

Acculturation and adaptation of immigrant adolescents in Greece: Preliminary findings of a 3-year study



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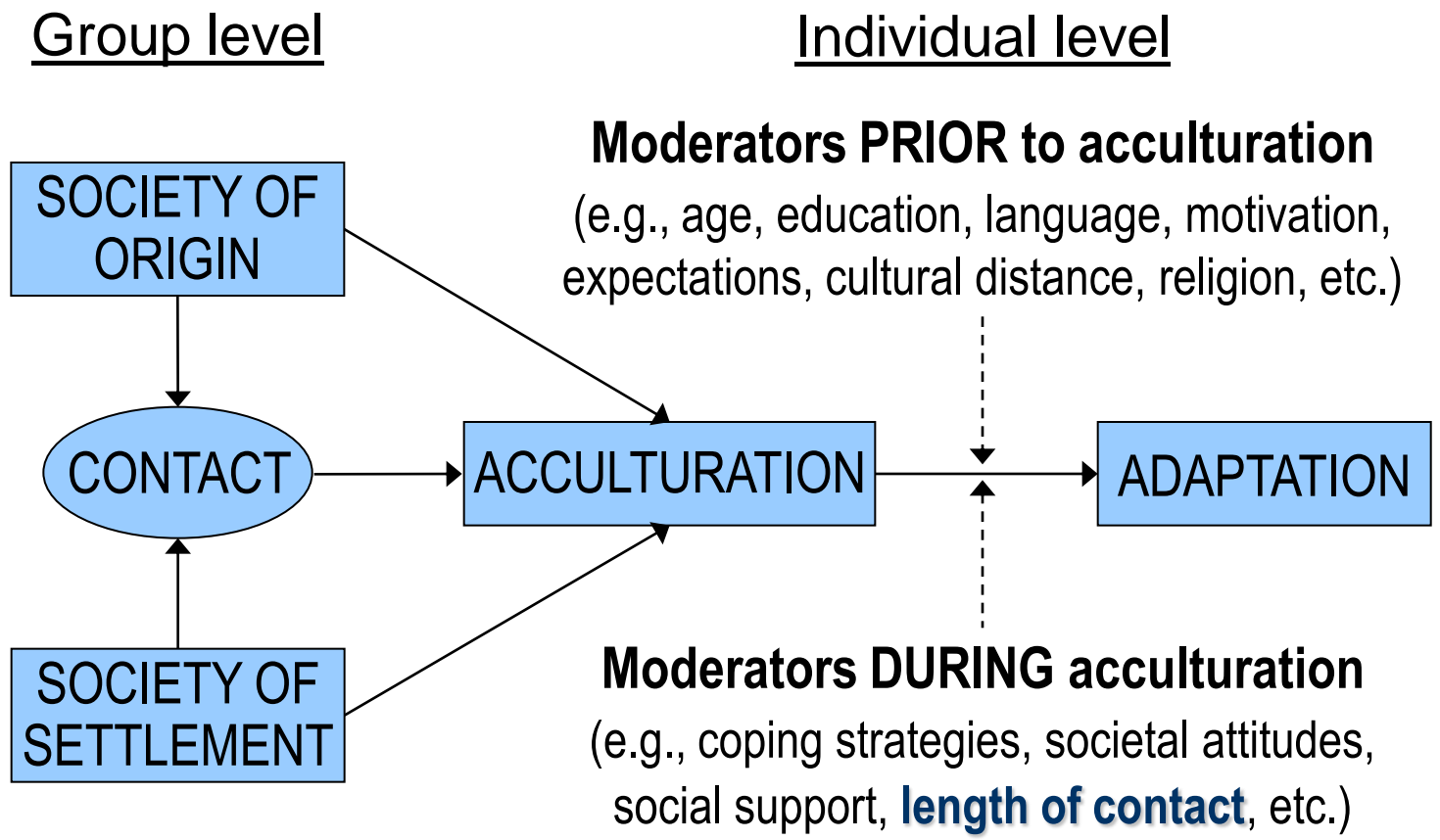


General purpose of the research project

- To study levels of psychological and sociocultural adaptation of immigrant youth, as compared to their native Greek peers.
- To identify protective and risk factors in the process of adaptation of immigrant youth.
- To apply the above findings (e.g. by implementing interventions in the school context or by elaborating suggestions for policy making).

Acculturation model

(Berry, 1997, 2006. Sam, 2006)





Methods for studying the effect of time on immigrant adaptation

- **Cross-sectional designs:**

- ☞ Compare groups with different length of stay (or % of life spent) in the host country.
- ☞ Compare generations of immigrants (1st vs. 2nd).

- **Longitudinal designs:**

- ☞ Repeated measures across time points.
- ☞ Predict future outcomes from baseline measures.



Adaptation of immigrant adolescents: A “double challenge”

- The interplay of **acculturation changes** with normative **developmental goals** (Sam & Oppedal, 2002).
- The **conflict** between important socialization agents, i.e. school (*cultural change/assimilation*) and the family (*cultural maintenance*) (Ward et al., 2001).
- The “**immigrant paradox**” and the inconclusive findings (Sam et al., 2008).



Immigrant adolescents in Greece

- Rapid increase in the number of immigrant youth in Greek schools (e.g., from 6.7% in 2002 to >8% in 2004). Of them, 72% is of Albanian origin (HCER, 2005).
- Lower levels of adaptation of immigrant youth have been found in the academic and social domain, but not in the psychological domain (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2008a,b).



Research questions and hypotheses

- How do acculturation processes of immigrant adolescents evolve over time?
 - ☞ Increase in national involvement and decrease in ethnic involvement is expected (Berry et al., 2006).
- How does adaptation of immigrant adolescents in two socialization contexts (school, family) evolve over time?
 - ☞ Lower levels of adaptation in both domains are expected for immigrant adolescents as compared to their native Greek peers (Berry, 2006; Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2008).



Research questions and hypotheses

- What individual, family, and acculturation factors are related to positive adaptation of immigrant adolescents over time?
 - ☞ Focus on **school adjustment** (normal attendance vs. school failure/drop-out).
 - ☞ Similar profiles over time for native and immigrant adolescents can be attributed to developmental agents, while different profiles can be attributed to acculturation processes.
 - ☞ National orientation is expected to be positively related to school adjustment of immigrant adolescents while ethnic orientation is expected to have a negative effect on school adjustment (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2008).



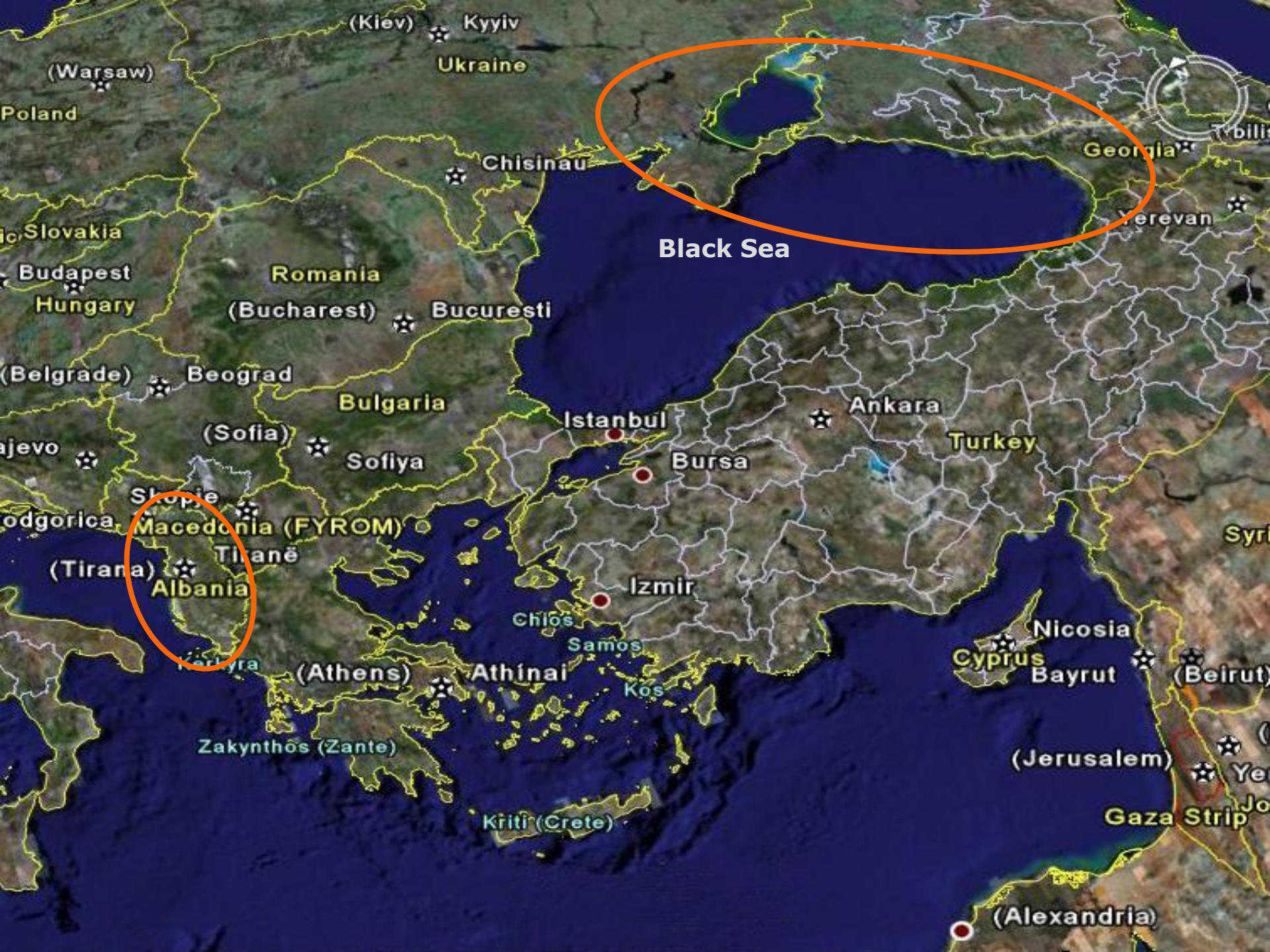
Participants

(8 High Schools in Athens, N=790)

	T1(2005)	T2(2006)	T3(2007)	T1-T3
Albanian	182	179	163	131
Pontian	158	164	133	133
Native Greek	362	362	338	318
1st generation	198	197	170	142
2nd generation	142	146	126	122
Boys	369	371	332	296
Girls	333	334	312	286
Total	702	705	634	582

The two immigrant groups under study

ALBANIAN	PONTIAN
Former communist regime, moved in the '90s	Former communist regime, moved in the '90s
Ethnic Albanians (few of Greek origin)	Immigrants of Greek origin from Former Soviet Union
Economic immigrants, voluntary minority (Ogbu, 2003)	Officially treated as remigrants; given full citizen status
They speak Albanian; religion not important	Speak Russian (and Pontian Greek); Greek Orthodox
They settle in urban and rural areas all over Greece	They often settle together in enclaves



(Kiev) Kyiv

Ukraine

(Warsaw)

Poland

Chisinau

Georgia

Yerevan

Black Sea

Slovakia

Budapest

Hungary

Romania

(Bucharest)

Bucuresti

(Belgrade)

Beograd

Bulgaria

(Sofia)

Sofiya

Istanbul

Ankara

Turkey

Bursa

ajjevo

Skopje

Macedonia (FYROM)

Izmir

(Tirana)

Albania

Podgorica

Tiranë

Chios

Samos

Kos

(Athens)

Athinai

Zakynthos (Zante)

Kriti (Crete)

Nicosia

Bayrut

(Beirut)

(Jerusalem)

Gaza Strip

(Alexandria)



Acculturation measures

- Acculturation Scale (Nguyen & von Eye, 2002, adapted)

- ☞ **Ethnic orientation**

11 items, $\alpha=.90$

e.g. “Most of my friends are [ethnic]”
“I like to eat [ethnic] food”

- ☞ **National orientation**

11 items, $\alpha=.89$

e.g. “Most of my friends are Greek”
“I like to eat Greek food”



Adaptation measures

- Teacher ratings

- ☞ **GPA** (mean of 5 subjects, $\alpha=.95$)

- Peer ratings

- ☞ **Peer popularity** (Coie, Dodge, & Coppotelli, 1982)
positive nominations minus # negative nominations

- Behavioral index

- ☞ **School absences** during the 1st semester

- Family functioning

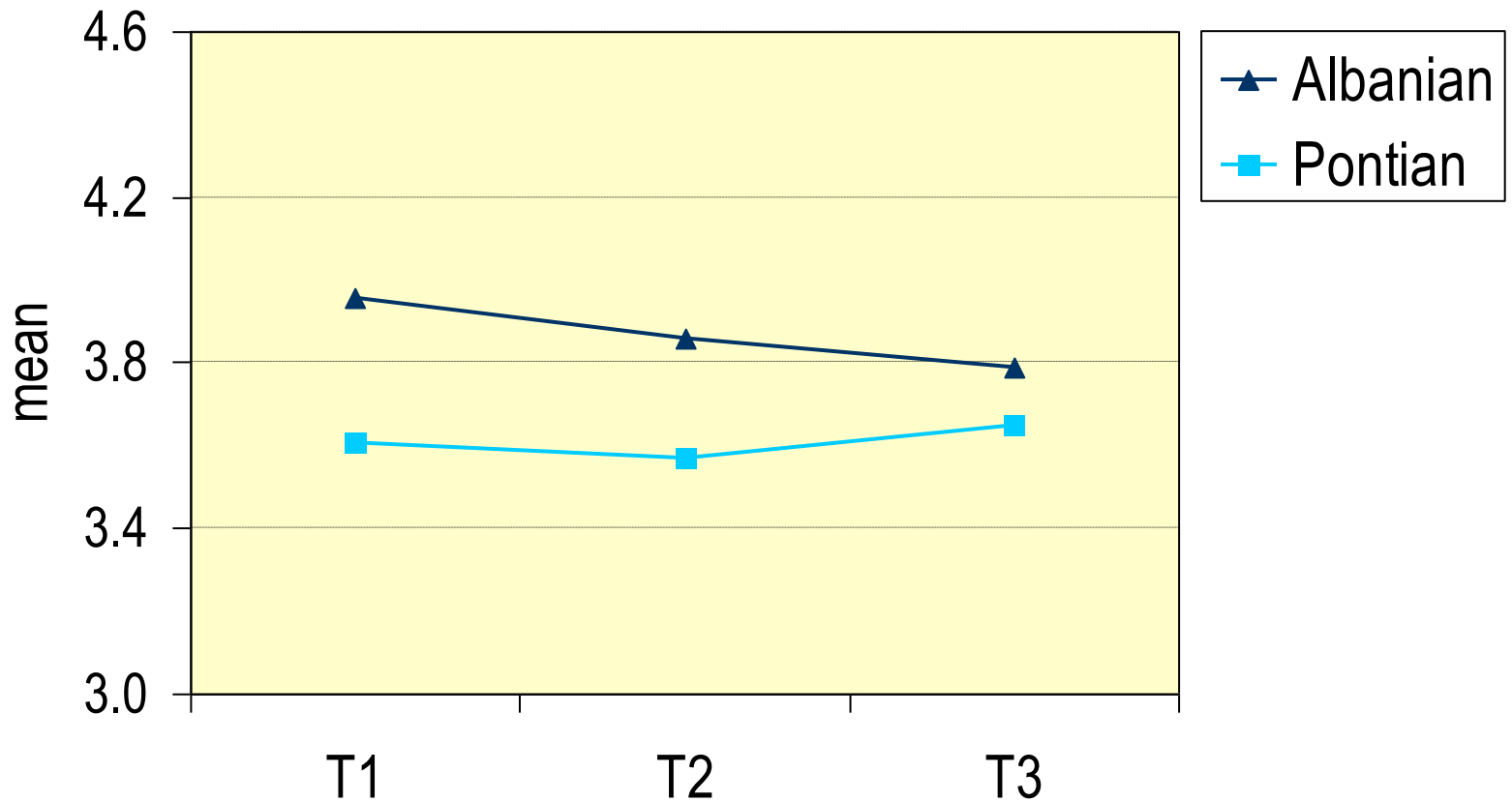
- ☞ **Parent-adolescent conflicts** (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2007)
(14 items, $\alpha=.80$, e.g. appearance, vocabulary, going out)



Findings for Research Question 1

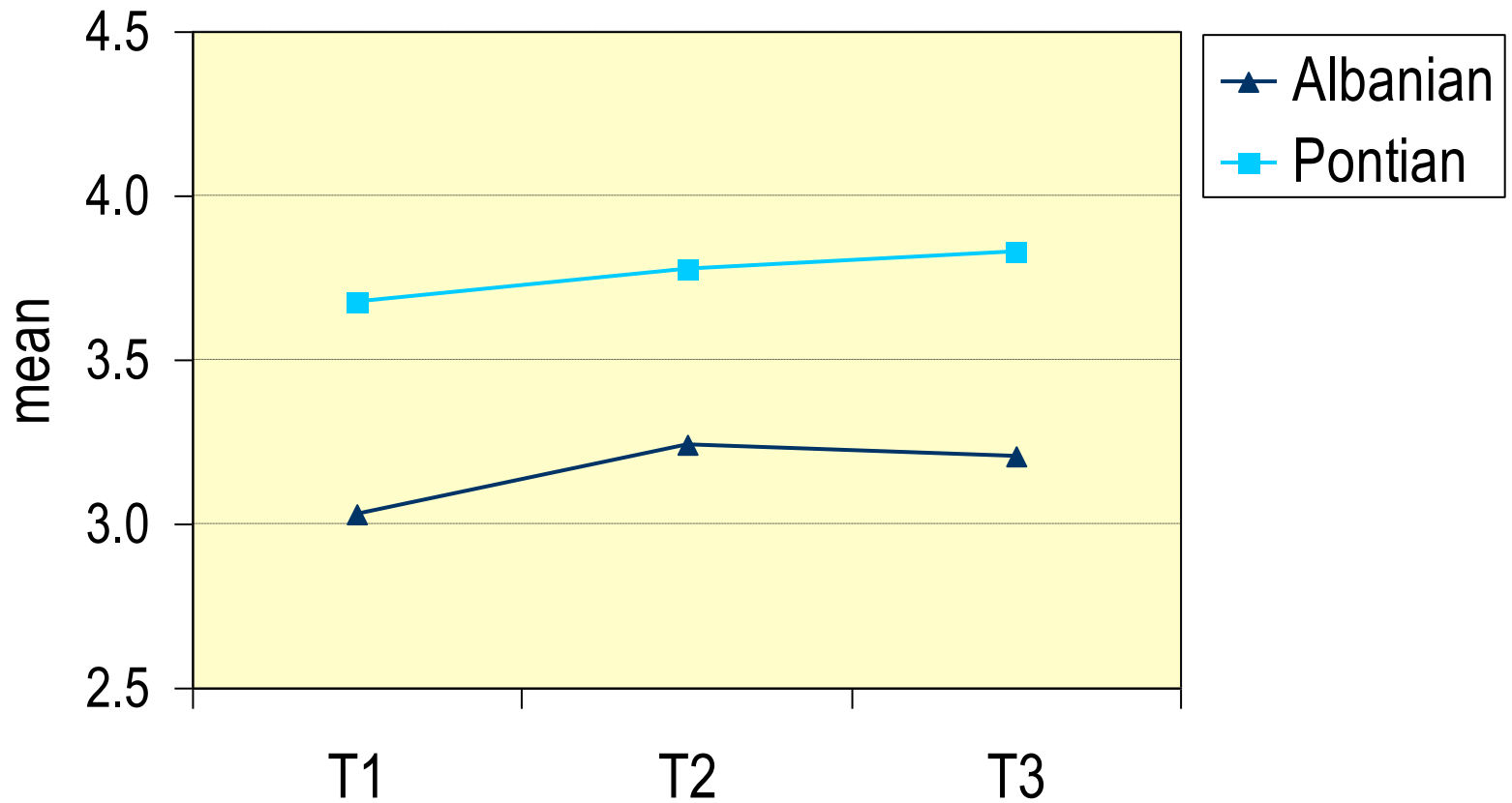
- **Acculturation processes** of Albanian and Pontian immigrant adolescents over time

National orientation of Albanian and Pontian adolescents over time



time [T1–T3]: n.s. | ethnic group X time: n.s. | **ethnic group: p=.013**

Ethnic orientation of Albanian and Pontian adolescents over time



time [T1–T3]: $p=.012$ | ethnic group X time: n.s. | ethnic group: $p<.001$



Summary of findings from the longitudinal study of acculturation processes

Over three years' time:

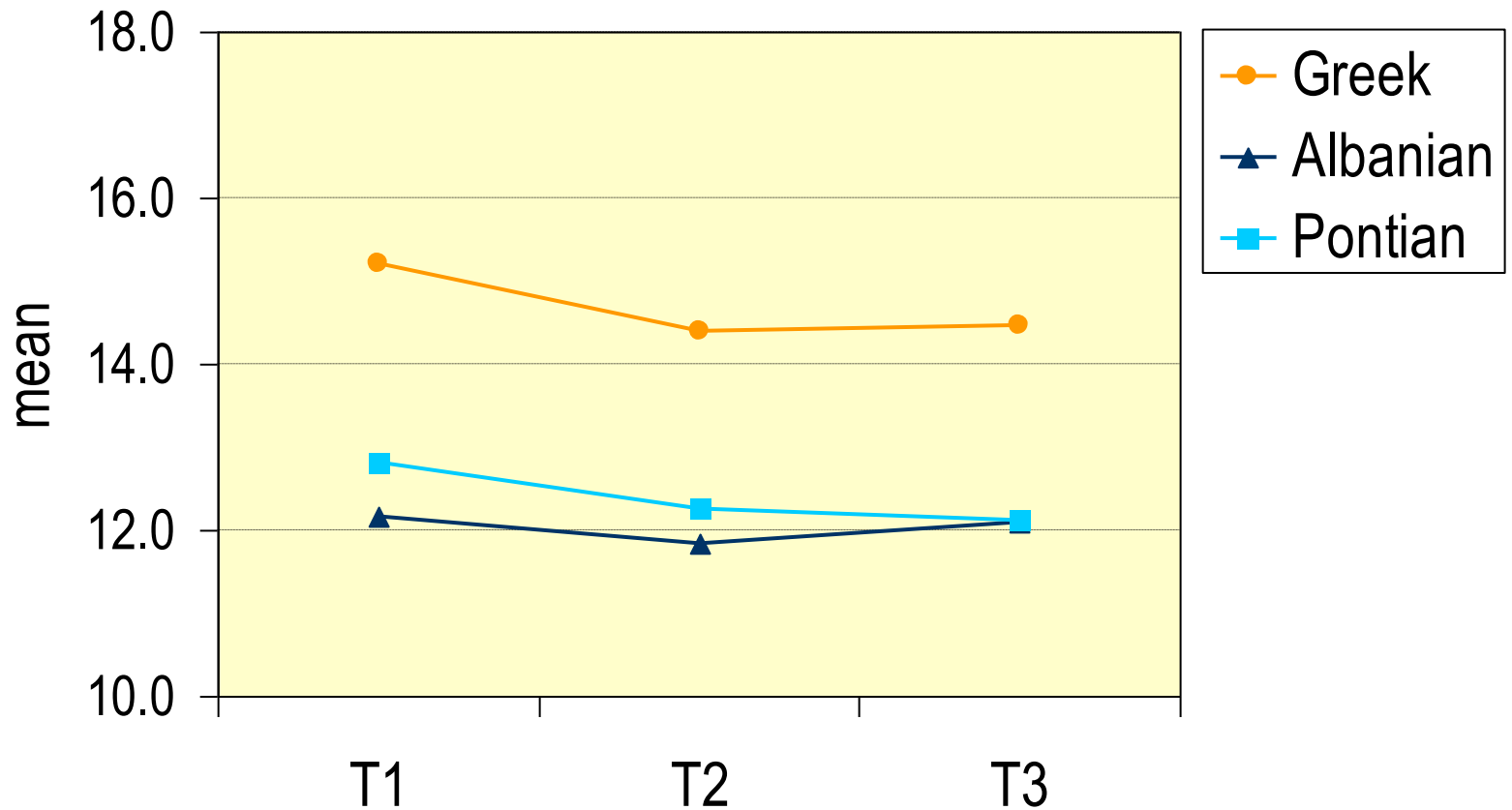
- *Ethnic orientation* of both **Albanian** and **Pontian** adolescents tended to increase.
- *National orientation* of **both ethnic groups** remained at the same level (though a slight drop was noticed for Albanians and a slight rise for Pontians).



Findings for Research Question 2

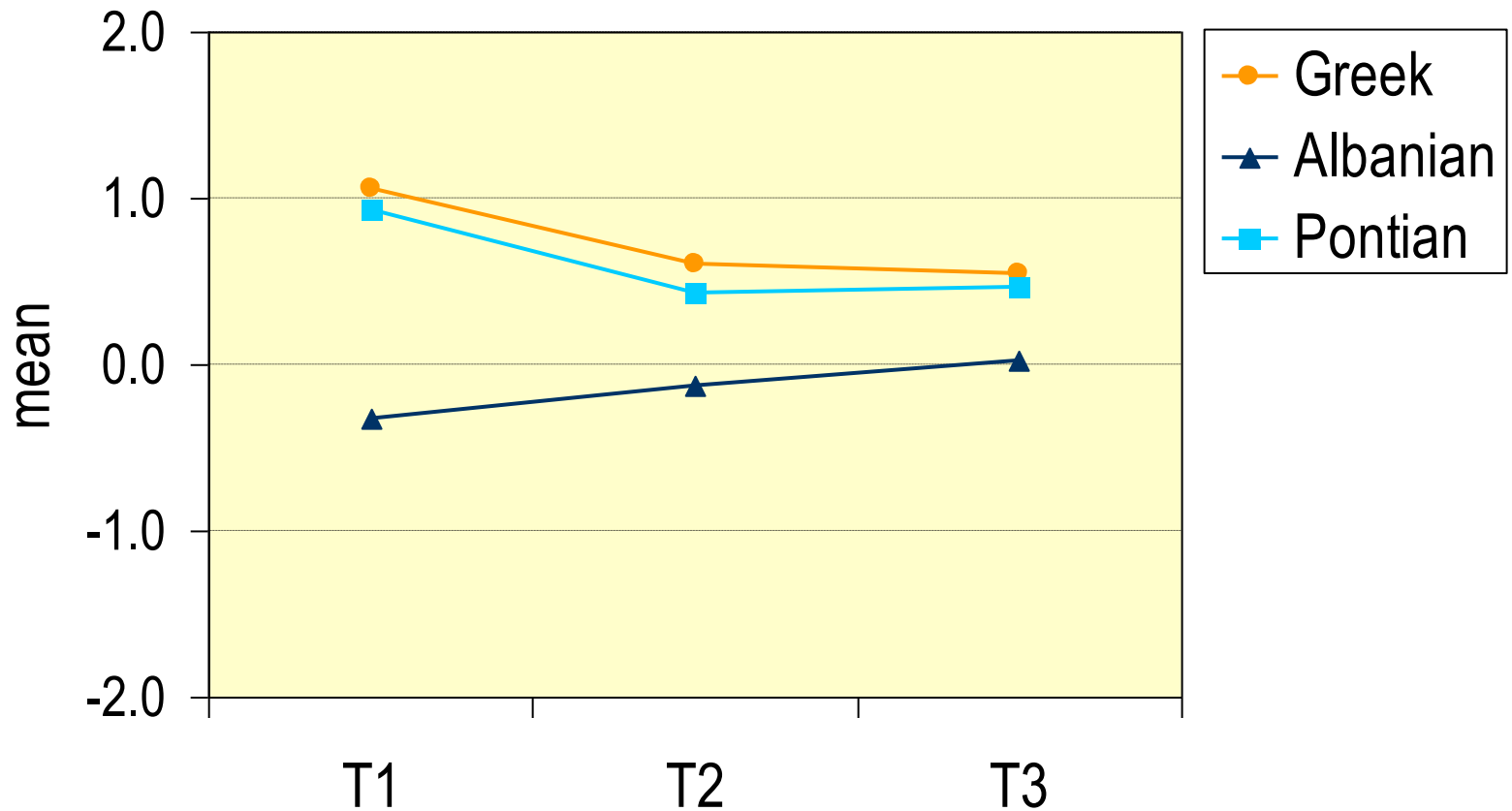
- **Adaptation** of Albanian and Pontian immigrant youth, as compared to their native Greek peers, over time

GPA of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents over time



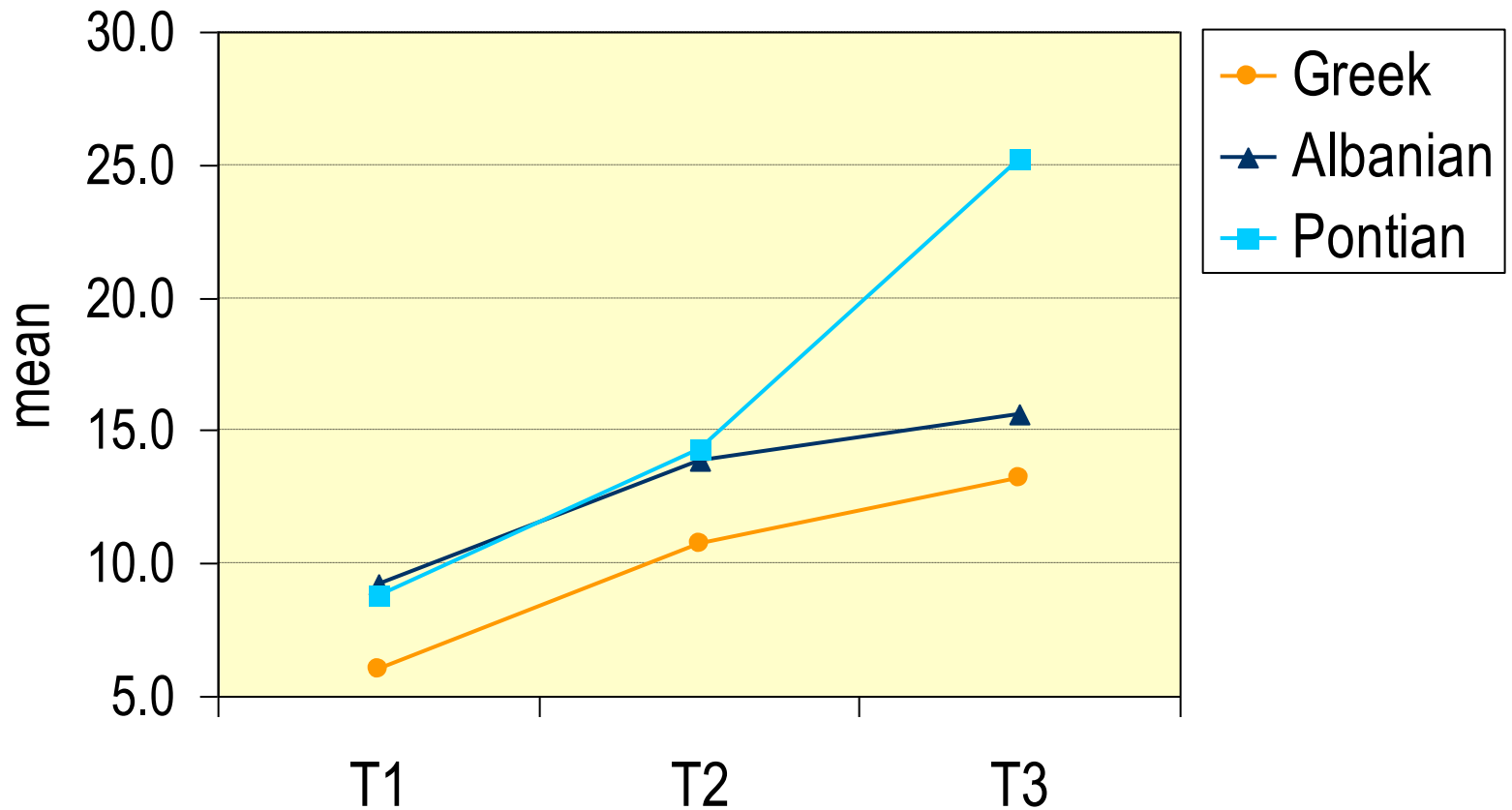
time [T1–T3]: $p < .001$ | ethnic group X time: $p = .001$ | ethnic group: $p < .001$

Peer popularity of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents over time



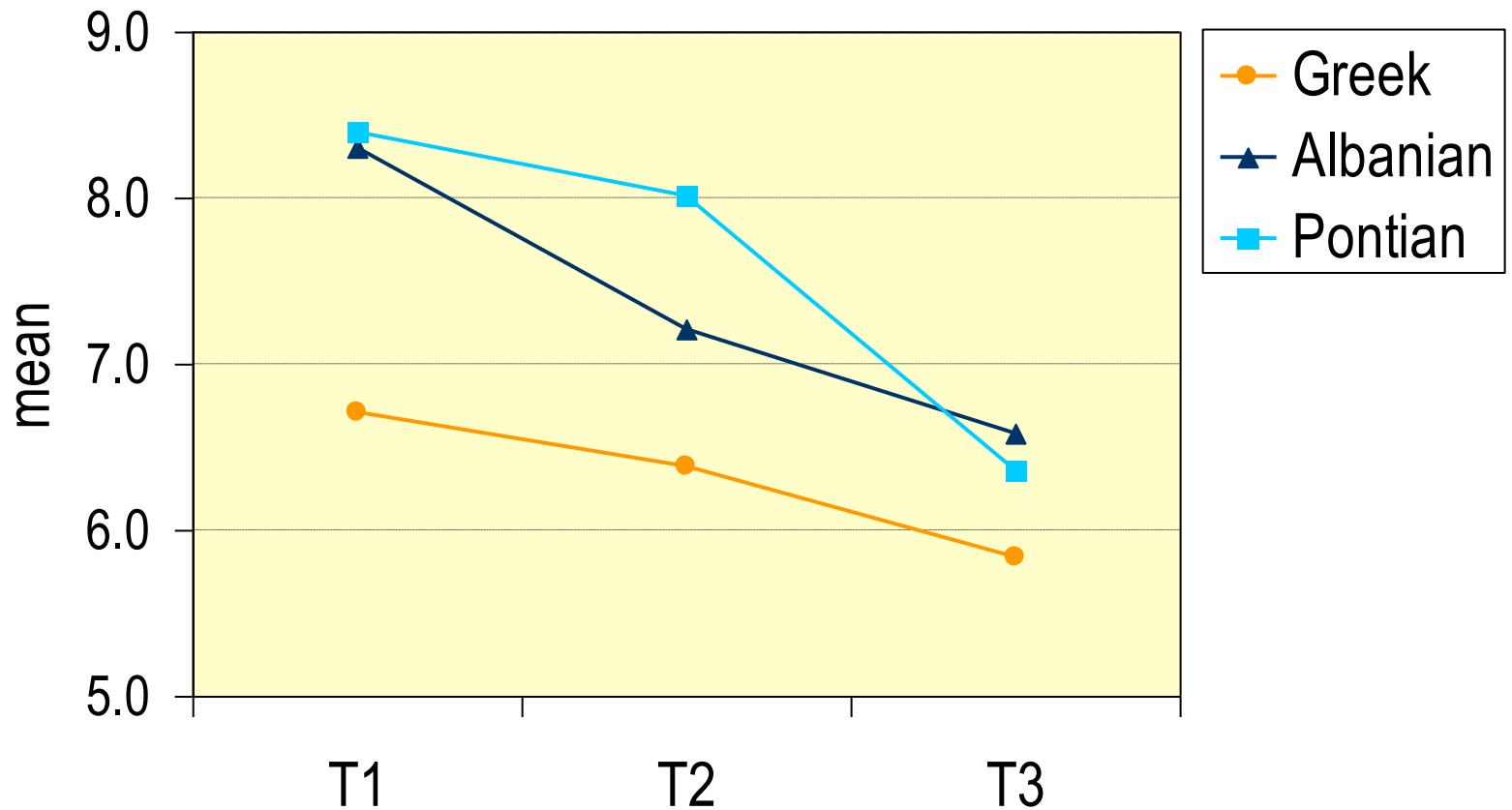
time [T1–T3]: n.s. | ethnic group X time: n.s. | **ethnic group: p=.023**

School absences of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents over time



time [T1–T3]: $p < .001$ | ethnic group X time: $p < .001$ | ethnic group: $p < .001$

Family conflicts of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents over time



time [T1–T3]: $p < .001$ | ethnic group X time: n.s. | ethnic group: $p = .008$



Summary of findings from the longitudinal study of adaptation

Over three years' time:

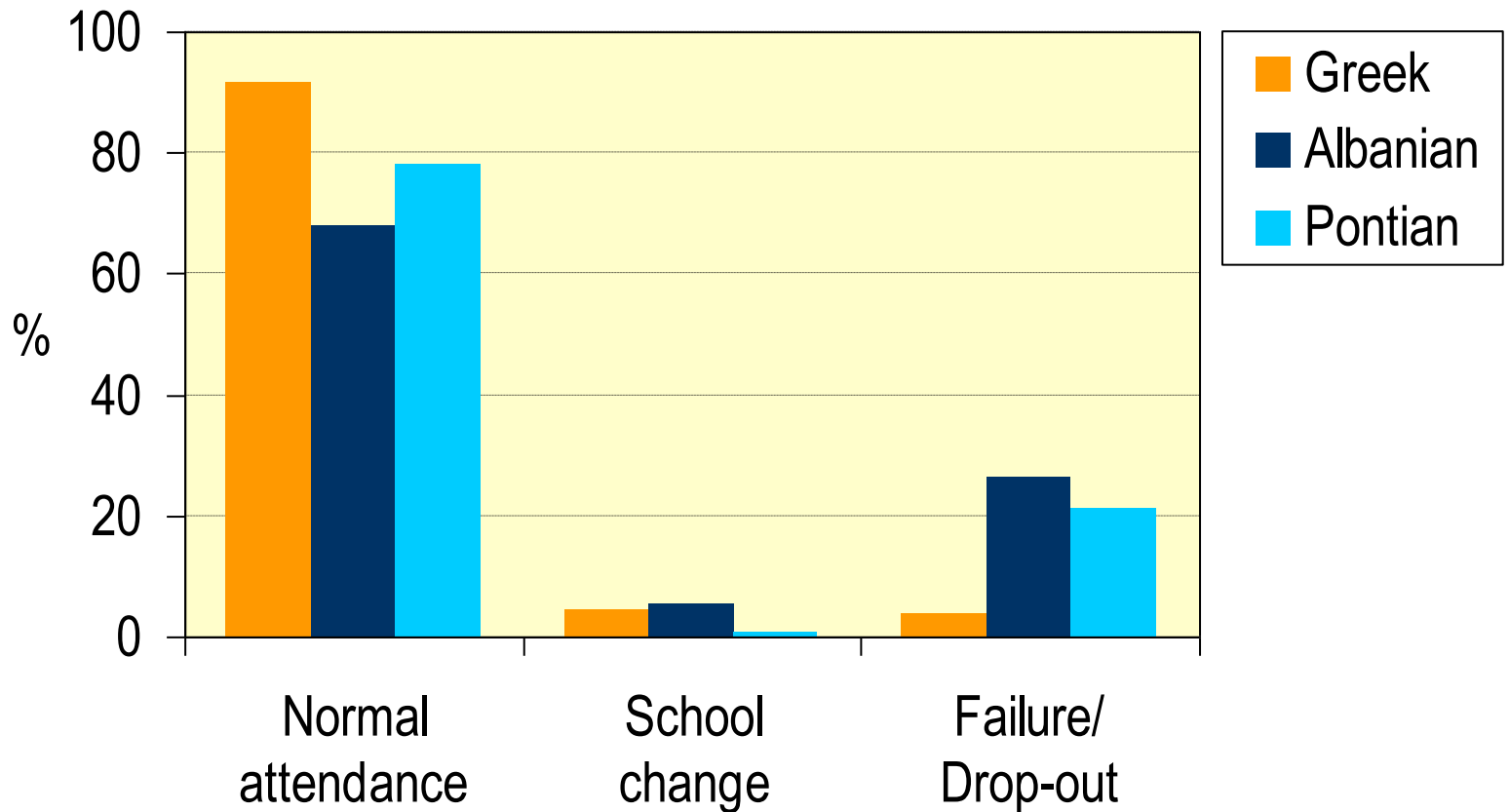
- **Albanian** adolescents had low *school performance* and low *peer popularity* while their *number of absences from school* tended to increase.
- (Low) *school performance* and (high) *peer popularity* of **Pontian** adolescents did not vary considerably but their *number of absences* increased dramatically.
- **Native Greek** youth had more positive profiles than their immigrant peers in most measures of *school adjustment* and also in *family functioning (conflicts)*.



Findings for Research Question 3

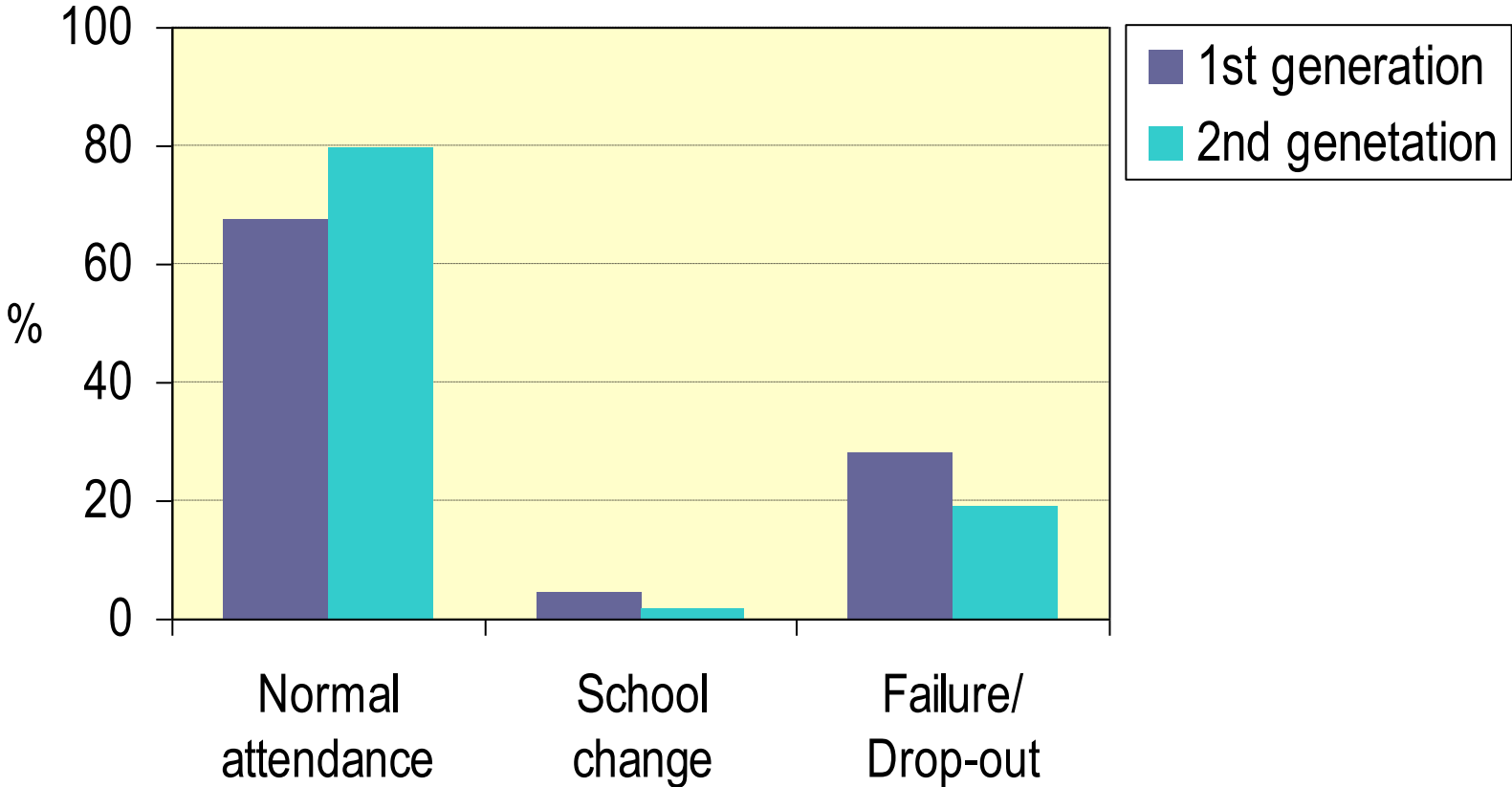
- Individual, family, and acculturation factors of Albanian, Pontian, and native Greek adolescents (at *T1*) related to **school outcomes** (at *T3*)

School outcomes of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents



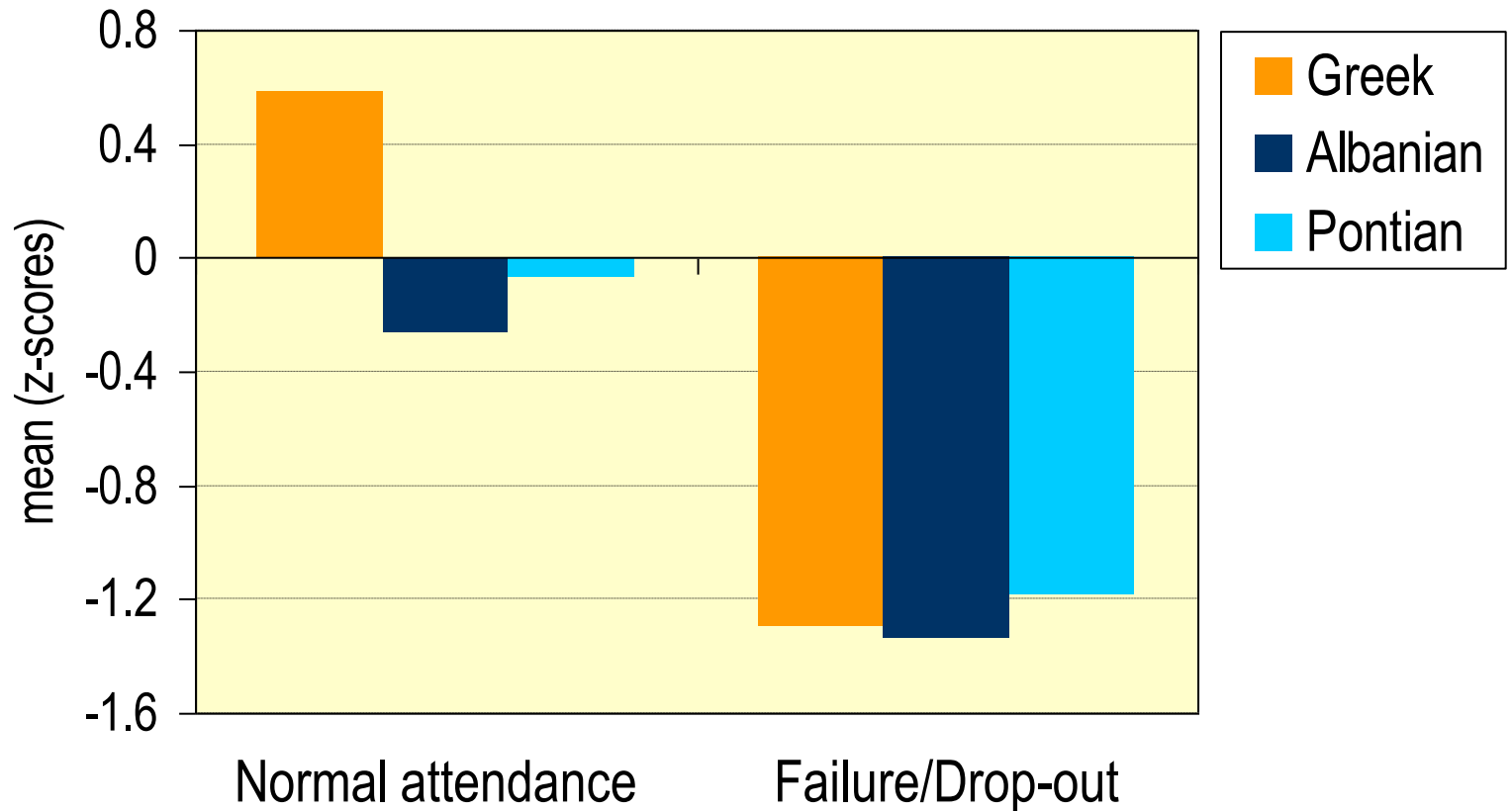
$\chi^2(4, n=651)=64.15, p<.001$

School outcomes of 1st and 2nd generation immigrant adolescents



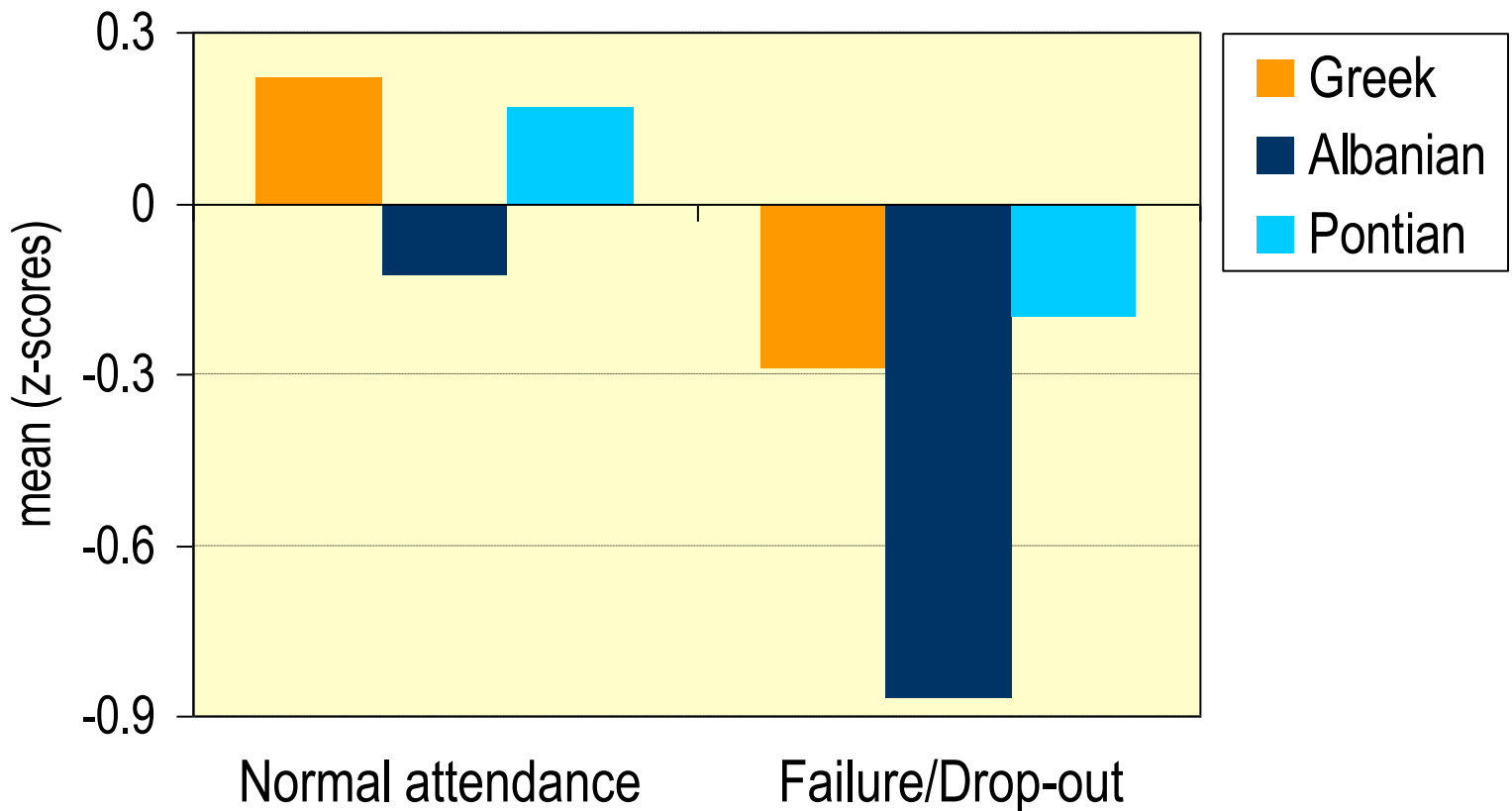
$\chi^2(2, n=312)=6.48, p=.039$

GPA at T1 of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents as a function of school outcome (T3)



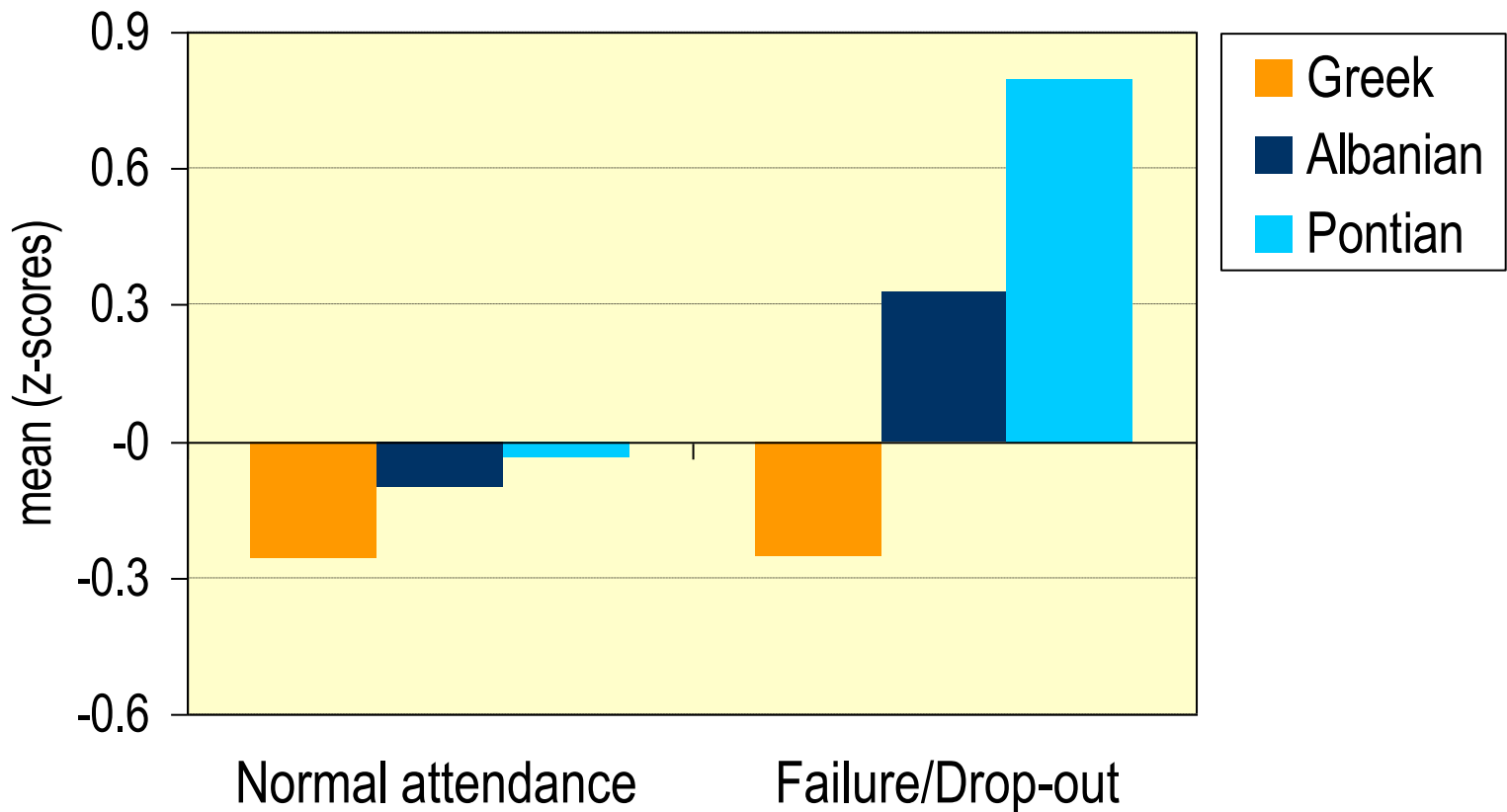
school outcome: $p < .001$ | ethnic group X outcome: $p = .022$ | ethnic group: $p = .012$

Peer popularity at T1 of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents as a function of school outcome (T3)



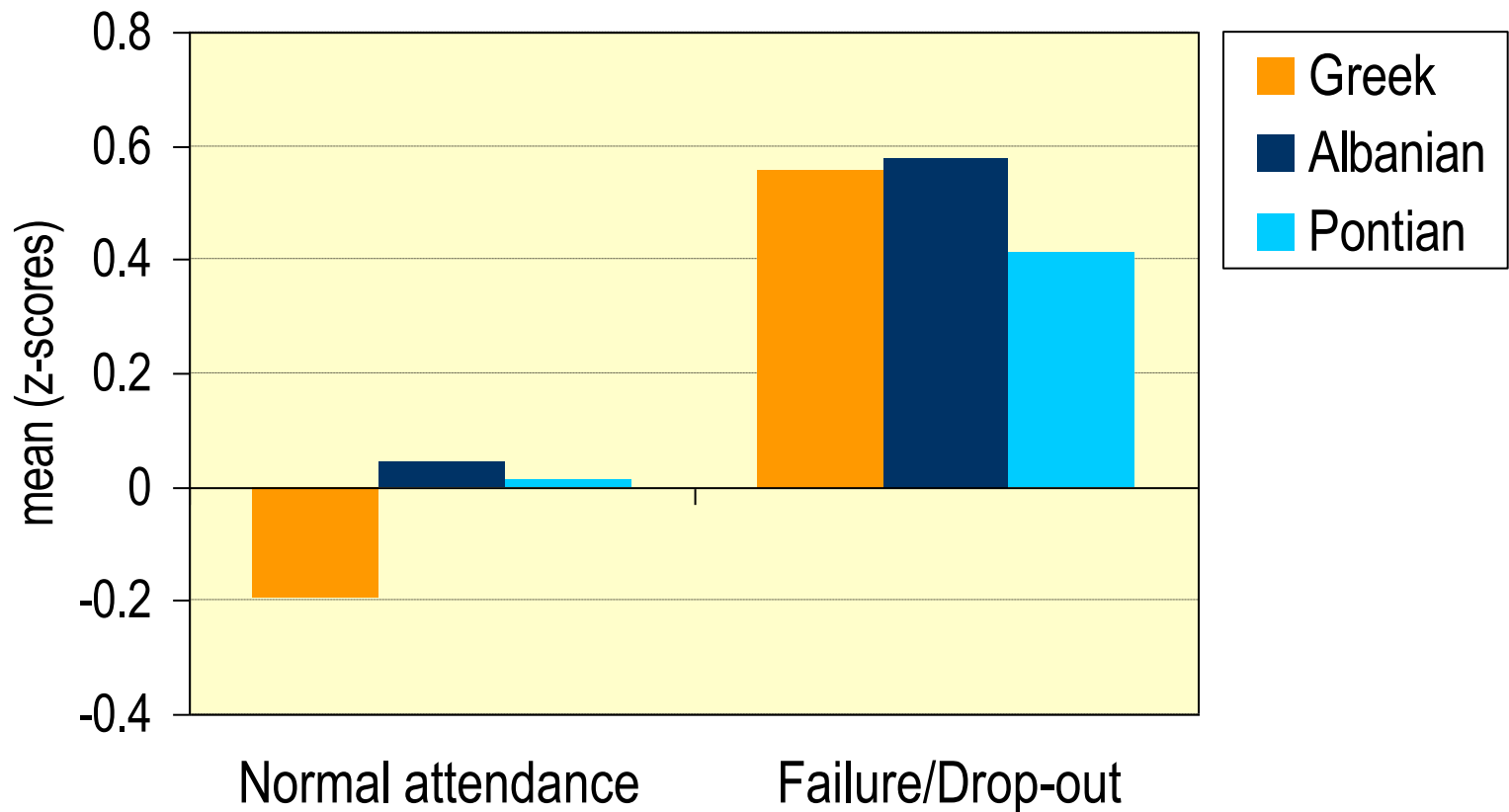
school outcome: $p < .001$ | ethnic group X outcome: n.s. | ethnic group: $p < .001$

School absences at T1 of native and immigrant Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents as a function of school outcome (T3)



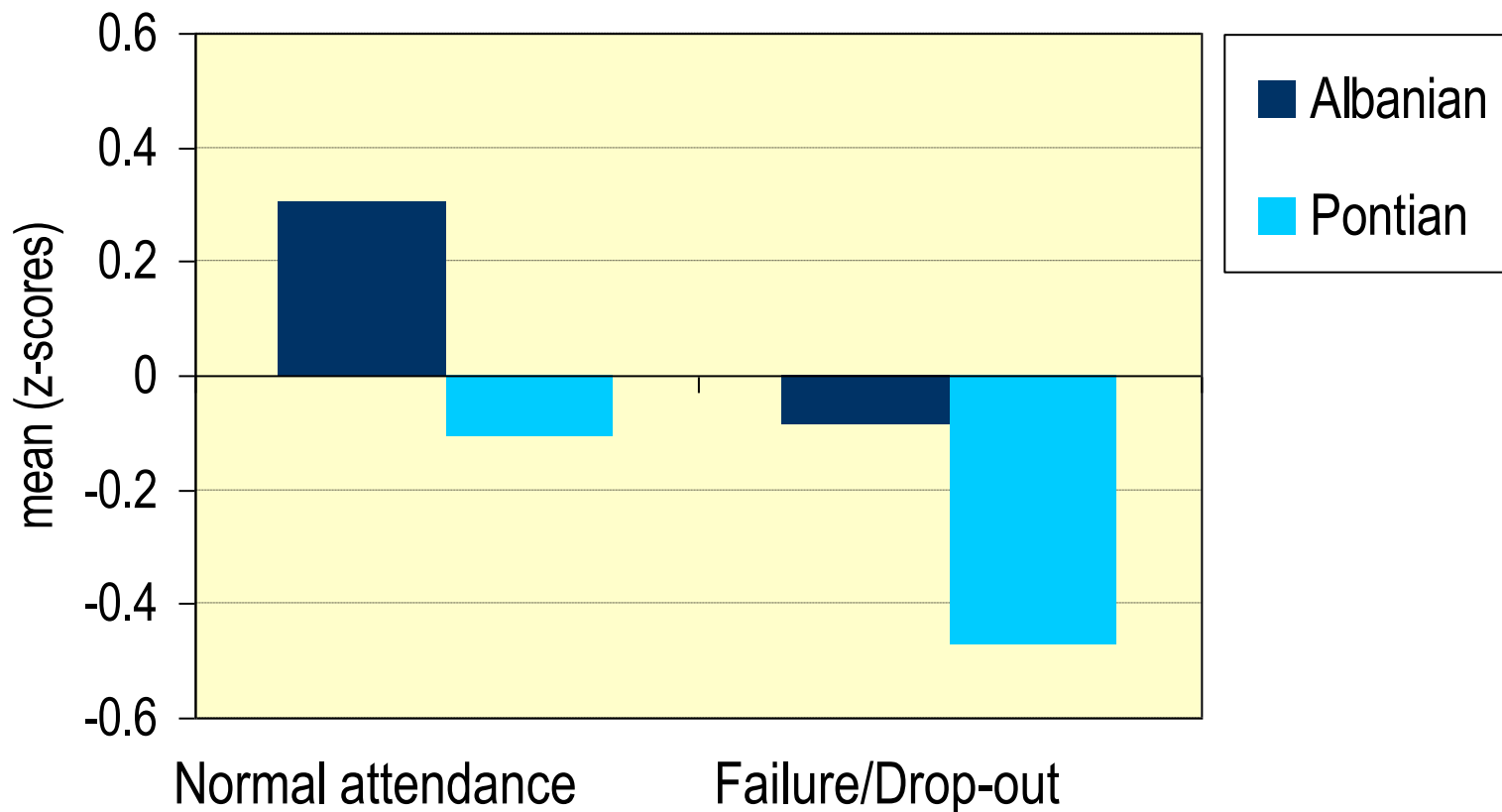
school outcome: $p=.001$ | ethnic group X outcome: $p=.036$ | ethnic group: $p=.001$

Family conflicts at T1 of native Greek, Albanian and Pontian adolescents as a function of school outcome (T3)



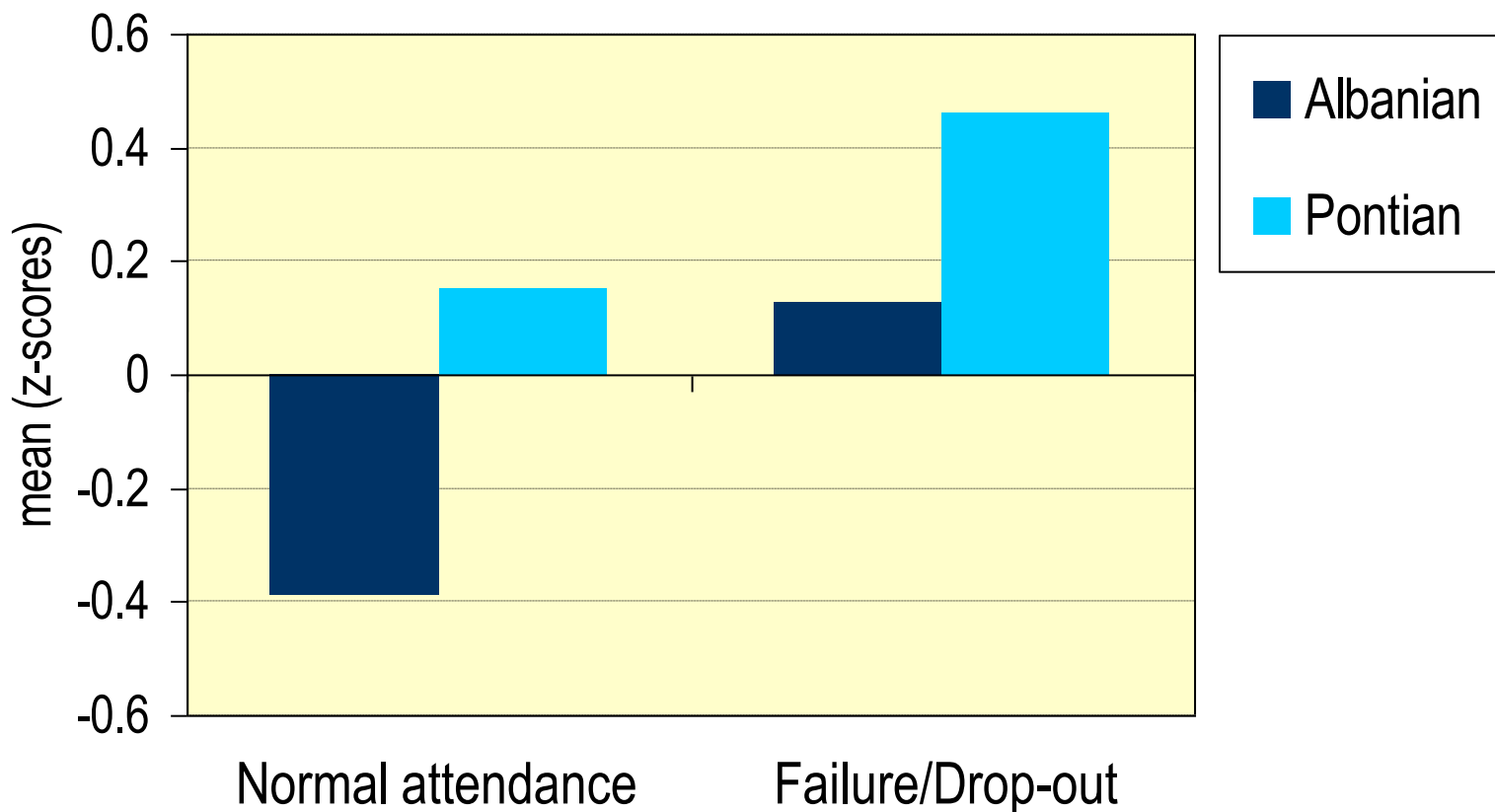
school outcome: $p < .001$ | ethnic group X outcome: n.s. | ethnic group: n.s.

National orientation at T1 of Albanian and Pontian adolescents as a function of school outcome (T3)



school outcome: $p=.013$ | ethnic group X outcome: n.s. | ethnic group: $p=.008$

Ethnic orientation at T1 of Albanian and Pontian adolescents as a function of school outcome (T3)



school outcome: $p=.013$ | ethnic group X outcome: n.s. | ethnic group: $p=.001$

Summary: Factors related to school outcomes of native and immigrant adolescents

	Positive (protective)	Negative (risk)
SCHOOL	GPA Peer popularity	School absences (immigrants only)
FAMILY		Family conflicts
CULTURAL	2nd generation immigrants National orientation	Immigration Ethnic orientation



Discussion and Conclusions

- **Adaptation** of immigrant youth as a two-fold process:
 - ☞ **Developmental:** similar profiles of change across time were found for native and immigrant adolescents in what concerns school adjustment and family conflicts.
 - ☞ **Acculturation:** group comparisons at the mean level revealed lower school adjustment of immigrants (*possibly due to worse language skills?*) as well as lower level of immigrant family functioning (*possibly due to conflictual socialization goals?*).



Discussion and Conclusions

- In what concerns **acculturation processes**:
 - ☞ Contrary to expectations, ethnic orientation of immigrant youth slightly increased over time (*possibly, a reaction to perceived discrimination?*)...
 - ☞ ...while their national orientation did not increase, as it was anticipated.
 - ☞ Asymmetrical intergroup relations (i.e., attachment to one's ethnic group as opposed to involvement with the host culture) are predictors of negative adaptation outcomes (Berry, 1997; Ward et al., 2001).



Discussion and Conclusions

- Length of stay in the host culture is a necessary but not adequate condition in the adaptation of immigrant youth.
- Further research is necessary in order to establish possible mediator and/or moderator effects between acculturation and adaptation. Longitudinal designs are most helpful towards this purpose.



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Thank you for your attention!!!