

# Patterns of Acculturation among Black, African Immigrants

Latifat O. Cabirou, Ph.D. <sup>1</sup> Asmita Saha, M.A. <sup>2</sup> Shirnelle Wilks, M.S.Ed. <sup>3</sup> Charlotte Jones, M.S.W <sup>4</sup>

Auburn University



## Introduction

- Acculturation (cultural adaptation to host society) and enculturation (cultural adaptation to culture of origin) has been reported to have both positive and negative influences on the psychological well-being of immigrants (Agbemenu, 2016; Du & Wei, 2015). However, the patterns of acculturation of Black, African immigrants, as well as its impact on their functioning remain understudied.
- Black immigrants in the U.S. encounter longstanding African American/Black culture, as well as a dominant European/White American culture. Thus, Ferguson, Bornstein, and Pottinger (2012) proposed a tridimensional acculturation model, capturing both mainstream culture and one/more ethnic minority cultures.
- The aim of the present study was to explore the relationship between acculturation to Black American culture, mainstream American culture, and enculturation and psychological well-being among Black, African immigrants to the U.S.

## Methods

- Data were drawn from 90 participants by contacting different community organizations. Participants were mostly men (51.1%) and the mean age was 26.6 years.
- **Measures :**
  - Acculturation Rating Scale for Jamaican Americans (ARSJA; Ferguson and Bornstein, 2012)
  - Social, Attitudinal, Familial, and Environmental Acculturative Stress Scale (SAFE; Mena et al, 1987)
  - Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, et al, 1988)
  - Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS, Diener et al, 1985)

1. Acculturating to Black American culture and (African) enculturation predict greater positive affect.
2. Acculturating to Black American culture predicts lower acculturative stress, and (African) enculturation predicts higher acculturative stress.

## Results

- Multiple regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between tri-dimensional acculturation (European Orientation (EOS), Black American Orientation (BOS), and African Orientation (AOS)) and subjective well-being. Age, gender, and generational status were covariates
- The model summary revealed that European Orientation, Black American Orientation, and African Orientation accounted for 19.2% of the variance in acculturative stress ( $R^2$  increase in step 2:  $\Delta R^2 = .162$ ;  $p = .002$ ). BOS ( $\beta = -.329$ ) and AOS ( $\beta = .419$ ) were the only significant predictors.
- European Orientation, Black American Orientation, and African Orientation accounted for 29.8% of the variance in positive affect ( $R^2$  increase in step 2:  $\Delta R^2 = .26$ ). BOS ( $\beta = .332$ ) and AOS ( $\beta = .310$ ) were the only significant predictors
- The relationship between acculturation/enculturation and life satisfaction and negative affect were not significant.

## Implications

- This finding supports the notion that multiple intersecting identities, especially minority-related identities (e.g., immigrant status) exacerbate stress (Binensztok, 2021).
- Individuals with greater African orientation may encounter more targeted experiences as a result of being seen as an outsider or holding an immigrant identity status (Thelamour, 2021).
- Findings emphasize the influence that access to Black and African American-centered social support resources has on experiences of acculturative stress among Black African Immigrants.



Scan the QR code to view tables & references!

Have any questions?

Contact: Latifat Cabirou

Email Address: [cabirou@auburn.edu](mailto:cabirou@auburn.edu)