

This article brings together two areas of current interest in cross-cultural psychology: acculturation and values. Specifically, to what extent do the values held by individuals change as they undergo the experience of acculturation? The cross-cultural study of values frequently examines a broad array of values, but the present study focuses on Greek family values because family is a central cultural institution. Because policies of the host society affect the process of acculturation, it was expected that Greek family values would be sustained after immigration to Canada (where integration is the policy) more than they would after immigration to European countries (where assimilation is emphasized more). It was also predicted that older people and males would subscribe to these values to a greater extent than would younger people and females. A total of 16 samples ($N = 951$) from Greece, Canada, the Netherlands, and Germany were drawn for the study and were administered a 65-item questionnaire. The results demonstrated significant value change in relation to acculturation across countries and between generations. The joint process of "culture shedding" and "culture learning" was supported.

ACCULTURATION OF GREEK FAMILY VALUES

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This article brings together two areas of current interest in cross-cultural psychology: acculturation and values. Specifically, to what extent do the values held by individuals change as they undergo the experience of acculturation?

Acculturation was first identified as a cultural-level phenomenon by anthropologists (e.g., Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936) who defined it as culture change resulting from contact between two autonomous cultural groups. In principle, change occurs in both groups; in practice, however, more change occurs in the nondominant group than occurs in the dominant group.

Acculturation is also an individual-level phenomenon, requiring individual members of both the larger society and the various acculturating groups to work out new forms of relationships in their daily lives. This idea was introduced by Graves (1967), who has proposed the notion of "psychological acculturation" to refer to these new behaviors and strategies. One of the findings of subsequent research in this area is that there are vast individual differences in how people attempt to deal with acculturative change (termed "acculturation strategies" [Berry, 1990]). These strategies have two aspects: their preferences ("acculturation attitudes" [Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989]); how much change they actually undergo ("behavioral shifts" [Berry, 1980]); and how much of a problem these changes are for them (the phenomenon of "acculturative stress," [Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987]).

Values are characteristics of individuals that represent what is desirable for those persons and influence the selection of both means and ends of possible actions from among a set of alternatives (Kluckhohn, 1951). More recently, values have been defined as "a broad tendency to prefer certain states of affairs over others" (Hofstede, 1980, p. 19).

In the study of the psychology of social change and acculturation (Berry, 1992a), many psychological characteristics become altered as individuals experience changes in their sociocultural milieu. In the former case, psychological changes may follow social changes that are taking place from within a society; values have been shown to change as a result of this intrasocietal process (e.g., Georgas, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1993). In the latter case, psychological changes may follow contact with other cultures; values have also been shown to change as a result of these acculturation experiences (e.g., Feldman, Mont-Reynaud, & Rosenthal, 1992).

The cross-cultural study of values frequently has examined a broad array of values including those relating to work (Hofstede, 1980) and to general life (Feather, 1986; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). The present study focuses on a set of values that is more limited (those that characterize family life) and is rooted in a particular cultural tradition (Greek).

Because families are universally a central cultural institution but are subject to change (Kagitcibasi, 1990), they serve as an ideal topic for cross-cultural study and for studying the effects of acculturation. At the cultural level, family structures and intrafamily relations may come into conflict with family norms that characterize the host society (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1993). In extreme cases, the conflict may involve legal norms (e.g., monogamy vs. polygamy, male-female and parent-child rights), but usually the acculturating group makes a successful adaptation to the type of normative family found in its new society without such serious conflict.

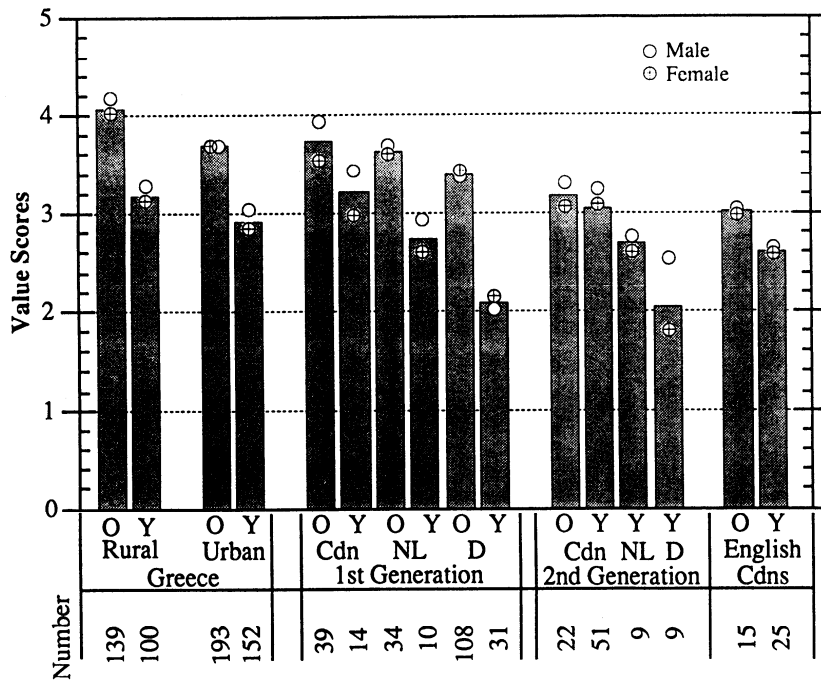


Figure 1: Sample Means of Greek Family Values Scale

NOTE: Rural = Greeks in rural Greece; Urban = Greeks in urban Greece; Cdn = Greeks in Canada; NL = Greeks in the Netherlands; D = Greeks in Germany.

With respect to specific differences in values related to acculturation, mean scores are higher for Greeks in Greece than they are for first-generation Greek immigrants as a whole ($F[1, 862] = 54.9, p < .001$), and second-generation Greek immigrants as a whole have higher scores than do English Canadians ($F[1, 132] = 5.6, p < .05$); however, there is no overall difference between first- and second-generation Greek immigrants as a whole. To examine this nondifference, further analyses were carried out. First, because covarying age to produce adjusted mean value scores to some extent undermines the very phenomenon we are considering (because the first generation is on average older than the second generation), a separate analysis was carried out using raw scores. This revealed a significant generation difference ($F[1, 344] = 10.8, p < .001$) with the first generation having more traditional family values than those of the second generation. Second, all Greek Canadians (first and second generations combined) had higher scores than did all Greek immigrants to Europe (first and second generations combined ($F[1, 340] = 28.1, p < .001$), and this significant difference was true for the first