



Expectations and acculturation: Further unpacking of adjustment mechanisms within the Russian-speaking community in Montreal

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Recent years have witnessed a significant growth in the Russian-speaking community in Montreal, Canada. However, little is currently known about the predictors of psychological adjustment in immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU). In this study we explored the expectations that this group of immigrants ($N = 271$) hoped to fulfill in their adopted society, the extent to which these expectations have been fulfilled, and the impact of fulfilled expectations on psychological adjustment. We found that the degree of fulfilled expectations was significantly associated with better psychological adjustment independent of personality traits, language proficiency, and acculturation. These findings contribute to the literature on cross-cultural adaptation of immigrants from the FSU and highlight the potential importance of expectations for the study of acculturation more generally.

Keywords: Expectations, Acculturation, Personality, Psychological adjustment, Immigrants

It is axiomatic that most, if not all, economic migrants have expectations when they move to a new country. They hope to improve their personal and familial financial standing, their career and educational opportunities, and their quality of life. Overall, congruence between pre-migratory expectations and post-migratory reality has been associated with better post-migration adaptation outcomes, including better psychological well-being (Murphy & Mahalingam, 2006). In a longitudinal study of Russian immigrants to Finland, expectations that were met in social domains were found to be associated with better psychological adjustment (Mähönen, Leinonen, & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2013).

According to Statistics Canada (2008), two thirds of approximately 220,000 individuals who immigrate to Canada yearly, report that life in the new country has met their expectations; however, the report does not specify the nature of these expectations in different groups of migrants. Moreover, systematic investigation on the relation between fulfillment of expectations and psychological well-being in Canadian migrants is lacking. Over the past years there has been a significant increase in the size of the Russian speaking community in Montreal (Statistics Canada 2006, 2011). No previous research examined the nature of expectations, and their impact on psychological adjustment in immigrants from FSU.

After the collapse of communism in 1991, the United States, Canada, Finland and other western countries have absorbed a large number of immigrants from the FSU. Nonetheless, research on Russian speaking immigrants remains relatively neglected in cultural, community, and clinical literature (Hundley & Lambie, 2007; Jurcik, Chentsova-Dutton, Solopieieva-Jurcikova, & Ryder, 2013). There are several important characteristics that distinguish this group, and shape expectations in the receiving society. First, most FSU immigrants constitute a non-visible minority group that migrates mostly for economic reasons (Hoffmann et al., 2006

Lashenykh-Mumbauer, 2005). They tend to be highly educated (Jones & Trickett, 2005; Niemi, 2007) and their expectations might be colored by aspirations for career growth and financial independence, much more than to escape war zones, persecution, or violence. However, together with low language proficiency and lack of recognition of their professional degrees and qualifications in adoptive countries, some immigrants fail to obtain desired employment (Jurcik et al., 2013; Niemi, 2007). Failing to fulfill expectations when migrating along with the harsh reality of underemployment in the adoptive country may contribute to low self-esteem, depression (Leipzig, 2006), and family conflict (Hundley & Lambie, 2007).

Other values and norms shaped by the Russian social and cultural context may also influence expectations. For example, informal social networks and family support are fundamental in the Russian culture (Jurcik et al., 2013). The extent to which social and family support are maintained

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has been associated with psychological distress in FSU immigrants in several studies (Ritsner, Ponizovsky, & Ginath, 1997; Mirsky, 2009). It is possible that many immigrants hope to fulfill expectations oriented towards immediate or extended family members who continue to reside in the country of origin.

Acculturative context has been shown to influence employment status and adaptation. For example, Russian-speaking Jewish immigrants from the FSU who settled in the Washington, DC area were more likely to be employed, less alienated from the American culture, and more satisfied with life than Jewish immigrants from the FSU who settled in New York City (Vinokurov, Birman, & Trickett, 2000). The authors concluded that limited access to welfare services and lower Russian ethnic density in the DC area might have provided the push for employment, leading to better integration. A different picture emerged for Russian-speaking immigrants in Finland. While many Russians migrate to Finland for family reasons (i.e., reunion, marrying a Finnish person), the majority of immigrants also have positive pre-migratory expectations concerning employment opportunities (Arajärvi, 2009). However, despite a remarkably high level of education, unemployment numbers among Russian immigrants compared to Finns are staggering (Niemi, 2007). Different patterns of socialization and acculturation have been discussed as obstacles to fulfilling their expectations for employment (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Perhoniemi, 2007; Niemi, 2007).

Montreal, the largest city and economic center of Quebec, is home to two mainstream cultures, French and English-Canadian, and high levels of French-English bilingualism. In addition to the increased complexity of navigating two mainstream cultures, immigrants in Quebec often find themselves facing the challenge of a bilingual context. Rudmin (2010) emphasized that acculturative stress might be exacerbated in this bilingual context via increased demands on metacognitive monitoring (i.e., monitoring for cross-cultural errors, miscommunication). In addition to the challenges of navigating the bilingual and bicultural context, immigrants in Quebec also struggle to obtain employment. The Quebec-based research group *Institut de Recherche et d'Informations Socio-économiques* (IRIS, 2016) indicated that in the past 10 years the unemployment rate for immigrants in Quebec has been nearly double that of people born in Canada. Thus, when compared to Russian-speaking immigrants in USA or Finland, Russian-speaking immigrants in Montreal might face additional acculturative stress stemming from the bilingual context of Montreal and reduced opportunities for employment. Greater acculturative stress and failed expectations for desirable employment might thus emerge as predictors of psychological distress.

Research emerging from cultural psychology contends that cultural environments shape a person's sense of self-

identity (Shweder, 1990). Migration to a new country can lead to conflicts between the established sense of self and the new cultural reality. The process of cultural and psychological change that occurs through interaction with other cultural groups is generally referred to as acculturation (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). While acculturation was earlier conceptualized as unidirectional assimilation to the mainstream cultural context, accumulated research suggests that bidimensional models might be superior to unidimensional ones (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). Operationally defined, bidimensional acculturation is the degree to which one identifies with the behavior, beliefs, and values of the *heritage* and the predominant *mainstream* cultural groups where the two dimensions are considered to be orthogonal (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000).

Studies using multidimensional measures of acculturation generally support the ecological assumption that acculturation is associated with improved outcomes within the respective cultural group. For example, orientation to the American mainstream cultural group among Jewish refugees from the FSU was associated with perceived support from American peers whereas orientation to the Russian heritage cultural group was associated with perceived support from Russian peers (Birman, Trickett, & Vinokurov, 2002). Russian-speakers have also been shown to benefit psychologically via acquired social support while residing in more ethnically concentrated areas in Montreal (Jurcik, Yakobov, Ahmed, Solopieieva-Jurcikova, & Ryder, 2015). Other findings have shown mainstream and heritage acculturation to be related to perceived competence within mainstream and heritage peer groups, respectively (Birman, 1998). These studies suggest that heritage and mainstream cultural orientations might offer differential benefits and depend on contextual setting (see Jurcik et al., 2014). In line with the aforementioned studies, fulfillment of expectations related to employment in the adoptive country is more likely to be associated with orientation to the mainstream culture, possibly via improved language proficiency, and increased social networks.

Another predictor of adjustment discussed in the literature pertains to personality structure. Personality traits influence how people interact with their environment and deal with stressors. Personality traits might serve as risk factors or buffers for difficulties with adjustment (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). In particular, low emotional stability (neuroticism) and introversion have been implicated in symptoms of anxiety and depression (Jylha & Isometsa, 2006). Poor psychological adjustment has been linked to low emotional stability, vulnerability to stress, and maladaptive coping (John et al., 2008). Hence, acculturative stress and possibly reduced social support may exacerbate the association between low emotional stability and poor psychological adjustment in migrants (Ward, Leong, & Low, 2004; Zhang, Mandl, & Wang, 2010). Extraversion, on the other hand, has been as-

sociated with assertiveness, enthusiasm, and sociability, and is a trait that can facilitate interaction with members of the mainstream cultural group, improving adjustment (Eap et al., 2008; Roesch, Wee, & Vaughn, 2006; Ryder et al., 2000; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001).

Moreover, bicultural contexts may place a higher demand on social interaction. In particular, the requirement to speak French in Quebec society in employment settings is often accompanied by situations where immigrants also have to function in English with some clients, colleagues, and acquaintances. High extraversion in this context might be particularly beneficial for acculturation and subsequent integration into both mainstream cultural settings. Although the importance of personality effects on acculturation and adjustment in bicultural contexts has been previously mentioned in the literature, empirical research on the relationship between these constructs remains scarce (Rudmin, 2010).

Symptoms of depression are common in immigrants due to the many different challenges during pre-migration, migration and post-migration (Kirmayer et al., 2011). Depressive symptoms may occur early in the trajectory because of migration-associated losses or later in the trajectory when expectations are not realized. Specifically, difficulties with the recognition of credentials, poor language proficiency, social and economic strain, social alienation, discrimination, and loss of social status may all be associated with depressive symptomatology (e.g., Beiser, 1999; Jurcik et al., 2014; Hollifield, Warner, & Lian, 2002; Lindencrona, Ekblad, & Hauff, 2008; Porter & Haslam, 2005; Tang, Oatley, & Toner, 2007).

The link between unmet expectations and depression has been well documented across many areas of inquiry, but few studies examined this association in the context of migration (Mossakowski, 2011; Reynolds & Baird, 2010; Xi & Hwang, 2011). Social psychology researchers put forward several theories that account for the association between unrealized expectations and susceptibility to depression. According to self-discrepancy theory, discrepancies that individuals experience between their actual and ideal selves may lead to negative emotions, including disappointment, sadness, dissatisfaction, and depression (Higgins, 1987, 1989). Large gaps between a person's actual self-states (i.e., their views of who they truly are) and their ideal self-guides (i.e., their hopes and aspirations) have been found to predict depression, and anxiety symptoms (Higgins, 1987; Michalos, 1985). Another perspective from social stress theory contends that failure to achieve an expected status is a source of distress that may provoke a psychological maladjustment. Specifically, unrealized expectations are understood as stressful non-events (i.e., the absence of a hoped, or the ongoing presence of an undesirable, situation) that lead to psychological distress (Drebing & Gooden, 1991; Nurmi & Salmela-Aro, 2002). According to this approach, unmet expectations for aspired personal and professional growth may be potent predictors of depressive

symptoms in economic migrants. The study of the role of expectations in psychological adjustment of immigrants in Canada is lacking and no previous research examined the relationship between the degree of expectation fulfillment and depressive symptoms in FSU immigrants in Montreal.

The present study is a follow-up to our study that we conducted to evaluate the role of social contextual variables (i.e., ethnic density, social support) on psychological adjustment of immigrant from the FSU in Montreal (Jurcik et al., 2015). The aim of the present investigation was to explore the nature of expectations and the interrelations between fulfillment of expectations and depressive symptoms. Specifically, the current study examined the expectations that immigrants from the FSU hope to achieve in their adoptive country, the extent to which these expectations have been fulfilled, and the role of fulfilled expectations in psychological distress, above and beyond acculturation styles and personality traits. Based on the literature review, we hypothesized that expectation fulfillment will be associated with acculturation to mainstream, length of residence, and language proficiency. We also hypothesized that there will be an inverse relationship between fulfilled expectations and depressive symptoms, above and beyond demographic variables, acculturation and personality traits of extraversion and emotional stability.

Method

Participants

The archival sample ($N = 271$) consisted of 208 first-generation FSU immigrants who completed an online survey in Russian and 63 immigrants who completed the survey in English. 68.2% of study participants were female; the average age was 34.21 and the mean length of residency in Canada was about 5 years. Approximately half of the participants did not identify with any religious affiliation (Table 1).

Procedures

The participants were recruited through various means, including Craigslist, local ethnic organizations, online forums, ethnic newspapers, and word-of-mouth. After obtaining informed consent, participants completed an online survey and were eligible to enter a raffle. Research materials were translated from English into Russian by a professionally trained translator (L.S.-J.) and verified by two native speakers (including E.Y.). Ambiguities were resolved through consensus between the translator, the first author, and a volunteer. As part of a larger study on immigrant adjustment, both language versions were made available online and participants had the option of completing the survey in either language. Jurcik et al. (2015) describe the procedure in more detail, and the current study used this archival data set. The university research ethics board approved the study.

Table 1

Gender, age, country of birth, years in Canada, marital status, religious affiliation, and language proficiency.

Variables (N)	
Gender (female, male)	185, 86
Age (years): Mean (SD)	34.2 (7.7)
Canada (years): Mean (SD)	4.9 (5.2)
Country of Birth	
Azerbaijan	3
Belarus	24
Georgia	2
Kazakhstan	16
Kirgizstan	4
Latvia	3
Moldova	41
Russia	94
Tajikistan	2
Turkmenistan	1
Ukraine	69
Uzbekistan	5
USSR	7
Status	
Single	41
Married/Cohabitation	186
Separated	13
Divorced	28
Not specified	3
Religious affiliation	
None	143
Christianity	112
Islam	2
Judaism	1
Buddhism	1
Other	3
Not specified	9
Language Proficiency (English: French)	
Very poor	25 : 15
Poor	4 : 4
Basic	28 : 23
Functional	55 : 108
Good	49 : 72
Very good	60 : 33
Native like	40 : 12
I am a native speaker	1 : 2
Not specified	9 : 2

Measures

Demographic questionnaire

The demographic questionnaire elicits information about age, country of birth, marital status, employment, education, heritage and mainstream language ability, and length of residence in Montreal, Quebec, and Canada.

The Vancouver index of acculturation (VIA) (Ryder et al., 2000)

The Quebec-specific modification of the VIA is couched within a bidimensional model of acculturation. The adapted VIA assesses heritage (i.e., Russian) and mainstream acculturation (i.e., French Canadian and English Canadian) on three 10-item subscales using parallel items. For example, the domain of ‘belief in values’ yields: “I believe in values of my heritage culture”, “I believe in mainstream English-Canadian values”, and “I believe in mainstream French-Canadian values”. The VIA items are rated on a 9-point Likert-type scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. Heritage ($\alpha = .86$) and mainstream acculturation ($\alpha = .85$ for English and $\alpha = .85$ for French) subscale scores showed good internal reliability. To obtain a single measure of mainstream acculturation, the highest item scores for either French or English mainstream acculturation were retained for the analyses.

Centre for epidemiological studies-depression (CES-D) (Radloff, 1977)

The CES-D is a 20-item scale that assesses psychological distress and depressive symptomology. The CES-D is rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (*rarely or none of the time*) to 3 (*most or all of the time*), measuring the frequency with which participants have experienced that symptom during the past week (e.g., *I thought my life had been a failure*). Internal reliability was excellent for the present sample ($\alpha = .91$).

The ten item personality inventory (TIPI) (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003)

The TIPI is a ten-item measure that asks two questions for each of the Big Five personality traits. Participants were asked about the extent to which they agree that they fit with a given personality descriptor (1 = *Disagree strongly*; 7 = *Agree strongly*). For the purpose of this study, we focused on extraversion (“extraverted”, “reserved”) and emotional stability (“easily upset”, “emotionally stable”). The TIPI has been shown to have adequate construct validity (Jonason, Teicher, & Schmitt, 2011).

Aspirations scale for refugees and migrants (ASRM) (Derluyn, Vervliet, & Broekaert, 2010)

ASRM assesses pre-immigration expectations on two identical 11-item subscales: one subscale for self-expectations and the other subscale for expectations of one’s family in the country of origin. For the purposes of this study we only used the first subscale, as we were only interested in self-expectations. The instructional set of the ASRM states: “*When people leave their country of origin, they often have certain expectations of themselves in the new country of settlement.*” It then asks the respondent to rate various listed expectations and indicate “*to which extent do you have the following expectations for yourself*”. For each of the expectations, responses ranged from 0 (*Not*) to 2 (*Much*) where *Not* pertains to no expectation, and *Much* pertains to experience the expectation to a large extent. The ASRM was adapted for the purposes of the present study. The first part of the scale was used simply to prime the participants to the nature of common expectations that immigrants hold in different domains (i.e., the extent to which studying, finding a good job, finding a secure environment, start a family was important). However, we also added one item assessing the degree to which the participants’ expectations have been fulfilled thus far: “*to which extent you feel you fulfilled your own expectations*”. Responses ranged from 0 (*None of the expectations*) to 4 (*All of the expectations*) and denote subjective fulfillment of expectations. It was this latter single item that was subsequently used in correlation and regression analyses.

Data analysis

All variables used in hypothesis testing showed a normal distribution with skewness values below 3 and kurtosis values below 10 (Kline, 2011). We dealt with missing data by calculating mean item scores for participants for each measure and including only those participants who completed at least two-thirds of each measure. A pairwise correlation matrix was inspected for associations between demographic and study variables; multiple hierarchical regression was used to test the hypothesis that fulfillment of expectations is inversely associated with depressive symptoms above and beyond demographic variables, language proficiency, acculturation, and personality traits.

Results

Expectations

More than 80% of participants endorsed high expectations each for obtaining a good job, earning more money, and living in a secure environment. In comparison, high expectations for living with family or friends, and to ensuring that relatives will immigrate to Canada, each were endorsed only by approximately 40% of participants (Table 2). 44%

of respondents reported that they fulfilled fewer than half of their expectations, 29% fulfilled half of their expectations and 27% fulfilled most of their expectations.

Patterns of relations between acculturation, expectations, demographic and personality variables

In the preliminary analysis, a zero-order correlation matrix was examined for the expected pattern of relations between variables (Table 3). Age, language proficiency, and time spent in Canada did not correlate with depressive symptoms. However, depressive symptoms were negatively correlated with emotional stability, extraversion, and fulfilled expectations. The duration of residence in Canada, English language proficiency, French language proficiency and English mainstream acculturation were correlated with fulfilled expectations. Paired sample *t*-tests revealed that English language proficiency was significantly higher than French language proficiency, $t(260) = 2.4, p = .019$, and acculturation to the English-Canadian mainstream was significantly higher than acculturation to the French-Canadian mainstream, $t(269) = 2.71, p = .007$.

A hierarchical regression equation was computed to assess the role of fulfilled expectations in depressive symptoms above and beyond demographic variables, language proficiency, acculturation, and personality traits (see Table 4). The hierarchical regression model was significant, $F(9,234) = 11.67, p < .001$, and accounted for 28.3% of the variance (adjusted). For the prediction of psychological adjustment, age and years in Canada were entered in the first step. English- and French-language proficiency were entered in the second step, and mainstream and heritage acculturation were entered in the third step – none of these variables contributed to the statistical prediction of depressive symptoms. Emotional stability and extraversion were entered in the fourth step of the regression equation and accounted for 23% of the variance in depressive symptoms; fulfillment of expectations was entered in the last step and accounted for an additional 6% of the variance. Examination of the standardized beta weights from the final regression equation indicated that extraversion ($\beta = .29, p < .001$), emotional stability ($\beta = .35, p < .001$) and fulfilled expectations ($\beta = .27, p < .001$) contributed significant unique variance to the prediction of depressive symptoms.

Discussion

The current study examined the nature of expectations and the role of fulfillment of expectations in psychological adjustment in a group of first generation immigrants from the FSU in Montreal. Most of our hypotheses were supported. Zero-order correlations revealed that fulfillment of expectations was associated with duration of residence in Canada, French and English language proficiency, acculturation to English-Canadian mainstream culture, and lower

depressive symptomatology. Hierarchical regression results demonstrated that a higher degree of fulfilled expectations was associated with lower psychological distress above and beyond demographic variables, language proficiency, acculturation, and personality traits. Notably, the analytic approach taken in this study was very conservative: the order of entry of variables in the regression analyses proceeded from the assumption that acculturation and personality traits had theoretical primacy, and as such, these variables were entered in an earlier step of the analyses. The results supported the incremental validity of the fulfilled expectations item. To our knowledge this was the first study conducted on the nature of expectations that immigrants from the FSU had in Canada, the extent to which these expectations have been fulfilled, and the impact of expectation fulfillment on psychological adjustment. Of particular interest in the present study was to explore the nature of expectations that recent immigrants from the FSU hope to fulfill in Canada. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, migration to Western countries including Canada has surged, attracting highly qualified specialists such as programmers, scientists, and medical professionals (Rybakovsky & Ryazantsev, 2005). The findings of our study concur with previous reports that immigrants from the FSU tend to migrate for economic reasons (Hoffmann et al., 2006; Lashenykh-Mumbauer, 2005). Analyses revealed that finding a good job, earning money, and living in a secure environment were among the highest-rated expectations that FSU immigrants endorsed. Although less frequently endorsed, maintaining connections and helping relatives who reside outside of Canada were also important expectations to a substantial proportion of our sample, consistent with the role of social support and family in Russian-speaking communities (Jurcik et al., 2013, 2015; see also Mähönen et al., 2013).

While Statistics Canada reports indicate that the majority of individuals who immigrate to Canada meet their expectations, the reports do not specify whether these numbers apply to recent and long term immigrants equally (Statistics Canada, 2008). The reports also do not specify the extent to which these expectations have been fulfilled. In the current study, 44% of immigrants reported that fewer than half of their expectations have been met. However, the results of the present study indicate that length of residence and greater reported mainstream acculturation are associated with having met expectations to a larger extent. There could be several explanations for this finding. First, with time, the acquisition of new cultural tools such as language as well as education in the adoptive country may naturally lead to fulfillment of expectations. Similar findings were reported in a study on acculturation and work status of Soviet Jewish refugees in the United States where longer length of residence was associated with acculturation to the American cultural context, language proficiency, higher income, and life satisfaction (Vi-

Table 2*The nature of expectations in adoptive country.*

Expectations	No %	Little %	Much %	Mean (SD)
1. Studying	11.9	26.0	62.1	1.5 (0.7)
2. Obtain a diploma	18.6	23.0	58.4	1.4 (.78)
3. Find a good job	2.2	10.8	86.9	1.85 (.42)
4. Earn money for myself	2.6	11.6	85.8	1.83 (.44)
5. Earn money for my family in my country of origin	29.0	26.4	44.6	1.16 (.85)
6. Finding a secure environment	3.3	13.7	83.0	1.80 (.48)
7. Go living with relatives or friends	28.1	30.4	41.5	1.13 (.83)
8. Obtain legal residence documents	18.7	8.6	72.8	1.54 (.79)
9. To ensure relatives can come to Canada	27.9	32.0	40.1	1.12 (.82)
10. Start a family	30.9	14.5	54.6	1.24 (.90)
11. Get to know new people	3.0	22.7	74.3	1.71 (.52)

Table 3*Correlation matrix for demographic variables, language proficiency, acculturation, personality, depressive symptoms, and expectations.*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Age	—	.23**	-.29**	-.14*	-.05	.16 [†]	-.14*	-.11	.05	-.10	.01	.09
2. Years in Canada		—	.28**	.14*	-.08	.06	.06	.19**	.02	.18 [†]	-.06	.34**
3. English			—	.15*	-.05	—	-.10	.37**	-.06	.28**	-.07	.24**
4. French				—	-.04	.04	-.01	.01	.31**	.13	-.07	.14*
5. Extraversion					—	—	.09	.11	.09	.11	-.30**	.04
6. Emotional Stability						—	.04	.02	.12*	.09	-.36**	.12*
7. VIA-H							—	.13 [†]	.11	.15 [†]	-.10	-.01
8. VIA-E								—	.45**	.83*	—	.14*
9. VIA-F									—	.65**	-.09	.06
10. VIA-M										—	—	.19*
11. CES-D											—	-.31**
12. Fulfilled Expectations												—

Note. VIA-H=Heritage acculturation; VIA-E=English-mainstream acculturation; VIA-F=French-mainstream acculturation; VIA-M=Mainstream Acculturation (French or English), CES-D=Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

nokurov et al., 2000). However, it is also possible that over time some expectations become less relevant and immigrants shift focus and attribute more importance to fulfilling more realistic goals. Future longitudinal research is needed to explore the changing and evolving nature of expectations that immigrants aspire to fulfill in their new country of residence (e.g., Mähönen et al., 2013).

One of the common modes of immigration to Quebec for families is through the Skilled Worker Program (Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2009), designed to select candidates who fit criteria that indicate their economic potential and viability. Along with age and education, language proficiency in both official languages in Canada, accords the immigrant valuable points that may enhance candidature for selection under this system. Perhaps this is why language

proficiency was correlated with mainstream acculturation in this population, with English language proficiency correlating with acculturation to the English-Canadian mainstream and French language proficiency correlating with acculturation to French-Canadian mainstream, while the length of residency in Canada was only correlated with acculturation to English-Canadian mainstream.

The results of our study indicate that first generation immigrants from the FSU were more proficient in English than in French and favored acculturation to the English-Canadian mainstream. Notably, fulfilled expectations were associated with acculturation to the English- and not the French-Canadian mainstream. English has been traditionally the most popular second language taught in FSU high schools (Stevens, 1987). It is possible that immigrants from the FSU

Table 4*Last step of the hierarchical regression analysis of depressive symptoms.*

	Beta	R ² change	F change
Dependent = Depressive symptoms			
Step 1			
Time in Canada	.03		
Age	.06	.00	.41 (2,241)
Step 2			
English Proficiency	-.04		
French Proficiency	-.03	.01	.72 (2,239)
Step 3			
Mainstream Acculturation	.04		
Heritage Acculturation	-.08	.01	1.46 (2,237)
Step 4			
Extraversion	-.29**		
Emotional Stability	-.35**	.23	35.48 (2,235)**
Step 5			
Fulfilled Expectations	-.27**	.06	20.86(1,234)**

Note: $N = 244$.** $p < .001$.

in the present sample favored acculturation to the English-Canadian mainstream and navigated within that context because they received a wider pre-migration exposure to English than to French. Sampling bias may also contribute to this discrepancy as we did not provide the survey in French, although over 76% respondents completed our survey in Russian.

Although mainstream acculturation was associated with fulfilled expectations in zero-order correlation analyses, this was not the case with heritage acculturation, suggesting that one's heritage cultural orientation may not play a role in expectations fulfillment. Acquiring the tools needed to fulfill one's expectations and navigate the new context may thus more likely come from affiliations with the new group. These findings support the construct of bidimensional acculturation, given the differential predictive utility of both acculturation dimensions (Ryder et al., 2000). They are also in agreement with previous research supporting the ecological thesis that posits that acculturation to different cultures is associated with improved outcomes within the life domains of one's respective cultural affiliations (Birman, 1998; Birman et al., 2002). Moreover, an earlier study exploring a disparate set of predictors with the current sample also indicated that heritage acculturation interacted with residential ethnic density and time lived in the neighborhood in predicting adjustment, corroborating the importance of ecological context when studying bidimensional acculturation (Jurcik et al., 2015).

In the present study, the duration of residency in Canada was not associated with depressive symptoms. This finding is

consistent with previous reports on the lack of association between duration of residence in Canada and depressive symptoms in Korean immigrants in Toronto (Kim & Chen, 2011; Noh, Speechley, Kaspar, & Wu, 1992) and in South Asian immigrants in Calgary (Lai & Surood, 2008), as well as the finding that recent immigrants (i.e., fewer than 10 years in Canada) are less likely to report depressive symptoms (Wu & Schimmele, 2005). While previous reports found that older immigrants in Canada may be at higher risk for depressive symptoms (Lai & Surood, 2008), in the present study we did not evidence a relationship between age and depression. It is possible that the present sample was buffered from depressive symptoms based on their selection criteria for migration. Specifically, when compared to previous studies, the present sample consisted of immigrants of younger age, with sufficient language proficiency, and potential for integration into the Canadian labor market.

Our findings demonstrated that only personality traits and fulfilled expectations were associated with depressive symptoms in zero-order correlations. Personality traits and fulfilled expectations were uniquely associated with depressive symptoms even when controlling for acculturation, language proficiency and duration of residency in Canada in regression analyses. Our findings suggest that contextual and dynamic variables (i.e., acculturation, language proficiency, length of residence) might be less reliable correlates of psychological adjustment than stable personality traits, and variables more proximal to depression, such as disappointment from unrealized expectations.

Personality traits, in particular extraversion and emotional

stability, may influence psychosocial adjustment outcomes (John et al., 2008; Haas, Omura, Constable, & Canli, 2007; Zhang et al., 2010). In North American cultural contexts where extraversion is valued in social interactions, this trait may facilitate sociocultural adaptation and buffer against depressive symptoms. Individuals with low emotional stability may have increased vulnerability to stressors, which in turn may lead to poorer psychological adjustment. More specifically, acculturative stressors may exacerbate mental distress in recent immigrants low on emotional stability. Consistent with this hypothesis, personality traits accounted for the largest portion of the variance in the regression model. This finding suggests that personality traits ought to be included in acculturation research. Scarce research exists on the relation between expectations and psychological adjustment in migrants (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Yijälä, 2011; Murphy & Mahalingam, 2006; Xi & Hwang, 2011). However, other areas of social psychological inquiry have provided a theoretical framework and empirical support for the link between unrealized expectations and susceptibility to depression. For example, self-discrepancy theory posits that the larger the discrepancy that a person experiences between their actual and ideal selves, the higher is the likelihood of experiencing negative emotions (Higgins, 1987, 1989). Social stress theory, meanwhile, suggests that unrealized expectations themselves may be a source of distress and contribute to psychological maladjustment (Drebing & Gooden, 1991; Nurmi & Salmela-Aro, 2002). Consistent with self-discrepancy and social stress theories, a lower degree of realized expectations was associated with symptoms of depression even when accounting for personality traits in the present study. These findings indicate that the degree to which migratory expectations are fulfilled is a potent predictor of psychological adjustment.

The present study has several strengths. It is one of the first studies to systematically examine expectations in people from the FSU settling in Canada. Additionally, a large number of acculturation studies are conducted with student samples that tend to be homogenous in their demographic variables (e.g., age, education) and heterogeneous in their cultural heritage. All of these factors limit external validity and may not be representative of the community at large (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010). The community sample of first generation FSU immigrants in the current study was sizable, and relatively homogenous, providing greater generalizability. Another strength of the study is the translation of self-reports into the Russian language. This methodology allowed capturing experiences of immigrants who may have not been able to complete the questionnaire in English. The current research thus contributes to the limited literature on the psychological adjustment and adaptation of Russian-speakers to life in North America.

It is also important to recognize the study's limitations.

First, a substantial part of the community sample was recruited through an online survey, which may have omitted a segment of the population (e.g., older immigrants), limiting generalizability. Second, even though immigrants were provided with a choice of language to complete the survey (Russian or English), once chosen, the language may have primed them to identify even more strongly with the culture of that particular language (Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2004). Lack of a French version of the survey is thus another limitation. Moreover, the expectations reported by immigrants were collected at different time points during their acculturation process, and no baseline of pre-immigration expectations existed; it is unclear how respondents estimated the extent to which their expectations were fulfilled. There is some evidence to suggest that Russian participants in general may be predisposed to be somewhat more pessimistic than some other groups (Jurcik et al., 2013), although whether this tendency applies to their perception of expectations being fulfilled remains an open question, as we did not have a comparison group. The relatively short duration of stay in the mainstream society may also pose a limitation, as some immigrants may not have had enough time to learn the language, acculturate, and fulfill their expectations. Finally, the study was correlational, and thus the direction of causality in this community cannot be drawn. Future research might elucidate the mechanisms of adjustment by utilizing a longitudinal design, hence providing better insight into constructs that contribute to immigrant adjustment and adaptation (see Mähönen et al., 2013). Further research is also necessary to examine whether heritage cultural affiliations are maintained in the long term, and whether French and English-Canadian mainstream acculturation might be differentially advantageous in terms of adaptation and fulfillment of expectations.

Despite its limitations, this survey study on acculturation and expectations is one of the first of its kind. It suggests that fulfillment of expectations plays an important role in psychological adjustment of recent immigrants from the FSU even when controlling for robust predictors of psychological adjustment, such as personality factors. The role of expectations in relation to psychological adjustment has not been widely examined in the acculturation literature and the findings of the current study attempt to partly fill this important gap. Our findings may also provide researchers, policy makers, and clinicians with a better understanding of different expectations that immigrants from the FSU hope to fulfill, and how the extent of their fulfillment may contribute to psychological adjustment in the context of Canadian immigration.

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