$, $p = .42$). The direct effect of perceived acceptance on psychological adaptation was significant ($b = .61$, $t = 11.34$, $p < .001$). We found that the total effect of perceived acceptance on psychological adaptation without negative meta-stereotyping in the model was significant ($b = .59$, $t = 11.67$, $p < .001$). The indirect effect of perceived acceptance on psychological adaptation through negative meta-stereotyping was not significant ($b = -.013$, $LLCI = -.05$, $ULCI = .021$). See figure 4.

Similarly to host orientation, meta-stereotyping did not mediate the relationship between perceived acceptance and psychological adaptation. However, the results show that the more acceptance one perceives, the more psychologically adapted they are.

Figure 4

Testing Mediation of Perceived Acceptance on Psychological Adaptation by Negative Meta-Stereotyping



To summarize, perceiving more acceptance from the Indian society is related to less negative meta-stereotyping (thinking that the Indian society thinks more negatively of you and your group). More negative meta-stereotyping is related to being less oriented towards one's home country, but not significantly related to host orientation nor psychological adaptation. Perceived acceptance is related to being more oriented towards India (the host country). Thus, when immigrants feel more accepted by the Indian society they also are more engaged with the Indian society. In addition, perceived acceptance has quite a strong relationship with psychological adaptation, as immigrants who perceive more acceptance from the Indian society feel more psychologically adapted in India. This means that they feel more comfortable and happy living in India.

In conclusion, Hypothesis 3 is not supported because negative meta-stereotyping does not seem to mediate the relation between perceived acceptance and our outcome variables

although there is an unexpected indirect relationship between perceived acceptance and home orientation through *negative* meta-stereotyping.

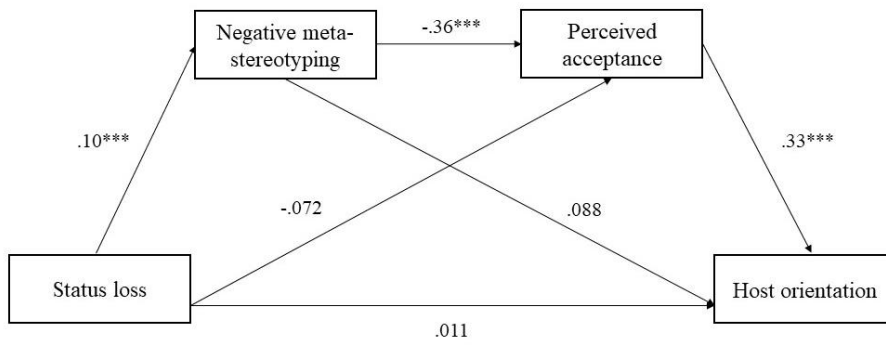
Hypothesis 4

Finally, we hypothesized that status loss would indirectly predict lower integration and lower psychological adaptation through perceived acceptance and negative meta-stereotyping (*Hypothesis 4*). However, as we found no support for hypothesis 3, it does not make sense to test Hypothesis 4. Instead, we explored a different mediation model: does status loss indirectly predict lower host country orientation and lower psychological adaptation, through negative meta-stereotyping, and hence, perceived acceptance (instead of perceived acceptance reducing negative meta-stereotyping as we originally hypothesized)? We explored this model with model 6 in the SPSS macro PROCESS 4.0 written by Hayes (2018).

The overall model with *host country orientation* was significant ($R^2 = .091$, $F(3, 201) = 6.7$, $p = .0002$). The direct effect of status loss on host orientation was not significant ($b = .011$, $t = .25$, $p = .80$). The total effect of status loss on host orientation without negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance in the model was also not significant ($b = -.016$, $t = -.39$, $p = .70$). However, the indirect effect of status on host orientation through negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance was significant ($b = -.012$, LLCI = $-.024$, ULCI = $-.0033$). See figure 5. This suggests that status loss may have increased negative meta-stereotyping, which reduced perceived acceptance, and hence, host orientation.

Figure 5

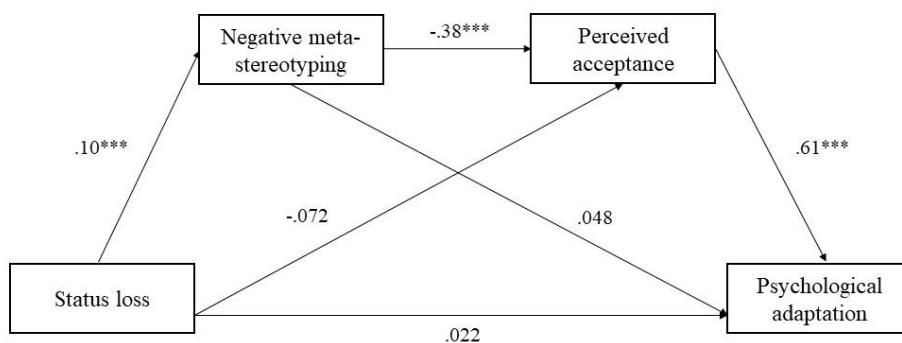
Testing Sequential Mediation of Status Loss on Host Orientation through Negative Meta-Stereotyping and Perceived Acceptance



The overall model with *psychological adaptation* was significant ($R^2 = .40, F(3, 205) = 45.63, p < .001$). The direct effect of status loss on psychological adaptation was not significant ($b = .022, t = .70, p = .48$). The total effect of status loss on psychological adaptation without negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance in the model was also not significant ($b = -.042, t = -1.11, p = .27$). However, the indirect effect of status loss on psychological adaptation through negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance was significant ($b = -.024, LLCI = -.045, ULCI = -.0079$). See figure 6. This suggests that status loss may have increased negative meta-stereotyping, which reduced perceived acceptance and hence, psychological adaptation.

Figure 6

Testing Sequential Mediation of Status Loss on Psychological Adaptation by Negative Meta-Stereotyping and Perceived Acceptance



In conclusion, we can say that we have found support for our explored mediation model. There is a significant indirect effect of status loss on host country orientation and psychological adaptation through negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance, meaning that status loss indirectly decreases host orientation and psychological adaptation.³ Status loss does not seem to directly predict home orientation, host orientation nor psychological adaptation. However, indirectly through our mediators status loss does predict host orientation and psychological adaptation. Thus, negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance are effective mediators in our explored mediation model. This suggests that experiencing status loss as an immigrant is related to using more negative meta-stereotypes(i.e., thinking that the Indian society thinks negatively of you and your group). In turn, immigrants may feel like they are not accepted by the Indian society, which may hinder them from integrating and adapting well.

Discussion

The aim of our research was to gain more insight into how immigrants experience their life in India. Immigrants may face difficulties when moving to another country. For example, they might experience that the status they had in their home country changed when they immigrated; that is, they may either feel that they lost their status (i.e. status loss) or that their status increased (status gain). We examined if status loss or gain was something that immigrants experience in India and how this is associated with their integration and adaptation, and whether this was mediated by feelings of acceptance and meta-stereotyping. The final sample consisted of 214 people from 49 different countries who were mainly expatriates, but a few international students, people who relocated for family reunification or their partner, and refugees as well.

³ After controlling for several covariates (e.g., age, gender, residence in India and reason for relocation), we still found the same effects. Thus, we can conclude that our findings are not attributable to those covariates.

First, we expected that experiencing status loss would predict poorer integration and psychological adaptation. However, we did not find support for this hypothesis. Next, we hypothesized that status loss would lower perceived acceptance. This hypothesis was supported by our findings, as immigrants in India who experience losing their status after moving to India feel less accepted by the Indian society. Our third hypothesis stated that negative meta-stereotyping would mediate the relationship between perceived acceptance and integration and psychological adaptation. We measured two indicators of integration: home country orientation and host country orientation. We did not find support for this hypothesis. However, we found a surprising effect that negative meta-stereotyping mediated the relationship between perceived acceptance and home orientation. Our findings revealed that perceived acceptance reduced negative meta-stereotyping, which in turn reduced home orientation. We did not find that the relationship between perceived acceptance and host orientation and psychological adaptation was mediated by negative meta-stereotyping. Instead, we found that the relation between negative meta-stereotyping and both host orientation and adaptation was indirectly predicted through perceived acceptance. That is, more negative meta-stereotyping predicted less perceived acceptance. In turn, low perceived acceptance predicted a lower host orientation and less psychological adaptation. This suggests that immigrants in India who think that they are negatively seen feel less accepted by the Indian society, and therefore adapt and integrate less.

For our final hypothesis we expected that status loss would indirectly predict lower integration and poor psychological adaptation through low perceived acceptance and hence more negative meta-stereotyping. However, as hypothesis 3 was not supported, this hypothesis automatically could not be supported either. Therefore, we explored a different mediation model: Does status loss indirectly predict lower host country orientation and lower psychological adaptation, through more negative meta-stereotyping, and hence, lower

perceived acceptance? We found support for this mediation model: status loss predicted more negative meta-stereotyping, which predicted less perceived acceptance. In turn, lower perceived acceptance predicted both a lower host orientation and less psychological adaptation. Hence, we can conclude that status loss, negative meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance are related to immigrants' integration and adaptation.

Theoretical Implications

Our findings show that experiencing status loss can be harmful, as is related to having negative meta-stereotypes and to less perceived acceptance, which in turn may harm immigrants' integration and well-being. Our study may thus add to the literature on status loss, meta-stereotyping, perceived acceptance, integration and adaptation of immigrants.

Status Loss and Status Gain

Status loss is a construct that has rarely been considered when predicting the integration and psychological adaptation of immigrants. Nevertheless, in our study it was clear that most of our participants experienced a change in their perceived social status (82.2%). More specifically, 64% of our participants experienced status gain, 18.2% experienced status loss and 17.8% experienced no change in status. Therefore, we may conclude that status loss or status gain is a real phenomenon that is experienced by people that immigrate to another country. So far research has mainly focused on the relationship between status loss (or downward social mobility) and well-being. For example, experiencing downward social mobility was related to more negative emotions, and higher chances of poor health and depression (Alcántara et al., 2014; Euteneuer & Schäfer, 2018; Vaquera & Aranda, 2017). Our findings imply that it might be of importance to also look at the relationship between status loss and integration and adaptation of immigrants.

Furthermore, our study suggests that experiencing status loss may have a negative effect on how accepted immigrants feel in their new country and they are more likely to think

that the host society thinks negatively of them. People who experience status loss may feel more powerless or feel like they are in a lower power position. When people feel powerless, they are more focused on how they are seen by others (Lammers et al., 2008), which could for example increase meta-stereotyping. If these meta-stereotypes are negative this could result in lowered perceived acceptance. Together this suggests that experiencing status loss could have detrimental consequences for immigrants' integration.

On the other hand, status gain might be positively related to immigrants' integration and adaptation. We found that status gain predicts more positive meta-stereotyping and is related to perceiving more acceptance from the host society. Previous research found that upward social mobility was related to lower levels of negative emotions (Vaquera & Aranda, 2017). Similarly, in a study among different subgroups of Latino immigrants in the US it was found that upward social mobility was not related to changes in physical health but did relate to lower levels of depression for Cuban immigrants (Alcántara et al., 2014). Hence, status gain could be beneficial for immigrant's well-being.

Perceived Acceptance and Meta-Stereotyping

Our research also suggests that how accepted immigrants feel by the host society, is directly related to their integration and adaptation. Thus, in order for immigrants to integrate and adapt well, it appears to be of importance that they feel accepted in their new country. This finding is in line with previous research (Otten et al., 2018; Cvetkovska et al., 2020; Wendel, 2021), which state that not feeling accepted or even excluded could lower people's willingness to integrate and adapt to the host society.

In order to actually feel accepted, our findings reveal that whether immigrants feel like they are seen in a positive or negative way may play an important role. That is, we found that when immigrants expected to be seen in a positive way they were also more likely to feel accepted, and hence felt better and integrated more. Interestingly, previous research revealed

that acceptance predicts meta-stereotyping and hence well-being and integration rather than the opposite direction (e.g., Wendel, 2021). The question is why we found this direction of the relationship between acceptance and meta-stereotyping, if previous research found the opposite. As our sample consists of mainly (higher status) immigrants that experience status gain, it could be that positive meta-stereotyping plays a more important role. Accordingly, people experiencing status gain might expect to be seen more positively and as a consequence may feel more accepted. Whereas people that experience status loss may feel directly rejected and/or excluded, which is why here acceptance may play a more important role, and as a consequence expect to be seen more negatively. It seems both directions are plausible, although this is based on correlation research. Thus, the causality of the relationship between perceived acceptance and meta-stereotyping remains to be examined.

Acculturation and Adaptation

Acculturation and adaptation are processes that immigrants will encounter while living in another country. As mentioned before, Berry (1997) states that there are different ways to acculturate (called acculturation strategies). Integration is believed to be the most adaptive acculturation strategy, hereby maintaining both the ethnic identity as well as adopting characteristics of the host culture. Thus, having both a high home country orientation and a high host country orientation.

In our study we looked at host country orientation (adopting the host culture) and home country orientation (maintaining the ethnic identity) separately. For host orientation we found that it was positively related to perceived acceptance. When immigrants perceive more acceptance from the Indian society, they are more likely to adopt characteristics of the Indian culture. Status loss was not directly related to host orientation (as we expected), but indirectly through negative meta-stereotyping and low perceived acceptance. Hereby status loss indirectly predicted a lower host orientation, which may hinder immigrants' integration. One

possible explanation for this finding is that when immigrants experience all these negative processes in the host country, they may not view the host country and its members positively and therefore it does not make sense to them to adjust or acculturate. This might even be more the case for high status immigrants, like expats, who then would rather stay in their expat community than communicate with host members. In contrast, the findings for home orientation were more unclear and difficult to explain. We found that negative meta-stereotyping decreased home orientation. Thus, thinking that the Indian society thinks negatively of your group was related to lower orientation towards the home country. This finding was not according to our expectations and previous research. We think this may have to do with not wanting to be associated with someone from your home country, and hereby distancing oneself from the home country by not maintaining home country friends, traditions, characteristics or actions.

Moreover, we also looked at psychological adaptation. This is an indication of how happy and comfortable an individual feels in their new environment (e.g., the host country). For psychological adaptation we found that when immigrants feel more accepted in India this is related to being more psychologically adapted. Similar to host orientation, status loss was not directly related to adaptation but indirectly through negative meta-stereotyping and low perceived acceptance. Losing your status can indirectly be associated with feeling less comfortable and happy in the host country. To conclude, our study has found support for the fact that acculturation and adaptation can be influenced by different factors, either facilitating or hindering integration.

Recent research questions the integration hypothesis of Berry (1997), by looking at the relationship between acculturation and adaptation. They question if the integration strategy is really the most beneficial, and if this indeed predicts the best adaptation (Bierwiazzonek & Kunst, 2021). They found that all correlations and effects in their meta-analysis between

acculturation (strategies and orientations) and adaptation were weak. However, they found that being more assimilated predicted better adaptation. Separation predicted less sociocultural adaptation over time. Home country orientation was negatively associated with adaptation, whereas host country orientation was positively associated with sociocultural adaptation over time. Correlations in our research support these findings (see Table 1). In addition, Demes and Geeraert (2014) found that international students in the United Kingdom were better adapted when their host orientation was high and their home orientation low. Taken together, this suggests that assimilation would be a more adaptive acculturation strategy than integration and that it might be helpful to look at home and host country orientation separately like we do. Furthermore, Bierwiazzonek and Kunst (2021) suggest that the role of acculturation for adaptation might be smaller than suggested by Berry (1997). Therefore, it could be suggested to study acculturation and adaptation separately, as well as in relation to each other.

Practical Implications

Our study suggests that losing one's status can have negative implications for immigrant's well-being and integration. Therefore, our findings can be of importance for people that work with immigrants. For example, therapists who have immigrants as clients (such as refugees), should know that factors like status loss and perceived acceptance might affect their client's psychological well-being. The same applies to people who work in asylum centres or refugee organizations, and thus have contact with immigrants on a daily basis. People who develop and implement immigration and integration policies may also benefit from the findings of our study. They should be aware of the fact that status loss is something that immigrants can experience and how this is related to their integration and adaptation. Especially for refugees that have fled their country and lost everything they had. Furthermore,

the results of this research can be relevant for the development of interventions that aim to facilitate the integration of immigrants.

While our study was focused on immigrants in India, our research findings may be useful for other immigration contexts as well. Especially since Wendel (2021) did a similar research in Germany, a Western country, and found that the same constructs (status loss, meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance) were related to immigrant's integration and adaptation.

Unexpected Findings

Since not all of our hypotheses were supported and we found some unexpected findings, our research still leaves some open questions. For example, why did we not find a direct relationship between status loss and integration and adaptation? Why did we find that perceived acceptance indirectly increased home orientation through negative meta-stereotyping? Why is negative meta-stereotyping not directly related to host orientation and psychological adaptation? We will now further explore these unexpected findings.

As just mentioned, our first hypothesis was not supported, as there was no significant direct relation between status loss and the outcome variables. However, Wendel (2021) did find a direct relationship between status loss and acculturation and adaptation. Their findings showed that immigrants who lost their status were less likely to be oriented towards the host country and were less psychologically adapted. Hence, our findings are contradictory. Perhaps this can be explained by the difference between our research samples. Wendel's participants sample existed mainly of people who immigrated to Germany, a country that is seen as having a high status, and many of the participants experienced status loss. However, our sample existed mainly of people who immigrated to India, a country that is seen as having a relatively lower status, and many of the participants experienced status gain. Perhaps status loss, compared to status gain, is more directly related to people's well-being. People that lose their

status are suddenly seen as less. Moreover, people may have important (negative) reasons for immigrating such as that they live in poverty or have to flee because of religion or political persecution in their home country. These aspects are likely to negatively relate to immigrants' well-being. However, in our study most participants are expats and did not have such negative reasons for their relocation to India (they relocated for work). Therefore, status gain may not be that relevant or have such a strong direct impact on integration and adaptation.

Moreover, our findings revealed that negative meta-stereotyping mediated the relationship between perceived acceptance and home orientation (*Hypothesis 3*). Perceived acceptance reduced negative meta-stereotyping, which in turn reduced home orientation. Thus, perceived acceptance indirectly seemed to increase home orientation because it decreased negative meta-stereotyping. This suggests that perceiving more acceptance from the Indian society indirectly orients immigrants towards their home country. Perhaps feeling more accepted as someone from your home country, makes you appreciate your own home country more as well. On the other hand, negative meta-stereotyping was negatively related to home orientation. This suggests that thinking that the Indian society sees your group (from your home country) more negatively, orients you away from your home country. For example, a Dutch immigrant may think 'Indians think negatively of Dutch immigrants, therefore I do not want to be associated with a Dutch immigrant'. As a result, distancing oneself from the home country by not maintaining home country friends, traditions, characteristics or actions. However, our finding is not in line with what Wendel (2021) found. They found that negative meta-stereotyping was related to being more oriented towards the home country. Possibly this could be explained by the difference in status between our participants, since Wendel had mostly low status participants and our study mostly high status participants. Perhaps low status immigrants are more dependent on their home country, whereas high status immigrants are more independent and can rely more on themselves rather than needing the support from

their home country. Another explanation could be that low status immigrants rely more on negative meta-stereotypes and therefore these have a bigger effect on their home orientation (Gordijn & Hesham, 2020; Lammers et al., 2008).

In addition, we found that negative meta-stereotyping did not have a direct significant relationship with host orientation and psychological adaptation. This indicates that when you feel that you are negatively seen by the host society, this is not directly associated with lower host orientation and lower adaptation. This is not consistent with Wendel's findings (2021), who did find that negative meta-stereotyping predicted poor psychological adaptation and lower host orientation. Instead, we found that perceived acceptance was directly related to host orientation and psychological adaptation. It could be that we did not find a direct relationship between negative meta-stereotyping and host orientation and adaptation, because we did not measure a specific meta-stereotype. Namely, we measured several positive meta-stereotypes ("In general, I think that people in India think that people from my country are: honest, competent, warm, educated, kind, trustworthy, wealthy, intelligent) and computed an average score (and recoded this for negative meta-stereotyping). Thus, we measured an overall negative or positive expected evaluation of the outgroup about your group. This is similar to perceived acceptance, but on a group level instead of an individual level. For that reason it might make more sense that when you think that your group is negatively seen, you (as an individual) feel less accepted and therefore are more poorly psychologically adapted and less oriented towards the host country. Another possible explanation might be that people do not identify that much with people from their own home country, and therefore these negative meta-stereotypes might not have that much of an influence on their host orientation or psychological adaptation. They may feel like these negative meta-stereotypes do not apply to them personally. It could also be that meta-stereotypes overlap with self-stereotypes. Thus, people may think negative about their home country, next to thinking that others think

negatively of their group. This might be another reason why we have not found a direct relationship between negative meta-stereotyping and psychological adaptation and host orientation.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Although we have found some interesting results, there are also some limitations of the current research. First of all, our study is based on correlational data and therefore we cannot draw conclusions about the causality of the relationships between our measured variables. We tested a certain order in which our variables are related to each other. Namely, that status loss is related to more negative meta-stereotyping and lower acceptance, in turn decreasing host orientation and psychological adaptation. However, the opposite order cannot be ruled out. For example, host orientation may also be related to perceiving more acceptance and more positive meta-stereotyping. When immigrants adopt more characteristics of the host culture, the host society might be more acceptive of these immigrants. In turn, immigrants may perceive that they are more accepted and more positively seen. Whether this is related to status loss as an outcome seems unlikely, because the recognition of qualifications or education level by the host country is not really dependent on whether you feel accepted and positively seen by the host society. Hence, we believe the order that we tested is more plausible (with status loss as a predictor rather than the outcome). Future research should examine the causality by doing experimental and longitudinal research.

In addition, our sample existed mainly of high status participants who experienced status gain in India ($n = 137$), whereas a smaller part of our sample experienced status loss ($n = 39$) or no change in status ($n = 38$). Beforehand, we hoped to reach more people from lower status countries (for example, refugees from neighbouring countries, like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar etc.) with our research. Unfortunately, this group turned out to be difficult to reach and to get in contact with. For future research it would be interesting to

collect a participant's sample that exists of one group experiencing status loss and the other group experiencing status gain, and to compare the two.

Another limitation in this study is that we were not able to reach certain groups of people due to the online nature of the study. For example, people who do not have access to the internet could not be reached. On the other hand, we were able to collect a very diverse participant's sample with people from all over the world through our online study. The question remains if our sample is representative of the immigrant population in India, since most people in our sample are expats which means we lack in other groups like international students and refugees. Therefore, our findings might be better generalizable to the expat community in India instead of the whole immigrant community in India.

Conclusion

To conclude, our research has found support for the fact that status loss or gain is something that immigrants may experience when moving to another country. We found that when immigrants experience status loss rather than gain they are less likely to feel accepted by the host society. Moreover, status loss indirectly relates to poorer integration and adaptation, through more negative meta-stereotyping, and in turn, lower perceived acceptance. Therefore, our study showed that constructs like status loss, meta-stereotyping and perceived acceptance could be of importance when you look at the integration and adaptation of immigrants. Literature on these constructs in relation to each other is scarce, making these findings relevant and important. However, more research needs to be done to examine causal relationships and explore open questions. Finding answers to these questions and gaining more knowledge on these constructs can help to understand what immigrants go through and can contribute to the development of immigration and integration policies.

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Appendix A

| Country of origin | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| Afghanistan | 2 | 0.9 |
| Australia | 1 | 0.5 |
| Austria | 1 | 0.5 |
| Bangladesh | 8 | 3.7 |
| Belarus | 1 | 0.5 |
| Belgium | 1 | 0.5 |
| Bhutan | 2 | 0.9 |
| Brazil | 5 | 2.3 |
| Burma | 1 | 0.5 |
| Canada | 5 | 2.3 |
| Czech Republic | 5 | 2.3 |
| Egypt | 1 | 0.5 |
| El Salvador | 1 | 0.5 |
| France | 11 | 5.1 |
| Germany | 6 | 2.8 |
| Greece | 1 | 0.5 |
| Hong Kong | 1 | 0.5 |
| Indonesia | 1 | 0.5 |
| Iran | 1 | 0.5 |
| Ireland | 1 | 0.5 |
| Italy | 5 | 2.3 |
| Japan | 2 | 0.9 |
| Kazakhstan | 1 | 0.5 |
| Latvia | 1 | 0.5 |
| Mexico | 1 | 0.5 |
| Mongolia | 3 | 1.4 |
| Myanmar | 1 | 0.5 |
| Nepal | 6 | 2.8 |
| Norway | 1 | 0.5 |
| Poland | 3 | 1.4 |
| Portugal | 3 | 1.4 |
| Russia | 7 | 3.3 |
| Singapore | 1 | 0.5 |
| South Africa | 4 | 1.9 |
| South Korea | 1 | 0.5 |
| Spain | 16 | 7.5 |
| Sri Lanka | 7 | 3.3 |
| Sweden | 11 | 5.1 |
| Switzerland | 3 | 1.4 |
| Syria | 11 | 5.1 |
| Taiwan | 6 | 2.8 |
| Thailand | 1 | 0.5 |
| The Netherlands | 17 | 7.9 |
| The United Kingdom | 13 | 6.1 |
| Ukraine | 3 | 1.4 |
| United States | 26 | 12.1 |
| Uzbekistan | 1 | 0.5 |

| | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|
| Vietnam | 1 | 0.5 |
| Zimbabwe | 1 | 0.5 |
| Total | 214 | 100 |

Appendix B

Questionnaire

Informed consent

“Immigration experiences in India”

In this research we want to study how immigrants experience their life in India. We would like to gain more insight into what challenges and opportunities immigrants may come across, and how they feel about living in India. We will first ask for your consent to participate in this research. If you agree to participate in our study, you will automatically be redirected to the questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

This research is carried out by Master students of the University of Groningen in the Netherlands, and meets the ethical guidelines of the University of Groningen. We believe there are little to no risks associated with participating in this study. By agreeing to participate in this study you understand the following:

1. I have the right to receive a copy of this informed consent form by taking a screenshot of this page or asking the researcher for a copy (send an email to i.pongener@student.rug.nl).
2. My participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from this study at any moment without having to give a reason and without any negative consequences.
3. I am allowed to refuse to answer any questions that I do not wish to answer. I do not have to provide any reason for this and this does not have any negative consequences.
4. My responses are confidential and will not be shared with anyone besides the research team. All my responses will be securely stored and are only accessible to the researchers.
5. After completing the questionnaire, I will receive more information on the purpose of this research.

Do you agree to participate in this study (if you don't want to participate, click no and you will leave the questionnaire)?

- Yes, I want to participate
- No, I do not want to participate

Demographic questions

First, we would like you to answer some questions about yourself.

I am

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

How old are you?

- 18 - 24
- 25 - 34
- 35 - 44
- 45 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 +

My home country (where I was born and/or raised in) is.....

(if you have lived in multiple countries, please select the country that feels most like your home country)

[open answer]

In what kind of area do you live in India?

- Urban
- Rural

In which region of India do you live?

- North
- West
- South
- East

Please indicate the date (year) when you relocated to India.

[open answer]

Please indicate the reason for your relocation to India:

- Education
- Job
- Reunification with a family member
- Asylum seeking
- Other (please indicate; open answer)

Perceived Cultural Difference

Now please think about your home country and India. Think about the differences and similarities between these countries. Rate for each of the factors the extent to which your home country is similar or different from India and use the answer scale to rate this (from 1 = very similar to 7 = very different).

In your opinion, how different or similar are these two countries in terms of:

- Social environment (e.g., size of the community, pace of life, noise)
- Living (e.g., hygiene, sleeping practices, how safe you feel)
- Food and eating (e.g., what food is eaten, how food is eaten, time of meals)
- Family life (e.g., how close family members are, how much time family spend together)
- Social norms (e.g., how to behave in public, style of clothes, what people think is funny)
- Values and beliefs (e.g., what people think about religion and politics, what people think is right or wrong)
- Please choose 'somewhat different' as an answer (this is an attention check)
- People (e.g., how friendly people are, how stressed or relaxed people are, attitudes toward foreigners)
- Language (e.g., learning the language, understanding people, making yourself understood)

7-point Likert scale (1 = very similar, 7 = very different)

Perceived Social Status

Now, think about both your home country and India in relation to each other. Does India in your perception score lower or higher on these factors than your country? Estimate for each of the factors the extent to which India in your opinion scores lower or higher than your country (from 1 = India much lower than my country to, 5 = India much higher than my country)

How do you estimate India on the following factors in comparison to your home country?

- Prosperity
- Quality of education
- Quality of life

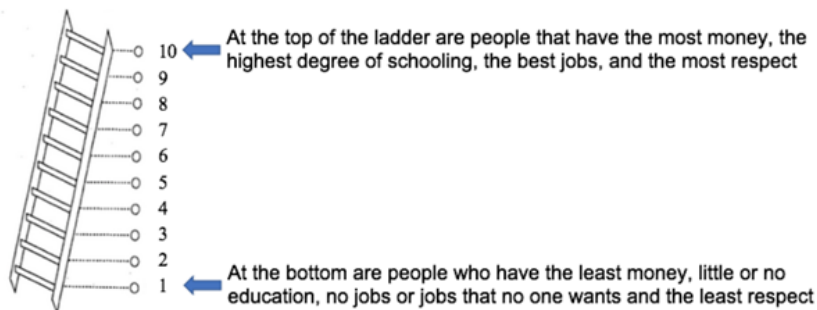
- Economic development

5-point Likert scale (1 = India much lower than my country, 5 = India much higher than my country)

Status Loss

Now, please think back to when you still lived in your home country.

Imagine that this ladder is a picture of how the society in your home country was set up.



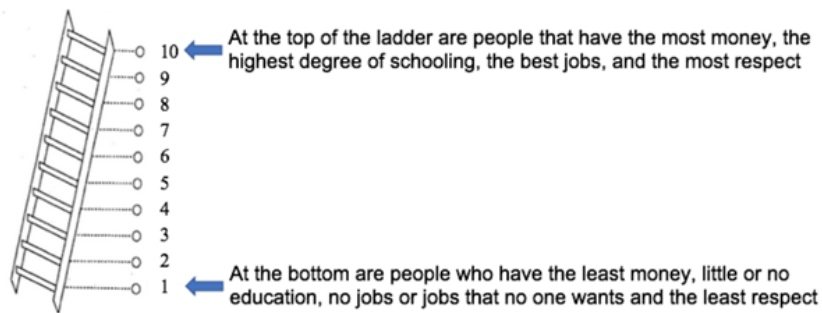
When you lived in your home country, what was your position (or the position of your family if you were still a child when you lived there) on the ladder relative to other people in your home country?

In my HOME COUNTRY my (family's) position was...

10-point Likert scale (1 = at the bottom of the ladder, 10 = at the top of the ladder)

Now, think about yourself being in India.

Imagine that this ladder is a picture of how the society in India is set up.



Where would you place yourself on this ladder when you think of your current position in India relative to other people in India?

In INDIA I am....

10-point Likert scale (1 = at the bottom of the ladder, 10 = at the top of the ladder)

Perceived Acceptance

Now, think about your interactions with other people in India and please answer the following questions regarding these experiences. Do people in India make you feel accepted? Or have interactions with people in India given you the feeling that you were being excluded?

Estimate for each statement to what extent you agree or disagree with them (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- In general, I feel accepted in India.
- In general, I feel excluded in India.
- In general, I feel valued in India.
- I am treated negatively in India.
- I feel respected in India.

7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

Attention Check Question

What is the capital of India?

Please select 'Kathmandu' as an answer, so we know you are paying attention (this is an attention check question).

- Mumbai
- Colombo
- New Delhi
- Kathmandu

Meta-Stereotyping

Now, please think about people from your home country. Further think about how you think they are perceived by the people in India. How do you think that people in India see people from your home country?

Please answer to what extent you agree with the following statements (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

In general, I think that people in India think that people from my country are...

- Honest
- Competent
- Warm
- Educated
- Kind
- Trustworthy
- Wealthy
- Intelligent

7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

Stereotyping

Now, please think about the people who live in India. What do you think of people in India?

Estimate to what extent you agree with the following statements (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

In general, I think that people in India are...

- Honest
- Competent
- Warm
- Educated
- Kind
- Trustworthy
- Wealthy
- Intelligent

7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

Psychological Adaptation

Please think about how you are feeling since you moved to India. Think about your experiences in India, and also think back to your home country. Rate these experiences and feelings on how often you have felt them (from 1 = never to 7 = always).

In the last 2 weeks, how often have you felt... (please give an answer to each statement):

- Excited about being in India
- Out of place, like you don't fit into Indian culture
- A sense of freedom being away from your home country
- Sad to be away from home country

- Nervous about how to behave in certain situations
- Lonely without your home country family and friends around you
- Curious about things that are different in India
- Homesick when you think of your home country
- Please choose 'never' as an answer (this is an attention check)
- Frustrated by difficulties adapting to India
- Happy with your day-to-day life in India

7-point Likert scale (1 = never, 7 = always)

Home country orientation

Now, please think about your home country and rate the following statements (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

- I have home country friends
- I take part in home country traditions
- I hold on to my home country characteristics
- I do things the way home country people do

7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

Host country orientation

Now, please think about India and rate the following statements (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

- I have Indian friends

- I take part in Indian traditions
- I develop my Indian characteristics
- I do things the way Indian people do

7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

Contact with other people

Finally, we would like you to think of interactions with people that are not from your home country and not from India. Thus, think of contact with people with other nationalities than your own nationality and an Indian nationality.

Please rate the following statements (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements:

- I have (regular) contact with people who are neither from my home country nor from India
- I like meeting people who are neither from my home country nor from India

7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

Debriefing

This is the end of the questionnaire. We are very grateful for your participation!

Your participation will help us to get an insight into the experiences of immigrants in India.

With this research we aim to investigate what factors may be related to how immigrants integrate and adapt to the Indian society. For example, we looked at cultural differences and perceived social status.

If you have experienced any negative feelings during the questionnaire, we would like to direct you to the following websites in case you would like to talk to someone or feel like you need (mental) help:

- <http://www.healthcollective.in/> (mostly in English)

- <https://www.thelivelovelaughfoundation.org/> (English and Hindi)

You can also call the National Health Helpline number of India (1800-180-1104 (Toll-Free), for any questions regarding your health.

Anonymity and confidentiality

Your responses are strictly confidential. In the event that you have communicated any information which may lead to your identification, we would remove it from the survey materials. All responses will be stored confidentially, will only be accessible to the research team, and will not be passed on to any third parties.

If you have any further questions, complaints or if you would like to receive the final results of our research, you can send an email to i.koelmans@student.rug.nl or to i.pongener@student.rug.nl (for emails in Hindi).

Thank you!