Acculturation, Ethnic Identity, and Psychological Well-Being of Albanian-American Immigrants in the United States

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ACCULTURATION, ETHNIC IDENTITY, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF ALBANIAN-AMERICAN IMMIGRANTS IN THE UNITED STATES

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy
International Family and Community Studies

by
Albina Balidemaj
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Accepted by:
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of the Albanian-American immigrant community in the United States. A total of 139 Albanian-American immigrants aged 21-35 years old participated in the study. In order to utilize the data, participants filled out four different surveys, including a demographic questionnaire, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM), the Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA), and Ryff’s Psychological Well-Being scale. A correlational design relying on cross-sectional survey data and multiple regression analysis was used to study the correlations between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being. The results showed that ethnic identity, acculturation, and psychological well-being were positively correlated to each other. In addition, the results showed that both ethnic identity and acculturation affected the psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants in the United States. This relationship was further moderated by gender and length of residency in the United States and mediated through graduate school education. The results of this study will help clinicians, social workers, and policy makers that work with immigrants to better understand the psychological consequences of immigration due to acculturation and ethnic identity factors.

Keywords: acculturation, ethnic identity, psychological well-being, immigration
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to all the immigrants and refugees who are trying to build an authentic identity between two cultures.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The support and guidance of my committee was invaluable during this process. I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my committee chair Dr. Mark Small, whose continuous guidance and help made this dissertation possible. I am especially grateful to Dr. Small for his expertise and encouragement during this journey. Dr. Small’s critical eye and insight added dimension to the research, and ultimately to the development of this project. His contribution to this project was enormous and to him I owe a debt of gratitude.

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Last, a special thank you to all the participants who generously participated in this process. Their insightful responses enabled me to develop a richer understanding of psychological well-being of the Albanian-American immigrant community in the United States. I hope these findings will serve the Albanian diaspora worldwide in the future.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The understanding of immigrant acculturation and ethnic identity has been an increasing concern for mental health professionals in the last 50 years. Early empirical studies on acculturation and ethnic identity show that immigrants who acculturate to the mainstream culture are more likely to forget the traditions of their ethnic background (Berry & Annis, 1974; Szapocznik, Scopetta, Kurtines, & Aranalde, 1978). The acceptance of one culture and the abandonment of the other, in recent years, has been viewed as two independent practices that can occur simultaneously. Both, acculturation and ethnic identity have also been examined as predictors of psychological and emotional well-being; though, the findings have not been consistent or conclusive. In early studies, it has been reported that immigrants’ acculturation level (i.e., the degree to which one adopts mainstream cultural values, English usage, and mainstream social affiliations) contributed to mental health (Nagata, 1994) and psychological adjustment (Mehta, 1998; Nguyen, Messe, & Stollak, 1999). In contrast, it has also been reported that various ethnic group members can potentially have relatively low levels of acculturation, but reasonably high levels of self-esteem (Yu & Berryman, 1996).

Acculturation, as a psychological process, is believed to play a crucial role in the psychological well-being of immigrants and is one of the most popular topics in migration studies (Schwartz et al., 2012). Studies in this area mainly involve the Asian-American and Latin-American communities living in the United States (Eunha et al., 2014; Bhattacharya & Schoppelrey, 2004), excluding other significantly large immigrant
communities, such as Albanian-Americans. Ethnic identity, on the other hand, has been added recently to literature as a crucial psychological source of emotional experience among immigrants (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Although reports about acculturation and ethnic identity have increased in recent years, specific studies researching how different groups acculturate remain contradictory (Koneru et al., 2007). Many immigrant and minority groups experience acculturative stress, ethnic identity crisis, and psychological difficulties due to the pressure to assimilate while maintaining cultural roots. According to Tores, Driscoll, and Voell (2011), accumulative stress may cause mental and physical health problems. In addition to acculturation, confusion with a new ethnic identity plays a crucial part in immigrants’ psychological well-being. It has been demonstrated that ethnic identity refers both to an individual’s declared membership to an ethnic group and the outcome of this association on one’s thoughts, views, emotional state, and actions. The group in which an individual claims heritage is noted to be his or her ethnic group (Phinney & Ong, 2007). Ethnic identity shows to be positively correlated with general well-being (Syed et al., 2013).

Studies between European-Americans and Asian-Americans show a strong positive relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being (Umana-Taylor & Shin, 2007). Further, literature shows that acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being are closely related to one another.

One of the growing immigrant populations in the United States is the Albanian population, which is presently estimated to be around 250,000 (United States Department of State, 2009). Albanians are the most recent group of Europeans to immigrate to the
United States although the recorded immigration figures remain small. Prior to World War I, Albanians migrated to America due to political concerns, poor economic circumstances, or to escape the military draft in the Turkish army (Vullnetari, 2007). Recently, Kosovar Albanians have immigrated to the United States to escape the Kosovo war of 1999.

During 1998-1999, Kosovo faced an ethnic conflict with strong territorial and cross-border dimensions. This resulted in a massive movement of the population, with more than a million Kosovo Albanians being expelled from the country and 90% of the population being displaced. During this time, the majority of refugees found safe haven in neighboring countries, however, a large number immigrated to the United States and most of them never returned.

Kosovo is situated in South-East Europe and is characterized by its central position in the Balkans and is a region of countless separations: inter-ethnic, inter-confessional, and inter-cultural with multiple historical truths. Demographically, about 88% of Kosovo’s population comprises of Albanians, while other ethnicities make up the remaining 12%, namely Serbian, Roma, and Turkish, among others. As a country, it has the youngest population in Europe with an estimate of one citizen in every two being under 25 years of age, and around 30% of the population below the age of 15 (Kosovo Census Results, 2012). Kosovo is considered the poorest country in the region with almost half of its population living in poverty (Kosovo Census Results, 2012).

Despite the significant number of Albanian-Americans in the United States, there has been little to no research done in the field on their ethnic identity formation,
acculturation, and their over psychological well-being. Considering the growing number of Albanian-Americans in the United States and the need to understand this population and immigrant psychological well-being in general, this study examines the process of acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of this community.

**Statement of the Problem**

There has been little to no research done in the field of Albanian-American psychological well-being, ethnic identity formation, and acculturation, despite the significant number of Albanian-Americans in the United States.

According to Castro (2003), high levels of psychological distress can be produced by immigrants’ incapability to deal with the extreme demands of the mainstream culture. Few studies have examined how acculturation and ethnic identity are correlated to mental health in immigrants (Carter et al., 2005; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Umana-Taylor & Shin, 2007). Nevertheless, studies assessing how immigrants acculturate and adapt to new cultures remain inconclusive and contradictory (Koneru et al., 2007). The main problems with discrepancies in these studies are related to the measurements used to evaluate acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being. Furthermore, studies in this area have largely focused on Latino and Asian populations, excluding Europeans, especially Eastern European immigrants. Hence, studies remain inconclusive in showing if the process of acculturation and ethnic identity formation in other communities are similarly correlated with psychological well-being as they are with Latino and Asian communities. In addition, most of the studies on acculturation, ethnic identity, and
psychological well-being tend to focus on adolescent populations making it unclear how adults experience acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being.

Ethnic identity formation seems to be influenced by acculturation in communities that emigrate from countries where they are a minority to the majority of the population (Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006). This in turn forces immigrants to restructure the significance of ethnicity in their lives.

Taking into account the growing number of Albanian-Americans in the United States it is important to further examine the process of acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological-well-being of this growing community.

**Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate an association among variables that have not received sufficient attention in literature, specifically, the correlations among acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of the Albanian-American population in the United States. The Albanian-American community in the Unites States has received little to no attention in terms of their acculturative stress in comparison to other immigrant groups such as Latinos, Asians, or immigrants from the Middle East, although their numbers reach 250,000. To date, there are no studies that examine the Albanian-American immigrant community specifically in this regard.

Further, the study examined the extent to which acculturation and ethnic identity affected immigrant’s psychological well-being. The moderating effects of gender, length
of residency, and spouse ethnicity and mediating effects of employment and education were also examined.

Based on the above-mentioned assumptions and research on the Albanian-American immigrant community, the purposes of this study were to:

1. Examine the relationship between Albanian-American immigrant acculturation and ethnic identity;
2. Examine the relationship between Albanian-American immigrant acculturation and psychological well-being;
3. Examine the relationship between Albanian-American immigrant ethnic identity and psychological well-being;
4. Examine if acculturation and ethnic identity affect psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants;
5a. Examine whether gender, length or residency in the United States, and ethnicity of the spouse moderate the relation between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being; and
5b. Examine whether acculturation and ethnic identity are related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education.

**Significance of the Study**

The literature review shows that acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being are closely related to one another. Literature further shows that socially
integrated communities stand best in terms of psychological well-being, while the marginalized groups remain the least happy (Berry et al., 2006).

The present study is of particular importance and will contribute in several areas especially since Albanian-Americans in the United States have received little to no attention in terms of their acculturative stress in comparison to other immigrant groups such as Latinos, Asians, or immigrants from the Middle East. To date, there are no studies that examine the Albanian-American immigrant community specifically in this regard.

Primarily, this study will significantly promote the processes of acculturation and ethnic identity of Albanian-Americans in literature. Understanding the data through this angle may shed light on the psychological complexity of the process of acculturation and ethnic identity and issues significant to immigrants in general. Further, practitioners working with immigrant clients can benefit from research that examines the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being. Drawing from one's cultural strengths can aid the therapeutic process, as psychologists need to know the consequence of separation from one’s ethnic group, especially if one maintains continued connections to a cultural identity. In addition, this study will also highlight the importance of understanding the contexts and environments that shape Albanian-American individuals' psychological development.

Furthermore, this study will also be beneficial to immigration policy makers in the United States and Kosovo by providing data on how this group of immigrants acculturates, and the struggles they experience in order to become part of a larger culture.
Finally, this research will provide recommendations about the process of acculturation and ethnic identity, more specifically how immigrants understand and navigate their new environments. The study will further provide recommendation on immigration policies. This study is important not just for Albanian-Americans as a whole but also for the other Eastern European subgroups, and immigrants in general.

Research Questions

The review of the significant literature and research on acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being, suggests the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity among Albanian-American immigrants in the United States?
2. What is the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being among Albanian-American immigrants?
3. What is the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being among Albanian-American immigrants?
4. To what extent do acculturation and ethnic identity affect psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants?
5. 5a. Do variables of gender, length of residency in the US, and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?
5b. Are variables of acculturation and ethnic identity related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?

**Hypotheses**

The literature review shows that acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being are closely related to one another. Literature shows that socially integrated communities show more positive psychological well-being, while the marginalized groups are the least happy (Berry et al., 2006). Numerous studies that have examined the effect of acculturation in Asian-American’s psychological well-being have shown that acculturation is predominantly negatively associated to psychological well-being (Suinn, 2010). Studies with Russian immigrants showed that different stressors can lead to problems with acculturation; however issues such as lack of family and social support have shown to have a negative effect on their psychological well-being (Birman, 2006a; Kwak, 2003). In contrary, studies among European-Americans and Asian-Americans show a strong positive relationship between ethnic identity and psychological outcomes (Umana-Taylor & Shin, 2007). This study further investigates the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological outcomes as well as the effects of acculturation and ethnic identity on psychological well-being among Albanian-American immigrants. The results of this study may aid further in immigrant literature, immigrant policy development, mental health policies and add to the existing governmental data.
More specifically, a review of literature showed that immigrants who assimilate to
the mainstream culture reported lower scores on measures of ethnic identity while the
separation from the mainstream culture was positively associated with ethnic identity
(Berry et al., 2006). This suggests the following research question:

1. What is the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity among
Albanian-American immigrants in the United States?

The question above suggests the following hypotheses:

   a. Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with ethnic identity.

Further, the literature notes that acculturation is negatively associated with psychological
outcomes (Koneru et al., 2007). Thus, the following question is posed:

2. What is the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being
among Albanian-American immigrants?

The question above suggests the following hypothesis:

   a. Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with psychological well-being.

Numerous studies have shown the effect of ethnic identity on psychological
outcomes. Studies among European-Americans and Asian-Americans showed a strong
positive relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being (Umana-
Taylor & Shin, 2007). This raises the following question:

3. What is the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being among
Albanian-American immigrants?

The question above suggests the following hypothesis:
a. Ethnic identity is significantly positively correlated with psychological well-being.

In addition, over the past 20 years, most of the research has concentrated on the relationship between ethnic identity, acculturation, and numerous factors of psychological well-being. The highlight of these studies has been to examine different stages of ethnic identity as well as the best acculturation strategies that would lead to the most positive psychological outcomes. Even though the results for the most part remain mixed, Phinney’s (1990) model of ethnic identity development, and Berry’s (1980) model of acculturation have shown that inclusion in different cultures is related to positive psychological well-being. No studies to date have examined the effect of acculturation and ethnic identity on psychological well-being of the Albanian-American population.

Thus, the following question is posed:

4. To what extent do acculturation and ethnic identity affect psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants?

The question above suggests the following hypotheses:

a. Albanian-American immigrants who score lower on the acculturation scale and higher on the ethnic identity scale will show significantly better psychological well-being.

The second objective of this research was to investigate how gender, length of residency in the US, and spouse ethnicity moderate and how employment and education mediate the relationship between ethnic identity, acculturation and psychological well-
being. Therefore, the following question is posed:

5a. Do variables of gender, length of residency in the US, and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?

5b. Are variables of acculturation and ethnic identity related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?

Approach for moderation

5a. Gender, length of residency in the US, and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being.

5a. Gender, length of residency in the US, and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being.

Approach for mediation

5a. Ethnic identity is related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education. With the increase of employment and education, the relation between ethnic identity and psychological well-being becomes stronger.

5b. Acculturation is related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education. With the increase of employment and education, the relation between acculturation and psychological well-being becomes stronger.
Definition of Terms

In order to clarify the concepts discussed in this study, several terms must be defined. For the purpose of this study, the following terms and definitions are provided for use throughout the study.

- **Acculturation**: Is defined as the process of adaptation and cultural change stemming from direct contact and interaction between different cultural groups (Berry, 1987).

- **Ethnic Identity**: Is defined as the degree to which one identifies with a particular ethnic group. The ethnic group is generally the one in which the individual claims to belong to culturally. Ethnic identity also refers to one’s thinking, views, outlooks, and actions that are due to an ethnic group association (Phinney, 1996).

- **Immigrant**: A person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence (Webster, 2015).

- **Migration**: Refers to the movement of people among countries. The movement of people has existed throughout human history at various levels, however, modern migration refers to individuals change in long-term permanent residence (Jefferys, 2007).

- **Psychological well-being**: Refers to both a theory and measurement scales designed and advocated primarily by Carol Ryff. Diener and Suh (1997) have defined psychological well-being as a “combination of three interrelated components: life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant affect”. Affect refers
to “pleasant and unpleasant moods and emotions”, whereas life satisfaction refers to a “cognitive sense of satisfaction with life” (Diener & Suh, 1997, p. 200).

**Organization of the Study**

Chapter II presents the review of literature on the process of migration, acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of immigration. The literature review further outlines the concepts of acculturation, its indicators, and scales that have been developed and used within cross-cultural research. Next, the concepts of ethnic identity and psychological well-being and their definitions as applied in these studies are presented. Finally, the literature review illustrates a brief history of the Albanian migration to the United States, including the Albanian family and social life as well as Albanian assimilation into the American culture. This chapter closes with presenting the hypotheses for the present study.

Chapter III presents the implemented methodology of the study, including research questions and hypotheses, participant inclusion criteria, research measures, IRB approvals, and a detailed approach to analysis including the power analysis.

Chapter IV shows the results attained through data analyses. The correlations and regressions between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being are presented. In addition, a set of multiple regressions and the potential effects of mediating and moderating variables are shown.

The last chapter, Chapter V focuses on the discussion of the findings in relation to hypotheses and research questions. This chapter also presents the limitations and
implications of this study. In addition, this chapter provides recommendations for further studies.

The dissertation itself ends with Appendices where Appendix A includes the Power Analysis table, Appendix B includes the participant recruitment form, Appendix C includes the consent form, and Appendix D includes the questionnaires used in the study.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Through the examination of the acculturation process and ethnic identity formation, this dissertation explores the psychological well-being of the Albanian-American community in the United States. The following chapter provides contextual information for better understanding of the process of acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of immigrants. In itself, the present study does not test any previous existing theories. This chapter individually explores the process of acculturation and ethnic identity through the description of existing studies of different minority groups in the United States. This chapter further presents research on psychological well-being of immigrants in association with acculturation and ethnic identity formation. Moreover, this chapter explores the literature on the correlation between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being as well as the influence of acculturation and ethnic identity on psychological well-being of immigrants. In addition, this chapter provides background information on the history of the Albanian-American migration to the United States. The literature review focuses on the community in general with emphasis on significant immigration waves, demographics, family life and traditions, as well as assimilation. Finally, the chapter concludes by presenting a summary of the literature presented.
Acculturation

Acculturation is generally defined as cultural adaptation of immigrants to the mainstream society (Kim, 2006). More specifically, acculturation refers to the process in which one cultural group adopts the beliefs and behaviors of another group (Berry, 2006). Acculturation has also been defined as a progression of cultural and psychological change as a result of contact between cultures (Sam & Berry, 2010). In 1954, the Social Science Research Council extended the definition of acculturation to include psychological components as contributing variables to acculturation. This addition underlined the importance of choices, meaning that immigrants had a choice about which components of the new culture they wish to adopt and which they wish to keep from their own culture (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

During the 1970’s, acculturation became a topic of interest in psychology. Two of the main concerns in acculturation literature were directionality and dimensionality. Studies began to focus more on directionality or the direction in which the change occurs with the assumption that all immigrants move from their heritage culture to the mainstream culture. Further, in terms of dimensionality, research expanded into studying if acculturation occurs in a continuum or along two independent dimensions (Berry, 2004).

Many theorists have redefined the process of acculturation since the 1970s. In 1987, Parks created a three stage ecological model, which included (a) contact, (b) accommodation, and (c) assimilation (Persons, 1987). Parks’ model considered the process of acculturation to be advanced but also permanent, meaning that through
contacts people accommodate to each other leading to acculturation to the mainstream society, which in turn results in intermarriages and mixed relationships. Although it has significantly changed, Parks’ model has been the foundation of the description of the process of adjustment of newcomers to another country (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

Among the first, Berry (1997) wrote about four acculturation orientations: assimilation, which occurs when immigrants spend more time with the mainstream culture decreasing the time spent with their original culture; integration, which occurs when immigrants seek interaction with the mainstream culture while still maintaining their heritage; separation, which separates the heritage culture by rejecting the mainstream culture; and finally, marginalization, which is characterized by a lack of cultural maintenance and rejection of the mainstream culture. Likewise, in 1981, Mendoza and Martinez identified two acculturative processes known as assimilation and extension that resulted in four types of strategies including cultural resistance, cultural shift, cultural incorporation, and cultural transmutation. Berry (1997) had suggested that low assimilation would lead to marginalization, however, such a strategy was not part of Mendoza and Martinez (1981) presented acculturative process.

Although the Mendoza and Martinez model is interesting, research findings have not been convincing. Lackland (2000) found that acculturation strategies such as assimilation and integration account for about 4% of the variance in psychological well-being, and about 3% of the variance in life satisfaction. Similarly, Sabatier & Berry (2008a) found that acculturation strategies account for 14% of the variance in global self-esteem. In this case, more than 80% of the variance remains unexplained. Therefore,
although different models of acculturation have been appealing, when it comes to
acculturation and psychological well-being, the results have not been as clear as
expected.

Studies on acculturation have increased in recent years; however, specific
research that focuses on how different groups acculturate remains contradictory (Koneru et al., 2007). A model of acculturation presented by Sam and Berry (2006) shows that
contact between people from different cultures helps groups to accommodate one another
and helps avoid conflict. The study further notes that in the past, the process of dominant
culture incorporation was known as assimilation. Recent research has included new terms
as part of acculturation such as personality, values, and the psychological component.

A great amount of research has been devoted to understating the process of
acculturation, especially in relation to psychological well-being (Tsai, Chentsova-Dutton,
& Wong, 2002). In the United States, the majority of research on acculturation has been
focused on the Hispanic community with early studies specifically targeting research
with Hispanic-Americans (Negy & Woods, 1992). The indication for the influence of
acculturation on psychological well-being of the Hispanic-American community showed
to be weak or unclear. This suggested that the relationships between acculturation and
psychological well-being may be moderated by other variables, such as socioeconomic
status and income (Hovey, 2000). In addition to Hispanics, the Asian community was
also studied to a great extent. Tsai, Ying, and Lee (2000) focused on the connotations of
what it means to be Chinese and American by studying three different Chinese immigrant
groups: American-born Chinese, Chinese immigrants who arrived in the U.S. before or at
12 years of age, and Chinese immigrants arriving after 12 years old. The questionnaires in the study each asked the participants to individually describe how loyal they were to Chinese culture and American culture. Unfortunately, the study showed low independence between its two subscales (Chinese culture vs. American culture, $r = -0.60$).

The majority of acculturation measures that were developed during the 1980s and 1990s concentrated primarily on activities related to culture such as language, food choices, the media used and choice of friends (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992). More recent studies have included factors such as identifications with the culture of origin as well as that of the United States (Zea et al., 2003).

Other studies of acculturation have focused on cultural values (Park & Kim, 2008) even though they were not categorized as mechanisms of acculturation. The principles studied have generally fallen under the definitions of collectivism and individualism and there is broad literature on individualism and collectivism as cultural values. This literature helps connect the larger literature on cultural values with specific literature on acculturation in terms of individualism and collectivism (Schwartz, Weisskirch, et al., 2010). Cultural practices, values, and identifications are therefore all essential to consider as domains of acculturation (Costigan, 2010).

One of the first scales to measure acculturation, found in literature, is known as the Multicultural Acculturation Scale (1987) and it was designed by Wong-Rieger and Quintana. The first study to use this scale focused on Southeast Asian (SEA) and Hispanic immigrants. In this study, the Multicultural Acculturation Scale was used to compare the acculturation of these two ethnic groups living in Oklahoma. More
specifically, the scale was used to obtain results on the cultural background, residency status, and other pre- and post-arrival factors. The data showed that, Southeast Asian refugees tended to maintain a strong ethnic orientation and to be more bi-culturally oriented in comparison to the more integrated Hispanic immigrants (Wong-Rieger & Quintana, 1987).

Currently, acculturation is often measured as a bidimensional process where changes in the heritage and mainstream culture occur independently in one direction (Arends-Toth & Van de Vijuer, 2006). Important areas of measurement include identifying how strongly individuals value the heritage culture and the mainstream culture independently.

For immigrants around the world, acculturation has been an ongoing process for almost a century. Upon arrival in the new country and during the initial stages of adaptation, immigrants tend to undergo a culture shock which may include confusion, denial, and anger. According to Bornstein and Cote (2008), early examinations of acculturation focused on how immigrant identities changed following the immigration process; however, current trends (Sam & Berry, 2006) are examining how ethno-cultural groups relate to each other. There is also increasing interest in examining whether some of these immigrant populations change in response to coming in contact with other groups (Bornstein & Cote, 2008).

While acculturation is extensively researched and used, there is still controversy on how to define and measure acculturation in terms of psychological well-being (Rudmin, 2006). Although acculturation and psychological well-being are related,
psychological well-being is considered to be a consequence of acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010). Empirical data between these two variables have not been studied well. More research is needed to shed light on this important research area.

**Ethnic Identity**

The notion of ethnic identity is defined as a component of “awareness, self-labeling, attitude, and behavior” that result in individuals’ identification with a particular group as well as the emotional attachment to that group (Phinney, 1990, p. 17). According to most developmental researchers, ethnic identity consists of five components: (a) self-identification as a member of a particular ethnic group, (b) belonging and commitment to that group, (c) firm attitudes towards the group, (d) shared approaches and beliefs, and (e) specific ethnic traditions and practices (Phinney, 1990; Rosenthal and Feldman, 1992; Rotheram and Phinney, 1987). Branch (1994) further adds that the components of ethnic identity function at two different levels: individual (self-given) and group (other-absorbed). The function of ethnic identity is defined as a progression of the creation of identity over time (Phinney, 1990) due to a combination of experience and actions of the individual (Phinney, 2007). Development of ethnic identity at a group level is described through the sense of association with an ethnic group (Phinney, 2007). However, neither definition explains how the identity develops and forms (Branch, 1994). According to Spencer (1985), identity is a developmental process, which is in constant transformation.
Research on ethnic identity has followed two main theoretical approaches: Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the Developmental Theory (Erikson, 1968). According to Social Identity Theory, individuals are more inclined to categorize themselves as group members and show favoritism toward that group (Tajfel, 1978). The identity that the group creates then becomes part of the individuals’ identity and enhances the self-esteem of the individual (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In this sense, ethnic identity is then a type of group identity, which is essential to minority groups. Developmental Theory on the other hand, argues that human development is influenced by internal and external factors (Erikson, 1968). According to Erikson (1968), an individual’s identity is dependent on interactions with other people, meaning that it needs to be confirmed by others, even if discovered by the individual itself. Erikson (1968) further notes that the development of the individual may change as the environmental factors change. In response to Erikson’s theory of ethnic identity development, many researchers developed alternative models (Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1989). Even though these theories were different, they all concluded that ethnic identity is a progressive process that occurs with age; older adolescents seem to have stronger ethnic identities than the younger adolescents (Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1989).

One of the most prominent models of ethnic identity formation was developed by Jean Phinney (1989). She developed a three-stage model of ethnic identity with the aim of describing the process of individual understanding of one’s own ethnicity. She writes that during the first stage, the unexamined ethnic identity, the individual has not encountered ethnicity as an issue, has no interest in ethnicity or knows about ethnicity.
based on other’s opinions. Stage two, ethnic identity search, is marked with awareness about ethnicity as well as an increased interest of the individual to learn about ethnicity. During the last stage, ethnic identity achievement, individuals are informed about their own ethnicity while appreciative of other ethnicities (Phinney, 1989). Three years later, in 1992, Phinney established four components of ethnic identity: self-identification, affirmation and belonging, ethnic behaviors and practices, and ethnic identity achievement. The first component, self-identification, refers to the label that the individual uses when referring to him or herself. The second component, affirmation and belonging, refers to the pride that the individual experiences by being part of the group. The third component, behaviors and practices, includes the social components of the ethnic group such as language, religion, and cultural traditions, among others. The last component, the ethnic identity achievement, refers to the understanding and commitment to the individual’s identity (Phinney, 1992). Phinney concluded that stages two and four, affirmation and belonging along with identity achievement, are the crucial stages for ethnic identity development.

Some of the areas of ethnic identity research now study diverse practices of identity exploration including, explorations in depth, breadth, and cognitive assessment (Crocetti, Rubini, & Meeus, 2008). These studies show that there may be multiple forms of ethnic identities including beliefs, expectations, and choices. Two of the most regularly used measures of ethnic identity development are the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992; Phinney & Ong, 2007) and the Ethnic Identity Scale (EIS; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). The MEIM scale contains 12-items and the EIS
scale contains 5-items and they both study different variables. The MEIM scale examines items that are less tangible, such as talking or thinking about one’s ethnicity. The EIS scale consists of items which focus on actions or experiences that taught participants something about their ethnicity. These may include attendance of social activities and participation in cultural traditions. Therefore, the MEIM and EIS measure different forms of ethnic identity assessment - participation and search, respectively.

Similar to acculturation studies, most of the ethnic identity studies to date have focused on the Asian and Hispanic ethnic identity. There are several studies that focus on Israeli and Middle Eastern identity, but they are not prominent. Early studies show that due to the high value of collectivism in eastern cultures, the aspiration of keeping ethnic connections tends to be particularly strong for Chinese international students (Triandis, 1989). Although many Chinese international students acculturate into the American culture and society, many still wish to preserve strong connections with their heritage culture and identity (Ye, 2006b). Hence, the Chinese community in the United States may facilitate the acculturation process as a pre-existing culture. This way, the Chinese international students may feel more connected with their roots and may identify this connectedness as social support with which they will share their new experiences and frustrations (Ye, 2006a).

Other empirical attempts have focused on the self and ethnic identity and the impact that they have on each other. For example, among a Latino college student sample, collective self-esteem and a lower perceived threat to one’s identity was related to ethnic identity (Umaña-Taylor, 2002). Another study using a Latino adolescent sample
(Liang et al., 2007) demonstrated that individual self-esteem and effective coping strategies were positively related to a well-established ethnic identity.

Additionally, a significant number of studies on ethnic identity also focus on adolescence. Among Hispanic teenagers (Reder, 2014), the relationship between self-esteem, effective coping strategies and ethnic identity was a positive one. The results showed that participants, who scored high on ethnic identity measures, had significantly higher self-esteem. This study (Reder, 2014) provided the subjects with four choices of strategies when dealing with discrimination: asserting (having confidence in self or pride in group); discussing (explaining why discrimination is inaccurate or wrong); challenging (proving negative images wrong), and ignoring (having no external response). The study found that the subjects’ responses to discrimination and prejudice were correlated with the strength of ethnic identity and not correlated with self-esteem. Ethnic identity and self-esteem were found to be related. Discussion was the most frequent strategy used by high ethnic identity Hispanic adolescents.

Ethnic identity development is one of the most important phases of immigrant life. Research indicates that ethnic identity and psychological well-being are positively correlated (Phinney, 1989, Roberts et al., 1999; Smith et al., 1999).

**Acculturation and Ethnic Identity**

Acculturation shows to influence ethnic identity, making immigrants question their ethnicity (Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006). The definition of ethnic identity itself is dependent on the field; however, from a psychological perspective the
first definition comes from Phinney (1990). Phinney et al. (2001) were among the first to define ethnic identity as a part of acculturation, which more specifically deals with the sense of belonging within a culture. Identity is heavily influenced by changes in values, behaviors, and beliefs that occur during the process of acculturation (Schwartz, Montgomery, & Briones, 2006). Gong (2007) found that, in general, ethnic identity scores tend to be higher for ethnic groups which belong in the minority. Ethnic identity showed a positive correlation with acculturation in immigrants with a European descent in comparison to immigrants from other continents (Hsiao & Witting, 2009).

Early empirical studies on acculturation and ethnic identity show that immigrants who acculturate to the mainstream culture are more likely to forget the traditions of their ethnic culture (Berry & Annis, 1974; Szapocznik, Scopetta, Kurtines, & Aranalde, 1978). However, the acceptance of one culture and the abandonment of the other, in recent years have been viewed as two independent practices that can happen simultaneously to a person. More specifically, the development of a new cultural identity which belongs to the mainstream culture does not necessarily mean that one cannot keep their ethnic identity as well (Kang, 2006). Additional research shows that ethnic identity appears to be a significant factor for ethnic minorities in comparison to members of the ethnic majority (Chao & Otsuki-Clutter, 2011). Growing up in a dominant culture, while belonging to an ethnic group, has been shown to complicate the process of identity formation by providing alternate identities in adolescents (Phinney, 2006).

Additional findings suggest that ethnic identity and acculturation may interact differently for different populations in different circumstances. Acculturation orientation
and ethnic identity are influenced by the environment, more specifically, the ethnic
diversity as well as public policies directing immigrant integration (Vedder, Sam and
Liebkind, 2007). Ethnic identity and acculturation are significant issues for immigrants,
especially minority immigrants, who move from countries in which they are the majority
(Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007).

Recent research also aims to study some of the unexplored fields of acculturation
and ethnic identity. Askegaard, Arnould, and Kjeldgaard (2005) have studied the
conflicting moral positions in identity formation in the Greenlandic immigrants in
Denmark where these individuals have experienced the progressions and regressions of
both cultures. In addition, Üstüner and Holt (2007) have studied current acculturation
styles with the focus on the creation of mixed-identities. Both of these studies foresee
these so-called hybrid identities to be particularly problematic in developing countries.
Furthermore, they highlight the significance of the environment on the impact of
acculturation. Their prior studies have shown that migrants “individually pursue various
hybrid identities, the particulars of which vary across individuals and situations” (2007,
p.42). Taking into consideration all the socio-cultural factors that form the environment,
the study focuses on the factors that shape the immigrant’s lives, especially those of first
generations.

A positive sense of ethnic identity has been shown to act as a moderator for
acculturative stress and depression (Iturbide et al., 2009), but studies are still limited with
respect to how an integrated bicultural identity may benefit individuals facing
acculturation stress in ways that promote psychological well-being. A positive identity
development with participation in more than one culture may help reduce the negative outcomes due to stress from acculturation. According to Ponterotto et al. (2007), individuals who have multicultural personalities are culturally empathetic, more open minded, more emotionally stable, more active in approaching social situations, and are also more flexible. Most essentially, the most important part of ethnic identity development is the approach on how the worldviews are passed on from one generation to the other (Arnett, 2003). For youth in multicultural contexts, the development of multicultural identity occurs through the interactions between family traditions as well as through activities with peers and the greater society. Similar findings were reported in an assessment of mental health outcomes in a Latino-American sample (Gamst et al., 2002). They found that ethnic identity was linked with certain acculturation factors. Specifically, there was an inverse relationship between ethnic identity and acculturation; where the strong Anglo orientation was associated with low ethnic identity scores and Hispanic orientation was associated with higher ethnic identity scores (Gamst et al., 2002). The authors also noted that it was the affirmation and belonging components of ethnic identity that contributed most to these findings.

Both, acculturation and ethnic identity have also been examined as predictors of psychological and emotional well-being, but the findings have not been consistent or conclusive. In early studies, it has been reported that immigrants’ acculturation level (i.e., the degree to which one adopts mainstream cultural values, English usage, and mainstream social affiliations) contributed to mental health (Nagata, 1994) and psychological adjustment (Mehta, 1998; Nguyen, Messe, & Stollak, 1999). In contrast, it
has also been reported that various ethnic group members could have relatively low levels of acculturation, but reasonably high levels of self-esteem (Yu & Berryman, 1996).

Ethnic identity development therefore shows to be an important element to understand when acculturation and psychological outcomes are concerned. Identity development does not happen in isolation and individuals tend to look at their social surroundings in order to find indications of the behaviors and attitudes that are accepted by specific groups within society. For individuals developing among multiple cultures, understanding how to incorporate their different cultural traits into self-perception is very important. Identity conflict and the distance that one feels to lie between the cultures within which one lives (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005) may increase the likelihood of negative psychological outcomes such as depression and social anxiety and decrease psychological well-being. For this reason, it is important to take into account the process of identity development, with respect to the different cultures present in an individual’s life.

**Acculturation and Psychological Well-Being**

One of the main displays of human behavior and development is the contact between different populations. The contact between two different cultures results in cultural and psychological changes. At present, there are no individual data or studies suggesting the psychological outcomes of acculturation among the Albanian immigrants in the United States. However, research shows that socially integrated communities stand best in terms of psychological well-being, while the marginalized groups are the least
happy (Berry et al., 2006). Positive acculturation has also been defined in terms of mental, physical and psychological health as well as high self-esteem (Kunst & Sam, 2013).

Various studies on immigrant mental health have attempted to investigate the impact of acculturation and psychological consequences, however, studies remain conflicted. Studies of Latino and Asian immigrants have shown no relationship between the two (Umana-Taylor & Shin, 2007). Jang, Kim, and Chiriboga (2005) indicated that low levels of acculturation were associated with higher levels of depression.

As mentioned above, acculturation, known as the method of combining the ethnic culture with the mainstream culture, has been described as a very stressful process (Akhtar, 1999). Specifically, acculturation is occasionally presumed to be a tough process that is associated with psychopathology, risk taking, and family conflicts (Smokowski et al., 2008). Stress from acculturative responsibilities such as communicating in English, living with people of different cultures, and living in a different political and economic system have shown to have a negative influence on the overall psychological well-being of immigrants (Organista et al., 2003). When individuals experience levels of acculturative stress that are perceived as threatening to their wellbeing and outside their control, it may lead to depression, anxiety, or somatization. These types of acculturative tensions are more likely to be present in first and second generation immigrants, but they can be passed on to later generations as well (Schwartz, Zamboanga, & Jarvis, 2007). These pressures can lead to complications in adjusting to the new culture as well as
appearing ignorant toward the heritage community for having abandoned one’s ethnic heritage (Castillo, Cano, Chen, Blucker, & Olds, 2008).

Numerous studies have explored the degree to which acculturative stress and its variables affect or mediate the mental health outcomes (Schwartz et al., 2007; Wang, Schwartz, & Zamboanga, 2010). The majority of these studies have focused on college students. These studies have shown that biculturalism or the ability to live within two cultures is linked with several psychological advantages (Tadmor, Tetlock, & Peng, 2009). One of the possible advantages perceived, similar to acculturation in immigrants, is the general immigrant psychological well-being (Yoon, Lee, & Goh, 2008). The study of psychological well-being is one of the main themes in positive psychology, and it refers to the general life satisfaction, positive feelings, the ability to meet the demands of everyday life, and having a sense of personal purpose in life (Ryff & Singer, 2008; Waterman, 2008). To date, three types of well-being have been defined: subjective well-being, psychological well-being, and eudaimonic well-being (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Significant to this study, psychological well-being refers to a web of concepts referring to thriving; feeling accomplished, self-acceptance, purpose in life, and self-determination in decision-making. (Ryff & Singer, 2008).

Although acculturation may be a demanding life experience (Berry, 1998; Berry & Sam, 1996), it can also be beneficial in terms of adaptability to multiple cultural environments and abilities as well as in helping expand worldviews. As noted by Cross (2003), culture is a source and a great advantage for healing and mental wellness. Therefore, to have a better understanding of acculturation’s effects on the mental health
of immigrant families, investigators are aiming to shift their focus to the strategies that immigrants use to overcome their well-documented acculturative struggles.

Yeh and Inose (2002) examined cultural adaptation complications and managing strategies in a sample of 274 Chinese, Japanese, and Korean teenage immigrants. They reported the communication difficulties as the most shared difficulty among all three groups. Korean students were more likely to depend on religious observances as coping strategies in comparison to Chinese and Japanese students. In a similar study, Birman et al. (2010) found that communication styles could have an intermediating effect between acculturation, psychological distress, and family functioning in Russian immigrants.

Several other early studies illustrate these problems as well. Ghaffarain (1998) found that Iranian immigrants in the United States who acculturated through either integration or assimilation reported better psychological outcomes than those who were resistant to the American culture. The authors of the study used a translated version of the Cultural Lifestyle Inventory, an acculturation measure initially developed for use with Mexican-Americans, to measure the level of acculturation. This study also showed that there was no distinction between the first and second-generation Iranian immigrants in terms of acculturation and psychological well-being. In contrast, Obasi and Leong (2009) concluded that the integrationist orientation resulted in increased psychological distress when compared to those who adopted a more traditionalist (preference for maintenance of culture of origin) orientation in a sample of African descent immigrants. In this study, the authors used the Measurement of Acculturation Strategies for People of African Descent (MASPAD).
It is important to note that psychological well-being of immigrants might also be affected by the environmental changes brought in by contact with the new culture, despite the fact that the debate remains contradictory on whether personality or environmental factors contribute more on overall immigrant psychological well-being. Yoon, Lee, and Goh (2008) noted in their study of Korean immigrants that acculturation and environmental changes accounted for 45% change of psychological well-being, which showed a substantial effect of acculturation on immigrants’ psychological well-being. The authors also noted that the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being is far more complicated than a simple direct, or indirect association, and as such it deserves more research devotion in the future (Yoon, Lee, & Goh, 2008).

**Ethnic Identity and Psychological Well-being**

There are numerous studies that focus on the effect of ethnic identity on psychological well-being; however, most remain contradictory. One of the reasons for the inconsistent findings may be that most research had examined either acculturation or ethnic identity, but not both simultaneously. In early studies, Phinney (1990) noted that acculturation and ethnic identity are two related processes and as such should not be studied separately. Further, she adds that ethnic identity is not apparent to individuals who are members of a homogenous group as it functions as the basic standard. Ethnic identity becomes apparent in multiethnic surroundings and to individuals who perceive themselves as ethno-cultural minorities to the mainstream culture. She further believes that the key to a good relationship between ethnic and the mainstream culture to those,
whom both acculturation and ethnic identity are relevant, is a good adjustment of ethnic minority members to the mainstream culture. Therefore, the study of ethnic minorities’ psychological adaptation cannot be accomplished without taking into consideration their ethnic identity adjustment as well.

On the contrary, there seem to be inconsistent outcomes as to how ethnic identity impacts psychological well-being among immigrants. Early studies showed that ethnic identity was associated with high self-esteem among the 8th and 9th grade Hispanic students (Grossman, Wirt, & Davids, 1985) while the lower ethnic identity was associated with lower self-esteem among African American college students (Parham & Helms, 1985). According to Phinney (1989), the ethnic identity was positively associated to several psychological adaptation measures among African-American, Asian-American, and Mexican-American 10th graders. In the contrary, when the individual interacted in the mainstream environment, it was observed that close association with one’s ethnic group could lead to a decrease of self-esteem (Phinney, 1990). However, some studies showed to be unsuccessful in finding a relationship between ethnic identity and different methods of adaptation (White & Burke, 1987).

Newer studies among European-Americans and Asian-Americans show a solid positive relationship between ethnic identity and psychological outcomes (Umana-Taylor & Shin, 2007). Ethnic identity also shows to be positively correlated with the general psychological well-being (Carter et al., 2005).

However, the studies that focus on the immigrant ethnic identity in relation to psychological well-being remain limited. Furthermore, there are fewer studies which
focus on the specific immigrant group’s psychological outcomes based on their ethnic identity. Most of the immigrant studies focus on adolescent ethnic identity formation (Phinney & Ong, 2007).

Other samples, such as that of adopted Korean-American adults studied by Lee, Yoo, and Roberts (2004) found a significantly negative association between social engagement and life satisfaction, taking into account ethnic identity and pride. Likewise, a study by Romero and Roberts (2003) which consisted of Mexican-American adolescents, showed a weak correlation between ethnic identity and self-esteem. The same observations of a weak relationship have been made among ethnically diverse high school students and ethnically diverse college students in regards to satisfaction with life and self-esteem (Ghavami, Fingerhut, Peplau, Grant, & Wittig, 2011).

On the contrary, researchers have also revealed a positive association between ethnic identity and psychological well-being across ethnically diverse populations (Umana-Taylor, 2004). Individuals with strong ethnic identities are more likely to feel part of the larger community which in turn helps maintain a positive sense of well-being and high self-esteem (Fulgini, Yip & Tseng, 2002) as well as experience a higher quality of life (Utsey et al., 2008).

Theoretical associations between ethnic identity and psychological well-being have been recognized years ago, however, only recently did they highlight the positive values of identifying with the ability of connecting emotionally with one’s ethnic group (Umana-Taylor, Diversi, & Fine, 2002). Individuals’ lives can be affected positively by ethnic identity where the latter can provide the basis of support in dealing with negative
or stressful events (Tajfel, 1981). For instance, the stress associated with the stigma of belonging to an ethnic minority group, which is often labeled as inferior to the mainstream ethnic group, can negatively impact the individuals’ psychological well-being (Kim, 2001). In an attempt to deal with such tensions, individuals may reinforce their ethnic identity to create an association in order to find support for their psychological well-being (Tajfel & Forgas, 2000; Phinney, 2003). In addition, Caldwell, Schmeelk-Cone, & Zimmerman (2004) recommend that for a positive psychological well-being adjustment, individuals should be reinforced to keep strong ethnic identities. Therefore, one of the main purposes of ethnic identity might be to act as a psychological shield to help ethnically distressed individuals in stressful circumstances (Mossakowski, 2003).

Positive theoretical observations between ethnic identity and psychological well-being have been supported by empirical work as well. Current studies, in both African-American and Latino samples, have consistently shown a positive link between ethnic identity and psychological well-being (Gray-Little & Hafdahl, 2000; Umana-Taylor, 2004). This is contrary to the earlier studies where ethnic identity was considered a personal responsibility for individuals’ overall psychological well-being (Clark & Clark, 1950).

Similarly, a positive link has been seen between higher levels of ethnic identity and quality of life which is often an indicator of psychological well-being (Utsey, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002). Likewise, a positive relationship has been seen between high levels of ethnic identity and better adaptation to the mainstream culture (Phinney, 1990).
While the developing literature proposes a strong positive link between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, there are still areas of research which remain unexplored. Ethnic identity envisions a large number of lasting outcomes which reflect on the overall psychological well-being (Ryff, Keyes, & Hughes, 2003; Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2001), however, what rests unclear is how the ethnic identity itself affects the day-to-day lives as well as the overall psychological well-being. It remains necessary to further explore the outcomes and benefits of ethnic identity on the overall psychological well-being by further exploring the anxiety and happiness levels on a daily basis. Further examination of the benefits of ethnic identity provides a more specific preview on how ethnic identity influences psychological development.

**Background: A Brief History of Albanian Migration to the United States**

One of the most recent groups of Europeans to immigrate to the United States are Albanians, although the recorded immigration figures remain small. Prior to World War I, Albanians migrated to America due to political concerns, poor economic circumstances, or to escape the military draft in the Turkish army (Vullnetari, 2007). Recently, Kosovar Albanians have immigrated to the United States to escape the Kosovo war of 1999.

Albanians who initially escaped Albania due to strict communist political factors eventually returned to Albania between 1919 and 1925. Many of these same Albanians re-migrated to the United States due to political developments in Albania, this time planning to remain permanently in America (Zonzini, 2005). After Albania came under
Communist control in 1944, another wave of Albanian immigrated to the United States. After the collapse of communism, Albanians began entering the United States in increasing numbers between 1990 and 1991 (Vullnetari, 2007).

There are no accurate immigration statistics on the most recent immigration of Albanians to the United States. However, the most recent group of Albanians immigrating to the U.S. was during the 1999 ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians, at which time the United States approved a legal foreign status to about 20,000 Kosovar refugees. They united with their families, friends, or charitable sponsors in America, but some returned back to Kosovo as soon as the conflict subsided. According to current U.S. immigration statistics, overall there are about 250,000 Albanian-Americans residing in the United States (2012).

In terms of residency, the 2010 U.S. census shows that the largest number of Albanians live in New York City with a high concentration in the Bronx, followed by Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Illinois, California, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Settlements of Albanians can be found in Chicago, Los Angeles, Denver, Detroit, New Orleans, Miami, Pittsburgh, and Washington, D.C.

This background literature aims to offer some insights into the socio-history of the Albanians in America, their settlements, community life, and ethnic organizations, with a particular focus on immigration waivers starting with the opening up of Albania’s borders after 1990 and the crisis in Kosovo that peaked with NATO airstrikes in March of 1999. Both of these events have triggered the Albanian immigration to America while causing major identity and political shifts within the Albanian community.
Significant Albanian Immigration Waves

Albanian emigration to the United States started in the late 19th Century, although at a very slow pace. The first wave of Albanian immigrants came from areas of southern Albania (Nagi, 1988). Their main settlement center was Boston and the Greater Boston area. Until the late seventies, Boston remained the major center of Albanian immigration in the United States with several hundred Albanians working in the mills of New England factories (shoe, wood, leather, etc.) or in restaurants and hotels.

During the nineteenth century, a shift was seen in the Albanian immigration where the majority of Albanian immigrants in the United States moved back to Albania after it had gained its independence in 1912. However, due to economic and political difficulties most of them returned back to the United States within two years (Nagi, 1988). Albanian immigration to the U.S. then increased during the ‘20s and ‘30s, and it continued to come mainly from southern Albania, with only very few known cases of immigrants from the north of the country.

This pattern of Albanian emigration, mostly from Albania, came to an end by the end of World War II, when the country’s borders were closed by Enver Hoxha’s communist regime. There were very few immigrants who managed to cross over after 1944 (Nagi, 1988).

Events took on a more drastic turn in 1989, after the autonomy of Kosovo was taken away by Slobodan Milošević, then head of the Serbian communist party. The 1990s saw a dramatic worsening of the situation of Kosovar Albanians with mass job dismissals, increased police repression, and restriction of collective rights (Roux, 1992).
This is when a new flow of immigrants arose. Simultaneously, the fall of communism in Albania turned it into a country with high emigration potential. Lack of economic improvement and high unemployment contributed to Albania’s population to search for alternatives through emigration (Barjaba, 2000).

During 1999, the last wave of Albanians immigrated to the United States, this time from Kosovo. The Albanian-American community in the United States became evident at the time of the NATO intervention in Kosovo in the spring of 1999. The U.S. government offered shelter to 20,000 Kosovar refugees, expelled from their homeland by Serb-dominated Yugoslav forces (Kranish and Leonard, 1999).

The total number of American citizens of Albanian descent, who currently reside in the United States, is still difficult to determine. Two of the major factors aiding in this difficulty are the illegal status of many immigrants who may have never officially registered. In addition, Albanians from Kosovo, Montenegro, and Macedonia, with an ex-Yugoslav citizenship, often hesitate in declaring themselves as Yugoslavs. According to the latest Census data, there are approximately 250,000 Americans of Albanian descent currently living in the United States (U.S. Census, 2010).

Family and Social Life

According to the National Albanian American Council, family and social life of Albanian-Americans is a fusion of two value systems. The first system belongs to the old, tightly bound Albanians who maintain close contacts with their relatives and continue to preserve the traditional greetings and rituals when they visit or meet with each other. In
recent decades, the Albanian family has changed from being a (rural) traditional extended poly-nuclear family, to a (modern) mononuclear family lifestyle.

In terms of family size, the average number of family members in the mononuclear family has changed little since the 1950s until today: from an average of 5.8 family members in 1950, to less than 4 family members in 2003 as per latest available figure.

In terms of religion, the life of Albanian-Americans evolved around Albanian institutions: in Albania and Kosovo, like other countries of Eastern Europe, religion and ethnic identity are complicated (Zonzini, 2005). For centuries two religions have coexisted pacifically in Albania; Islam with its Sunnite and Bektashi confessions, and Orthodox and Catholic Christianity. Albanians in the US are predominantly Christian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Muslim. Mutual tolerance has always characterized the Albanian religious setup.

**Acculturation and Assimilation**

Currently, there are no studies that examine the practices and influences of the Albanian-Americans in the United States. According to historians, however, there were two significant waves of Albanian immigration to the United States. Prior to World War I, Albanians migrated to America due to poor economic circumstances, political distress, or to escape the military draft in the Turkish army. This group settled mainly in New York and Massachusetts. The second wave of Albanians came to the United States during 1944 when Albania came under Communist control. After the collapse of communism,
Albanians began entering the United States at large between 1990 and 1991. This group has mainly settled in the Midwest area.

In general, Albanian neighborhoods were likely to resist integration in the U.S., as it is of fundamental significance in the Albanian society to preserve national pride and ethnic identity. In particular, the Albanian communities in New York and Massachusetts have remained more isolated and contact with other ethnic groups has been rare (Vullnetari, 2007). This could be due to their lack of education, poor economic conditions, and continuous concerns with political issues in Kosovo and Albania. Other groups of Albanians in the Midwest may have adapted more rapidly, although equally concerned with the political problems in their old country; they were more educated and had a better standing economically.

Waldorf (1994) has compared the assimilation of Italians and Albanians in the United States and suggests that Albanians and Italians experience returns to assimilation in the host country at a decreasing rate. However, the study shows that Albanians experience the assimilation at a much faster rate than Italians. She suggests that this could be as a result of the relative newness of Albanians to the U.S. and their lack of ability to benefit from social networks in the U.S., and are therefore forced to assimilate rapidly.

Albanians have often been mistaken and taken to belong to other ethnic groups, such as Greeks or Armenians. As the national identity is extremely important to Albanian families, they have prospered in conserving a sense of collective identity, customs, and traditions in numerous clubs and associations, organized wherever Albanians live (Vullnetari, 2007).
The Immigration Process

Extensive literature on acculturation and ethnic identity has shown that immigrants who acculturate to the mainstream culture are more likely to forget the traditions of their ethnic culture (Berry & Annis, 1974; Szapocznik, Scopetta, Kurtines, & Aranalde, 1978). However, the acceptance of one culture and the abandonment of the other, in recent years have been viewed as two independent practices that can happen simultaneously to a person.

Ivlev and King (2009) argue that in areas where emigration has been equal with escape from a war zone, causes of present emigration objectives are of superior importance in exploring the overall psychological well-being, especially in correlation to acculturation and ethnic identity. Ivlev and King (2009) created a survey in order to analyze emigration purposes in Kosovo in June 2008 and found that around 30% of the Albanian respondents describe having taken tangible steps to pursue their motives to move abroad for longer periods of time. Males, respondents with family connections abroad, and people in their early 30s are the most likely to migrate. Wealthier and better-educated residents also tend to have higher likelihood of emigration (Ivlev & King, 2009). In addition, Kosovo is identified in having Europe’s youngest and fastest emerging population. In principle, this holds the possibility of active nation-building; however, it also holds the possibility for emigration in search of better opportunities.

According to Pantiledou and Craig (2006), the process of immigration can be very stressful and can result in psychological and physical problems. Current statistics show greater death rates among migrants, particularly in terms of mental health issues such as
depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, emotional grievances and anxiety; diseases, and infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis and hepatitis B (Carta, 2005). Moreover, Nawyn (2012) notes that leaving the family behind leads to feelings of loss and decline in social support. Immigrants show to be more often at risk of mental distress, and group segregation because of language obstacles, limited social networks, and cultural differences from the mainstream society (Barrett and Mosca, 2013).

Despite the significant number of Albanian-Americans in the U.S., there has been little to no research done in the field of their psychological well-being, ethnic identity formation, and acculturation.

**Hypotheses**

The first three research questions studied the psychological well-being of the Albanian-American immigrant community in the United States. More specifically, the research questions examined the correlation between the following factors: acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being of the Albanian-American population in the United States.

These factors were chosen for analysis as they have shown significant importance in literature in terms of the overall immigrant psychological well-being. For immigrants around the world, acculturation has been an ongoing process. Upon arrival in the new country and during the initial stages of adaptation, immigrants tend to undergo a culture shock, which may include confusion, denial and anger. Acculturation research shows that contact between people from different cultures helps groups to accommodate one another
and helps avoid conflict (Sam & Berry, 2006). However, although acculturation has been extensively researched and used, there remains controversy on how the measure of acculturation is defined in terms of psychological well-being (Rudmin, 2006). In addition, ethnic identity development has shown to be one of the most important phases of immigrant life. Research indicates that ethnic identity and psychological well-being are positively correlated (Phinney, 1989, Roberts et al., 1999; Smith et al., 1999).

Further, the fourth research question examines the extent to which acculturation and ethnic identity affect the psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants. Studies have shown that biculturalism, or the ability to live within two cultures, is linked with several psychological advantages (Tadmor, Tetlock, & Peng, 2009). One of the possible advantages perceived, similar to acculturation in immigrants, is the general immigrant psychological well-being (Yoon, Lee, & Goh, 2008). Studies among European-Americans and Asian-Americans show a solid positive relationship between ethnic identity and psychological outcomes (Umana-Taylor & Shin, 2007). Ethnic identity also shows to be positively correlated with general psychological well-being (Carter et al., 2005).

Lastly, the final research question examines the relationship between the variables for the sample of Albanian-Americans in terms of moderating variables of gender, length of residency in the U.S., and ethnicity of the spouse and mediating variables of employment and education. A study by Ait Ouarasse & Van de Vijver (2004a, 2004b) has shown that demographic variables (such as education) mediated the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being. In addition, education and
employment also mediated the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being. Furthermore, demographic factors such as age, gender, occupation and length of stay in the country, moderated the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being.

**Acculturation**

For the purpose of this study, acculturation is defined as cultural adaptation of immigrants to the mainstream society (Kim, 2006). More specifically, acculturation here refers to the process in which one cultural group adopts the beliefs and behaviors of another group (Berry, 2006). In addition, acculturation is also defined as a progression of cultural and psychological change as a result of contact between cultures (Sam & Berry, 2010). In 1954, the Social Science Research Council extended the definition of acculturation to include psychological components as contributing variables to acculturation. The definition of acculturation in this study includes the choice of the components of the new culture they wish to adopt and which they wish to keep from their own culture (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

**Ethnic Identity**

The notion of ethnic identity in this study is defined as a component of awareness, self-labeling, attitude and behavior that result in individuals’ identification with a particular group as well as the emotional attachment to that group (Phinney, 1990). In addition, the function of ethnic identity is defined as a progression of the creation of identity over time (Phinney, 1990) due to a combination of experience and actions of the
individual (Phinney, 2007). Development of ethnic identity at a group level is described through the sense of association with an ethnic group (Phinney, 2007).

**Psychological well-being**

Psychological well-being in this study refers to both a theory and measurement scales designed and supported mainly by Carol Ryff. Psychological well-being is defined as a “combination of three interrelated components: life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant affect (Diener and Suh, 1997). “Affect” refers to pleasant and unpleasant moods and emotions, whereas life satisfaction refers to a cognitive sense of satisfaction with life” (Diener & Suh, 1997, p. 200). Psychological well-being has also been defined as a combination of ‘positive affective states’ and ‘functioning with optimal effectiveness in individual and social life’ (Deci and Ryan, 2008).

**Gender**

The moderating variable of ‘gender’ in this study will use the official definition of ‘gender’ according to the American Psychological Association. According to APA, gender refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that given cultures associate with a person’s biological sex. Manners which are well-matched with cultural expectations are referred to as gender-normative while manners that are viewed as incompatible with these expectations constitute gender non-conformity (American Psychological Association, 2015). Studies show that gender may also be significantly related to acculturation attitudes. Ting-Tomey (1981) notes that women may be slower than men in identifying with the host culture, but they are more accepting of their culture of origin.
**Length of residency in the US**

The moderating variable of ‘length of residency in the U.S. in this study refers to the amount of time the participant has spent in the United States prior to participating in this study. The study requires that the participants be born outside of the United States, therefore this variable measures the participants’ self-declared residency in the United States. Length of residence in a foreign culture has shown to be positively associated with attitudes toward the host culture and negatively correlated with attitudes toward the ethnic culture (Cortes, Rogler, & Malgady, 1994).

**Ethnicity of the spouse**

The moderating variable of the ‘ethnicity of the spouse’ in this study refers to the ethnicity of the spouse (partner) of the participant taking part in the study. As mentioned above, the notion of ethnic identity in this study is defined as a component of “awareness, self-labeling, attitude and behavior” that result in individuals’ identification with a particular group as well as the emotional attachment to that group (Phinney, 1990). The participants themselves define the definition of the spouse in this study.

**Employment**

The mediating variable of ‘employment’ in this study refers to the occupation by which the participant earns a living. The employment status of the participant in this study is defined in terms of full-time, part-time, self-employment or no employment.
Education

The mediating variable of ‘education’ in this study refers to the process of gaining knowledge in terms of school, college, university or graduate study. This study also includes ‘other training’ as part of the participants’ education. According to early studies by Suinn, Ahuna, and Khoo (1992), educational level has also been associated with acculturation where it demonstrates that higher levels of education increase identification with the host culture.

Summary

This chapter provided extensive literature review on acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being. Further, this chapter explored the literature on relationships between these three variables and how they affect one another. Although the literature in general remains controversial, there is also evidence that acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being are inter-correlated and they affect one another.

The literature showed that in terms of acculturation, although acculturation and psychological well-being are related, psychological well-being is considered to be a consequence of acculturation. Research further indicated that ethnic identity and psychological well-being are positively correlated (Phinney, 1989, Roberts et al., 1999; Smith et al., 1999). Additionally, a positive sense of ethnic identity has been shown to act as a moderator between acculturative stress and depression (Iturbide et al., 2009).

Numerous studies have explored the degree to which acculturative stress and ethnic identity affect or mediate the mental health outcomes (Schwartz et al., 2007; Wang,
Schwartz, & Zamboanga, 2010). Positive theoretical observations between ethnic identity and psychological well-being have been supported by empirical work.

Further, Chapter 2 reviewed literature pertaining to the background and history of Albanian-American immigration. Literature showed that the Albanian community, which immigrated to the U.S. mainly during World War II, are a community that was likely to resist integration in the United States, as it was of fundamental significance in the Albanian society to preserve national pride and ethnic identity. Literature showed that in particular, the Albanian communities in New York and Massachusetts have remained more isolated keeping contact with other ethnic groups sporadic (Vullnetari, 2007). This could be due to their lack of education, poor economic conditions, and continuous concerns with political issues in Kosovo and Albania. The literature also notes that other groups of Albanians in the Midwest may have adapted more rapidly, although equally concerned with the political problems in their old country; they were more educated and had a better standing economically.

Regardless of the extensive literature available on the process of acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being, there is still much left to explore about the relationship between these variables, especially in relation to unexplored communities such as the Albanian-American community. The present provides more information on the psychological well-being of Albanian-Americans in the Unites States in terms of their acculturation and ethnic identity formation.

Chapter 3 describes the research methodology of the present study as well as survey instruments used to carry out the analysis.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being among Albanian immigrants in the United States. This chapter describes in detail the methods used to examine these objectives. This includes participants and setting, sampling and power analysis, inclusion criteria, research measures, piloting of the survey, data collection procedures, Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, data analysis, threats to validity, and human subject concerns.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity among Albanian-American immigrants in the United States?
   
   **Hypothesis 1:** Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with ethnic identity.

2. What is the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being among Albanian-American immigrants?

   **Hypothesis 2:** Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with psychological well-being.

3. What is the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being among Albanian-American immigrants?
Hypothesis 3: Ethnic identity is significantly positively correlated with positive psychological outcomes.

4. To what extent do acculturation and ethnic identity affect psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants?

Hypothesis 4: Albanian-American immigrants who score lower on the acculturation scale and higher on the ethnic identity scale will show significantly better psychological well-being.

5a. Do variables of gender, length of residency in the US and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?

Approach for moderation

Hypothesis 5a: Gender, length of residency in the US, and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being.

Hypothesis 5a: Gender, length of residency in the US, and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being.

5b. Do employment and education mediate the relationship of acculturation and ethnic identity with psychological well-being?

Approach to mediation

Hypothesis 5b. Ethnic identity is related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education. With the increase of employment and
education, the relation between ethnic identity and psychological well-being becomes stronger.

**Hypothesis 5b:** Acculturation is related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education. With the increase of employment and education, the relation between acculturation and psychological well-being becomes stronger.

![Path diagram of moderating and mediating effects](image)

**Figure 1.** Path diagram of moderating and mediating effects

**Participants and Setting**

Participants for this study were recruited between June 2015 and October 2015. The recruitment began from personal contacts and active Albanian-American cultural-based organizations. Online data showed that there were several active Albanian-American organizations operating in the United States. Most of them were located on the
East Coast with one organization located in Detroit, Michigan. In total, there were five Albanian-American organizations contacted: Albanian-American National Organization, Albanian-American Women’s Organization, the Albanian-American Association of Young Professionals, Albanian-American Civic League, and Albanian-American Medical Society.

For recruitment, the researcher’s personal Facebook account was used to advertise the study as well as to contact the Albanian-American organizations. The survey used in this study was created through SurveyMonkey, an online survey platform.

Initially, a link to the survey with a brief description of the study was emailed to the five Albanian-American Organizations’ addresses. The email can be found in Appendix B. Once approval was received from the organization’s presidents, they then proceeded by inviting their members to participate in the study.

In order to recruit more participants, the social networking website, Facebook, was used to advertise the study. A link that directed potential participants to the study was posted on the researcher’s personal page, which included approximately 400 Albanian-American members.

Lastly, the study’s sample was also generated through the snowball technique where each contact or participant was asked to forward the link to the survey to their contacts that could be potential participants (Sadler, Lee, Lim, & Fullerton, 2010).
Sampling procedure

The sample size for this study was determined through power analysis using an effect size calculator and G*power (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). This method requires drawing of significant effect sizes from two similar studies for each construct used in the study. In order to calculate $r$ for each effect, the effect size calculator was used. G*power was then generated at 80% power and .05 one-tailed significance level. Finally, the average sample size was calculated, yielding a required sample size of 135 participants.

The sample size required was initially increased by 100% to 270 participants in order to account for non-responses, outliers, and missing values. In addition, this decision was also made due to the limitations of power analysis and the difficulty in finding exact effect sizes which are comparable to the current study. However, once the required sample size of 135 participants was reached and the response rate was noted to be sufficient, the decision was made that it was not necessary to double the sample size.

In total, there were about 800 potential participants contacted of which 380 responded. Out of 380, 140 submitted complete data showing a 47.5% response rate.

Inclusion Criteria

The final sampling frame consisted of 139 Albanian-American immigrants living in the United States. All the participants were between the ages of 21 and 35 and self-identified as an Albanian-American immigrant man or woman born outside of the United States and associated territories. Participants were of mixed levels of education,
employment, income, marital status, immigration status, and religions. The majority of
the participants belonged to the second generation of Albanian-Americans.

**Research Measures**

The quantitative survey design consisted of three standardized scales and a
demographic questionnaire. The following are the standardized scales that were used:

_A Demographic Questionnaire_ was developed and used to collect data through a
series of single items created for the study. The questionnaire asked for basic
demographic information including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, education,
employment, income, marital status, ethnicity of the spouse, language preference and
proficiency, migration information and age at migration, years in the U.S., country of
origin, and citizenship status.

_The Vancouver Index of Acculturation_ (VIA) was used to assess acculturation
orientation (Ryder et al., 2000). The VIA is a 20-item instrument designed to measure the
heritage (home) and mainstream (host) dimensions of acculturation. Items assess several
areas significant to acculturation, such as values, social relationships, and devotion to
traditions, with one item in each pair referring to heritage culture and the other item
referring to host culture. The questionnaire consists of 20-questions measuring
acculturation on a 9-point Likert scale. Questions evaluate the degree of participation in
the heritage and mainstream cultures (Ryder et al., 2000). The heritage orientation
subscalescoredbycalculatingthemeanofodd-numbereditems,andalphabetamainstream
orientation subscale is scored by calculating the mean of the even-numbered items. High
scores on the heritage subscale indicate the level of cultural maintenance whereas high scores on the mainstream subscale indicate the level of acculturation to the host culture. The North American culture score is calculated in this manner using 10 North American items (the even-numbered items) (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2007).

Reliability for the Vancouver Index of Acculturation is strong and is normally above the requirements needed for research. Huynh, Howell, and Benet-Martínez (2009), using bivariate correlations, found that variability and reliability estimates were associated with scale length, gender, and ethnic composition of the samples. Their multiple regression findings show that when used in the United States, users can be sure of the reliability of scores. Vancouver Index of Acculturation has produced alphas above .80 on both the non-dominant and dominant culture scales across many different samples (Huynh, Howell, and Benet-Martínez, 2009). The Vancouver Index of Acculturation for the current study produced an alpha coefficient of 0.93.

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) was used to measure ethnic identity. The MEIM (Roberts et al., 1999) was developed to assess behavioral and attitudinal aspects of ethnic identity that are common to all ethnic group members (Phinney, 1992). The measure focuses on general characteristics of ethnic identity for all ethnic groups as well as participants’ attitudes toward ethnic groups other than their own. Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) contains 15 items, with 5 on “ethnic identity search” and 7 on “affirmation, belonging, and commitment.” Responses are recorded on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (4) to “strongly disagree” (1). The MEIM score is the sum of item scores, which can range from 12 to 48.
In sum, the evidence on the MEIM has been consistent across a number of studies. In terms of reliability, a number of studies were located measuring the internal consistency (coefficient alpha) of MEIM. The alphas were similar across college samples and high school samples. Collectively, for the ethnic identity subscale, alphas ranged from a low of .81 (Goodstein & Ponterotto, 1997; Phinney, 1992) to a high of .92 (Taub, 1995), with the mean of .86 (median of .85). Examining the mean and median coefficient alphas across samples, internal consistency scores seem to be the strongest for the ethnic identity subscale. No studies were found measuring the reliability of the scale with adults. Structural validity analyses of the MEIM in four majority ethnic minority samples (Lee et al., 2001; Phinney, 1992; Worrell, 2000) produced a relatively robust structure. Overall, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure has been shown to have adequate construct validity for the whole scale of .81 for high school samples, .90 for college samples and over .80 across various ethnic groups (Chae & Larres, 2010). The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure for the current study produced an alpha coefficient of 0.92.

The Psychological Well-being Inventory (The Ryff Scale) was used to measure psychological well-being. The Psychological Well-being Inventory was developed by Ryff (1989) to measure the proposed six dimensions of psychological well-being which are a) autonomy, or independence and self-determination, b) environmental mastery, the ability to manage one’s life, c) personal growth or being open to new experiences, d) positive relations with others or having satisfying, high quality relationships, e) purpose in life, believing that one’s life is meaningful, and f) self-acceptance, a positive attitude towards oneself and one’s past life. The original questionnaire included 120 items (20 per
dimension) but shorter versions comprising 84 items (14 per dimension), 54 items (9 per dimension), 42 items (7 per dimension) and 18 items (3 per dimension) have been widely used. The forty-two item version of the Ryff scale of psychological well-being was used in this study using a composite score of all dimensions. The response format for all items normally comprises seven ordered categories labelled from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’. For each category, a high score indicates that the respondent has a mastery of that area in his or her life. Conversely, a low score shows that the respondent struggles to feel comfortable with that particular concept. Ryff’s Psychological Well-being Inventory subscales yield acceptable to excellent internal consistency (Negovan, 2010). Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale and the subscales ranged from .72 to .85. The highest alpha reliability shown is for the scale of psychological well-being (.84) and the lowest reliability for the subjective well-being related to everyday events scale (.72). Ryff’s Psychological Well-being Inventory for the current study produced an alpha coefficient of 0.85.

**Piloting the Survey**

The survey was piloted in order to check for length and clarity of the questions. Five individuals participated in the pilot study. Changes on the demographic survey were made according to the feedback of the participants. A few questions on the demographic questionnaire pertaining to ethnic identity were removed, as they seemed repetitive to the pilot participants. The timing reported for completing the survey was between 15 and 20 minutes.
Data Collection

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained before the data collection began. The Clemson University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) reviewed the application for the study using exempt review procedures and a determination was made on May 8, 2015 that the proposed study involving human participants (#IRB 2015-133) qualified as Exempt under category B2 based on federal regulations 45 CFR 46. The approval then expired on September 30, 2015. An amended extension for data collection was provided by the IRB for one year on September 11th, 2015.

After the obtained approval, all the participants interested in participating in the study were directed to a web page (hosted via SurveyMonkey) where they completed several questionnaires over the span of approximately 20-30 minutes. Since the majority of the participants were educated or fluent in English, all the scales were administered in English. The participants were asked about their English proficiency level in the demographic questionnaire.

Once respondents were ready to complete the questionnaires, they were presented with an informed consent statement. Upon completion, participants were provided with a debriefing statement on the screen. All participants of this study were given an opportunity to submit their name into an incentive drawing for a series of gift cards. The winners of incentives were selected randomly and the selected winners were e-mailed Amazon gift cards to the e-mail addresses provided.
In addition, a final copy of the results was sent to all the interested participants.

Data Analysis

This study used a quantitative research methodology by utilizing a correlational design, relying on cross-sectional survey data to test hypotheses. The general approaches were univariate analyses (descriptive statistics), bivariate analyses (correlational statistics), and multivariate analyses (regression analyses).

The independent variables were acculturation and ethnic identity. They were measured using the Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA) and Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM). The dependent variable was psychological well-being, which was measured through the Ryff’s Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB). Further, regression analyses were used to determine whether acculturation and ethnic identity affect psychological well-being as well as for analyzing the mediating and moderating effects.

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics software v. 21.0 (2012). Initially, the data were screened and prepared for further analysis including data cleaning, the replacement of missing values, as well as reliability and validity of scales. Table 1 shows the specific analytical tests that were executed for each of the research hypotheses.
Data Cleaning

Data cleaning was performed on all data. After gathering all the responses from participants, the collected data were entered into a database to score the three standardized scales according to the scoring methods recommended by the authors of each scale. Frequencies were run to reveal if there were errors in data entry, missing values, or outliers. The data regarding outlier, coding error, and missing value points on the individual questionnaire items and all key variables were checked. The data were also checked regarding the normal and bivariate assumption of distribution.

For the categorical variables, the frequencies were run to check for missing values and whether there were any extreme values (values outside the range of response options). The missing values were replaced by using the trend replacement method where necessary while none of the outliers were removed from the dataset. For continuous variables, the examine procedure was run to make sure that a) the mean and the 5% trimmed mean were reasonable, b) to check if the range of values exceeded the range of response options, and c) to check the extent of skew. Non-linear transformations were applied to the skewed scale variables in order to improve the symmetry of distribution.

To maintain better organization, value labels were added and variables were collapsed where needed.

Missing Data

Initially, the data were checked for potential patterns in missing values. A Missing Value Analysis was used to determine the pattern of missing data. The analysis showed that the data were missing completely at random (MCAR). The missing values were
replaced by using the trend replacement method where necessary. Data from incomplete surveys were not included in the final analysis of the findings; surveys were used only if 75% of the items were completed. Out of 380 respondents, 139 submitted complete data presenting a 37% response rate.

Dropping cases from analyses is one accepted procedure for dealing with missing data if the total missing data is less than 5% for any given variable (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007).

**Correlation between variables**

A frequency distribution of demographic data and descriptive items, internal consistency reliabilities of research instruments, and an inter-correlation matrix were generated. A correlational design relying on cross-sectional survey data was used to study the correlations between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being.

**Regression between variables**

Multiple linear regression analyses were used to examine which key demographic, ethnic identity, or acculturation factors predicted positive or negative psychological outcomes in Albanian-American immigrants.

**Moderation and Mediation**

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were used to model moderating influences of gender, length of residency, and spouse ethnicity on the relationship between (a) ethnic identity and psychological well-being and (b) acculturation and psychological well-being. Specifically, interaction terms (the product of relevant
moderators and predictors) were entered separately. All continuous predictors were
mean-centered prior to entry in the model (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

Hierarchical multiple regression analyses were also used to test for the
relationship between (a) ethnic identity and psychological well-being and (b)
acculturation and psychological well-being through the mediating effects of employment
and education. A classic four-step approach (Baron & Kenny, 1986) consisting of a series
of regression analyses was used.
Table 1. *Analytical Approach Used by Hypotheses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Analytical Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity among Albanian American immigrants in the United States?</td>
<td>H 1: Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with ethnic identity.</td>
<td>Correlation Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What is the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being among Albanian American immigrants?</td>
<td>H 2: Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with positive psychological well-being.</td>
<td>Correlation Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What is the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being among Albanian American immigrants?</td>
<td>H 3: Ethnic identity is significantly positively correlated with positive psychological well-being.</td>
<td>Correlation Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To what extent do acculturation and ethnic identity affect psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants?</td>
<td>H 4: Albanian-American immigrants who score lower on acculturation scale and higher on ethnic identity scale will show significantly better psychological well-being.</td>
<td>Multiple linear regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b. Are variables of acculturation and ethnic identity related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?</td>
<td>Approach for mediation: H 5b: Ethnic identity is related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education. With the increase of employment and education, the relation between ethnic identity and psychological well-being increases.</td>
<td>Hierarchical multiple regression analyses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Threats to Validity

There were a few features in this study that were treated as threats to validity. First, the study was focused on the experiences of Albanian-American immigrants and although the findings may be beneficial to immigration policy makers and immigration psychologists, they may not be generalizable to all immigrants as the sampling was done by convenience through multiple mechanisms. Second, all the surveys were distributed to participants in English. While all the participants were very likely to have been educated and proficient in English, for some English was their second language. The third threat to validity was the use of The Ryff Scale of Psychological Well-Being. The Ryff scale relies on the self-report assessment of psychological well-being and as with all self-report mechanisms, participants may respond based on what they think is socially acceptable and fail to disclose their true responses. In order to control for potential threats by using this scale, the composite score of the scale was used as opposed to individual scores for each subscale.

Further challenges also included potential threats posed by using an online survey platform which resulted in a high non-response rate and added to the difficulty in recruiting through online means, among others.

Human Subjects Concerns

The risks of human subject concerns of participating in this study were minimal. Institutional Review Board approval was obtained from the Clemson University research office prior to conducting research.
The two main concerns involved a) the loss of confidentiality due to an email address provided for gift certificate drawing and b) psychological discomfort experienced due to the content of the survey. Full efforts were made to ensure that these two apprehensions were controlled.

**Strategies for handling potential challenges and threats**

All data collected were locked and maintained on a personal computer in a private office accessed only by the researcher. Contact information, such as the email addresses, were maintained on a separate secure data file. All the information was deleted upon completion of the study. The identities of all the study participants who have participated in the drawing for gift certificates were kept strictly confidential.

In terms of psychological discomfort, participants were notified through the consent form that although all the data remained anonymous they were not obliged to participate in the study. In case they chose to participate and felt psychological discomfort after the completion, a phone number linking the participants to the Clemson University psychological services was provided.

The following chapter presents the results and data analysis of the study.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the association among variables that have not received sufficient attention in the literature, specifically, the correlations among acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of a sample of Albanian-Americans in the United States. This chapter presents the results of the study. The first part describes the screening process of data, more specifically, the steps taken to prepare the data for analysis as well as the characteristics of the sample. The second part of the chapter presents the results of the main research hypotheses.

Data Preparation

The process of data cleaning was conducted to prepare the data prior to running the main analyses for hypotheses testing. Initially, frequencies were run to check for any missing data and observe the distribution of the data. The evaluation of frequencies served as a guide for creating, collapsing, or transforming variables. The screening process also involved the development of scales and composite variables, and a review of the reliability of those scales. A transformation of composite scale variables was also performed in order to correct the skew distribution.

Initially, the dataset included 180 respondents. After a thorough review, all the cases not having completed at least 75% of the survey items were removed. In the end, 41 cases, or approximately 23% of the cases, were deleted from the dataset, leaving a total of 139 cases for data analysis. Almost all of the deleted cases did not have any data besides
an answer to the first question related to the consent letter where they agreed to participate in the study. Although this may have biased the results, the fact that there were no additional responses other than the initial confirmation, the bias level is predicted to be low. The remaining 139 cases were then checked for missing values. After scanning the data, the results showed that 95% of the data was valid, with only 5% of the data missing.

Next, the data were tested for skewness. Specifically, the data were analyzed to determine if the variables were normally distributed. The scale variables were negatively skewed and therefore non-linear transformations were applied in order to improve the symmetry of distribution. Since all the variables were demonstrating negative skews, they were reflected prior to transformation. Specifically, a square root transformation was applied to variables demonstrating skewness between .8 and 1.5, and a natural log transformation was used for variables demonstrating skewness between 1.5 and 3.0. None of the variables showed a skew above 3.0. The examine procedure was run to make sure that a) the mean and the 5% trimmed mean were reasonable and b) to check if the range of values exceeded the range of response options. The extreme values did not have a significant effect on the results as the mean and the 5% trimmed mean were at a reasonable distance. All the transformations were successfully applied and can be seen in Figures 1 (a) and (b), 2 (a) and (b), and 3 (a) and (b), below:
**Figure 2.** Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) scale distribution before and after square root transformation.

**Figure 3.** Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA) scale distribution before and after log10 transformation.
Missing Data

Analyses revealed a small amount of missing data. Missing values were analyzed for all of the 139 items in the data set prior to the creation of scales and new composite variables. The analysis revealed that 132 cases had 0% missing data and 7 cases had 5% of the data missing. Overall, 95% of all cases had complete data. Due to a reasonably low level of missing data, and given that the sample had the required number of cases for maintaining power, it was not necessary to exclude or replace the missing values for the main analysis.

Characteristics of the Sample

The final sample comprised of 139 self-identified Albanian-American adults between the ages 19 and 38, born outside of the United States and associated territories. More specifically, 97.8% of the sample listed a country outside of the United States as
their place of birth while 2.8% were born in the U.S. The majority of participants were born in Kosovo (70.5%) and Albania (14.4%) with the remaining participants being born in Macedonia (5.8%), Montenegro (5.0%) and Serbia (2.2%) and with an average length of residency in United States of 13.94 (SD= 7.25) years. About half of the sample (49.6%) ethnically identified themselves as Albanian while 14.4% said they were Albanian-American. Other ethnicity categories included American (2.2%), Kosovar (7.2%), and other (23%). The majority reported Albanian as their native language (91.4%) with 7.9% reporting English as their native language. In addition, the majority of the participants reported their level of English proficiency as either native (27.3%) or fluent (65.5%) with 7.2% reporting it as good. Moreover, the majority of the participants reported either speaking English (20.9%) or a combination of English and their native language (61.9%) at home with 16.5% speaking only their native language at home.

The average age of participants was 29.7 (SD= 5.45). Females made up 59.7% of the sample, males made up 39.6%, and 0.7% did not answer. The majority of the sample was single (49.6%), with the rest of the participants being engaged (9.4%), married (40.3%) or separated/divorced (0.7%). Among those surveyed, 54% of the participants reported identifying as Muslim, 8.6% as Christian, and 1.4% as Orthodox, while 24.5% reported on being unaffiliated with any religion or preferred not to answer (4.3%).

Over half of the sample (52.6%) had completed some college or had a college degree at the time the survey was taken, while 23.7% had completed a master’s degree and 9.4% had completed doctoral level studies. The majority of the participants reported having finished their highest level of education in the United States (71.9%) with the
remaining 23% obtaining their education outside of the United States, and 5% having no college education. Most of the participants reported being employed with either a regular full-time job (46.8%) or a regular part-time job (19.4%). The rest of the participants had seasonal jobs (1.4%), were self-employed (5%), or were unemployed (27.3%). The vast majority of the sample (61.8%) reported a personal yearly income between $0 and $29,999, 10.1% reported an income between $30,000 and $49,999, 12.9% reported an income between $50,000 and $79,999, 4.3% reported an income between $80,000 and $99,999, and 10.8% reported an income of $100,000 or above.

In terms of immigration, half of the participants reported arriving to the U.S. as immigrants (33.1%) or refugees (28.8%). The rest arrived on a study visa (19.4%), to be united with their families (11.5%), or as asylum seekers (7.2%). The primary reason for immigration cited was war or ethnic conflict (32.4%) followed by education (18.7%), family unification (18.7%), work and financial opportunities (13.7%), marriage (12.2%), and other reasons (4.3%). Prior to moving to the U.S., the majority of participants reported having witnessed war (37.4%), death (16.5%), hunger (7.2%), injury (5%), or a combination of all these events (33.1%). Tables 2 and 3 represent the socio-demographic characteristics and immigration characteristics of the sample.
Table 2. *Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Sample*

Characteristics of the sample (n = 139)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 25</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 30</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 and above</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian-American</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovar</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place of birth</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>70.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaged</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated/Divorced</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Native language</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albanian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral degree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 – 29,000</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000 – 49,000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 – 79,000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000 – 99,000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 or more</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaffiliated</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. *Immigration Characteristics of the Sample*

Characteristics of the sample (n = 139)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Born outside of USA</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>97.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>USA arrival status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asylum seeker</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student visa</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason for immigration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Traumatic experiences prior to immigration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injury or death</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent separation</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reliability of Scales

To test for the reliability of scales, individual scale variables were combined to create reliable subscales which were tested through the computation of Cronbach’s alpha. All the subscales recorded alphas of .80 and above, demonstrating good internal consistency. The scales in this study had 12 items with MEIM, VIA with 20 items, and PBW with 42 items. All three scales were negatively skewed and needed to be transformed for normality. Table 4 demonstrates the results of the reliability tests of the acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being scales.

Table 4. Reliability and Frequencies of Acculturation, Ethnic Identity, and Psychological Well-Being scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th># of Items</th>
<th>Item # on instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VIA</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>141.3</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>180.0</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>-2.1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEIM</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWB</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>150.3</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>208.0</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1-42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 provides means, standard deviations, and internal consistency estimates for acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being for Albanian-American immigrants in the United States.

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations for Acculturation, Ethnic Identity, and Psychological Well-Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>141.3</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td>150.3</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis Testing

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity among Albanian American immigrants in the United States?

\[ H_1: \text{Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with ethnic identity.} \]

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the direction and strength of the relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity. The results of this analysis are provided in Table 6. Contrary to what was expected, acculturation was positively correlated with ethnic identity \( r = .50, p < .01 \). As participants reported higher levels of ethnic identity, they also tended to report higher acculturation levels, hence not supporting the hypothesis.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being among Albanian American immigrants?

\[ H_2: \text{Acculturation is significantly negatively correlated with psychological well-being.} \]

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the direction and strength of the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being. The results of this analysis are provided in Table 6. Contrary to what was expected, acculturation was positively correlated with psychological well-being \( r = .32, p < .01 \). As such, participants reporting higher levels of acculturation reported higher levels of psychological well-being, hence not supporting the hypothesis.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being among Albanian American immigrants?
**H 3:** Ethnic identity is significantly positively correlated with psychological well-being.

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the direction and strength of the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being. The results of this analysis are provided in Table 6. As expected, the analysis revealed that ethnic identity and psychological well-being were significantly positively correlated $r = .29$, $p < .01$. So, as participants reported higher levels of ethnic identity affirmation, they also tended to report higher levels of psychological well-being, therefore supporting the hypothesis.

**Table 6.** *Pearson Correlations of Acculturation, Ethnic Identity, and Psychological Well-Being.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.29**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Well-Being</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Research Question 4: To what extent do acculturation and ethnic identity affect psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants?

**H 4:** Albanian-American immigrants who score lower on acculturation scale and higher on ethnic identity scale will show significantly better psychological well-being.

Multiple regression analyses were performed to examine the relationship of acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being (see Table 7). Multiple
regression analyses were conducted to determine if acculturation and ethnic identity, entered at the same time, were predictive of psychological well-being for the entire sample. As expected, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results, from the overall regression equation, were statistically significant, \( F (2, 128) = 9.4, p < .001 \). The model summary from the regression analyses showed that the set of predictor variables accounted for significant variance in the dependent variable, psychological well-being, with a moderate effect size (adjusted \( R^2 = .11 \)) showing that the hypothesis was partially supported. As in the bivariate correlations, the beta weight for both, acculturation and ethnic identity was in the positive direction. These results indicated that both variables accounted for significant variance. Higher acculturation scores were associated with higher scores of psychological well-being \((\beta = 0.23, p < .001)\) and higher ethnic identity scores were associated with higher scores of psychological well-being \((\beta = 0.18, p < .001)\) for the entire sample. Table 7 provides Multiple Regression Analyses for acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of the Albanian-American immigrant sample in the United States.
Table 7. *Multiple Regression Analysis Using Acculturation and Ethnic Identity to Predict Psychological Well-Being.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>$SE$ $B$</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>Adj. $R^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Multiple Regression</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.04*</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>.02**</td>
<td>.01**</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$*p < .05, **p < .001$

Research Question 5a. Do variables of gender, length of residency in the US and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?

Research Question 5b. Are variables of acculturation and ethnic identity related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education for this particular sample of Albanian-Americans?

*Moderation*

$H 5a$: *Gender, length of residency in the U.S., and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being.*

$H 5b$: *Gender, length of residency in the U.S., and spouse ethnicity moderate the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being.*

To test the hypothesis whether psychological well-being is a function of multiple factors, and more specifically whether gender, length of residence in the United States, and the ethnicity of the spouse moderate the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, a series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted.
Table 8. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses for Variables Predicting Moderation of Ethnic Identity and Psychological Well-Being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Block 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Block 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE\ B$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.37</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity x Gender</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
<td>.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$F$ for change in $R^2$</td>
<td>15.4**</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.1**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                               |         |         |         |         |
| Ethnic Identity               | -.01    | .00    | -.38    | -.00    | .00    | -.26   |
| Length of Residency           | .00     | .00    | .07     | .00     | .00    | .08    |
| Ethnic Identity x Length of Residency | .00   | .00        | .34     |         |        |        |
| R²                            | .14     |         | .24     |         |        |        |
| $F$ for change in $R^2$       | 10.2**  |         | 16.5**  |         |        |        |

|                               |         |         |         |         |
| Ethnic Identity               | -.01    | .00    | -.37    | -.01    | .00    | -.35   |
| Spouse Ethnicity              | .00     | .00    | .11     | .00     | .00    | .11    |
| Ethnic Identity x Spouse Ethnicity | .00        | .00        | .06     |         |        |        |
| R²                            | .14     |         | .15     |         |        |        |
| $F$ for change in $R^2$       | 10.7**  |         | .51     |         |        |        |

*Note: Gender, length of residency, and spouse ethnicity were centered at their means.

*p < .05, **p < .01

To avoid potentially problematic high multicollinearity, ethnic identity was centered and an interaction term between ethnic identity and gender was created (Aiken & West, 1991). In the first step, two variables were included: ethnic identity and gender. These variables accounted for a significant proportion of variance in psychological well-being, $R^2 = .19$, $F(2, 128) = 15.4$, $p < .001$. Next, the interaction term between ethnic identity and gender was added to the regression model, which accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, $\Delta R^2 = .26$, $\Delta F (1, 127) = 11.1$, $b =$
In the second step, ethnic identity was paired with the length of residence. These variables also accounted for a significant proportion of variance in psychological well-being, $R^2 = .14$, $F(2, 129) = 10.2$, $p < .001$. Again, to avoid potentially problematic high multicollinearity, the variables were centered and an interaction term between ethnic identity and length of residence was created (Aiken & West, 1991). Next, the interaction term between ethnic identity and length of residence was added to the regression model, which accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, $\Delta R^2 = .24$, $\Delta F(1, 128) = 16.5$, $b = .001$, $t(129) = 4.06$, $p < .01$.

Lastly, ethnic identity was paired with ethnicity of the spouse. These variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in psychological well-being, $R^2 = .14$, $F(2, 129) = 10.7$, $p < .001$. To avoid potentially problematic high multicollinearity, the variables were centered and an interaction term between ethnic identity and spouse ethnicity was created (Aiken & West, 1991). Next, the interaction term between ethnic identity and spouse ethnicity was added to the regression model, which did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, $\Delta R^2 = .146$, $\Delta F(1, 128) = .506$, $b = .000$, $t(129) = .711$, $p = .478$.

This hypothesis was partially supported. Table 8 shows the hierarchical regression analyses of variables predicting moderation of ethnic identity and psychological well-being.
To test the hypothesis that psychological well-being is a function of multiple factors, and more specifically, that gender, length of residence in the United States, and the ethnicity of the spouse moderate the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being, a series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted.

In the first step, acculturation and gender were entered. These variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in psychological well-being, $R^2 = .29$, $F(2, 128) = 24.5, p < .001$. To avoid potentially problematic high multicollinearity, acculturation was...
centered and an interaction term between acculturation and gender was created (Aiken & West, 1991). The interaction term between acculturation and the length of residence was then added to the regression model, which accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, $\Delta R^2 = .32$, $\Delta F (1, 127) = 4.6$, $b = .002$, $t (128) = 2.15$, $p = .03$.

In the second step, acculturation was paired with length of residence. These variables also accounted for a significant amount of variance in psychological well-being, $R^2 = .25$, $F (2, 129) = 21.7$, $p < .001$. Again, to avoid potentially problematic high multicollinearity, the variables were centered and an interaction term between acculturation and length of residence was created (Aiken & West, 1991). The interaction term between acculturation and length of residence was then added to the regression model, which did account for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, $\Delta R^2 = .31$, $\Delta F (1, 128) = 11.2$, $b = .00$, $t (129) = 3.35$, $p < .001$.

Lastly, acculturation was paired with spouse ethnicity. These variables accounted for a significant amount of variance in psychological well-being, $R^2 = .24$, $F (2, 129) = 20.1$, $p < .001$. To avoid potentially problematic high multicollinearity, the variables were centered and an interaction term between acculturation and spouse ethnicity was created (Aiken & West, 1991). The interaction term between acculturation and spouse ethnicity was then added to the regression model, which did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, $\Delta R^2 = .25$, $\Delta F (1, 128) = 1.5$, $b = .00$, $t (129) = 1.24$, $p = .22$. 

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This hypothesis was partially supported. Table 9 shows the hierarchical regression analysis of variables predicting moderation of acculturation and psychological well-being.

**Mediation**

\textit{H 5a: Ethnic identity is related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education. With the increase of employment and education, the relation between ethnic identity and psychological well-being becomes stronger.}

\textit{H 5b: Acculturation is related to psychological well-being through mediation of employment and education. With the increase of employment and education, the relation between acculturation and psychological well-being becomes stronger.}

In order to test if the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being and between acculturation and psychological well-being are mediated through employment and education, hierarchical regression analyses were executed. To test for mediation, Baron and Kenny’s (1986) procedure was followed in which several analyses are conducted to assess the effects of the mediator on the relationship between the main measure and predictor variables.

Prior to conducting the regressions, the variables of employment and education were collapsed due to several low categories, and dummy coded. Employment was dummy coded into full-time employment, part-time employment, and unemployment whereas education was dummy coded into high school or less, some college and college degree, and the graduate degree.
Next, correlations were run among the dummy coded employment and education variables, ethnic identity, acculturation, and psychological well-being. The dummy coded variables that were significantly correlated with acculturation and ethnic identity were then used for further analysis. Table 10 shows the dummy coded variables that were the most significantly correlated with ethnic identity were full-time employment \( (r = -.18, p < .01) \), unemployment \( (r = .17, p < .01) \), and graduate degree education \( (r = .20, p < .01) \). The dummy coded variables that were the most significantly correlated with acculturation were full-time employment \( (r = -.14, p < .01) \), and graduate degree education \( (r = .15, p < .01) \). The dummy coded variables that were the most significantly correlated with psychological well-being were college degree education \( (r = -.12, p < .01) \), and graduate degree education \( (r = .20, p < .01) \).
Table 10. Correlations between dummy coded mediator variables of Employment and Education, Ethnic Identity, Acculturation, and Psychological Well-Being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full-time Employment</th>
<th>Part-time Employment</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>High School or less Education</th>
<th>College Degree Education</th>
<th>Graduate Degree Education</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
<th>Psychological Well-Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td><strong>Full-time Employment</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.170*</td>
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<td><strong>Acculturation</strong></td>
<td>Pear. Corr.</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological Well-Being</strong></td>
<td>Pear. Corr.</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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<td>0.693</td>
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<td>-0.007</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological Well-Being</strong></td>
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<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Once the correlations were established, the next step involved using a regression analysis to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between the predictor and criterion variable. Table 10 shows the correlations between dummy coded mediator variables of employment and education, ethnic identity, acculturation, and psychological well-being. The second step involved conducting a regression analysis to examine whether the predictor variables were significantly related through the mediator variables. In this analysis, the mediator variables were used as criterion variables. In this case the significant dummy coded variables were used to run individual regression analyses between: 1) each significant dummy coded employment and education variable and ethnic identity, 2) each significant dummy coded employment and education variable and acculturation, and 3) each significant dummy coded employment and education variable and psychological well-being. Table 11 shows the summary of regression analyses of relationships between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, and acculturation and psychological well-being through the mediating variables. The third step involved establishing a relationship between the mediator variable and the measure variable.
Table 11. Summary of Regression Analyses predicting relations between Ethnic Identity and Psychological Well-Being and Acculturation and Psychological Well-Being through mediation variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Psychological Well-Being</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>SE $B$</td>
<td>$β$</td>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>$F$ for change in $R^2$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>SE $B$</td>
<td>$β$</td>
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<td>-.18</td>
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<td>4.90**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>.17</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>3.98**</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<td>Graduate School Education</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>5.60**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.15</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Full-time employment, unemployment, and graduate school were collapsed and dummy coded prior to analysis.

*p < .05, **p < .01
Finally, hierarchical regression analyses were executed predicting the relation between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, and acculturation and psychological well-being through mediating variables.

Table 12. *Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses Predicting the Relation between Ethnic Identity and Psychological Well-Being through Mediating Variables.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Block 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Block 2</th>
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<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
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<td>.29</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Employment</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F for change in R²</td>
<td>12.2**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.30</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F for change in R²</td>
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<td>.41</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.08</td>
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<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F for change in R²</td>
<td>12.2**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.02*</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Full-time employment, unemployment, and graduate school were collapsed and dummy coded prior to analysis.  
*p < .05, **p < .01*
To examine the association between ethnic identity and psychological well-being through the mediating effects of full-time employment, unemployment, and graduate degree education, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed. Three separate, two-block hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted with psychological well-being as the dependent variable. All the hierarchal multiple regressions are presented in Table 12. In all three regressions, ethnic identity was entered at Block 1 of the regression to control for ethnic identity responses.

In the first regression, the full-time employment variable was entered at Block 2. The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at Block 1, ethnic identity did contribute significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = .09, F(1,130) = 12.2, p < .01, \beta = .31$ and accounted for 9% of the variation in psychological well-being. Introducing the full-time employment variable did not show a change of variation in ethnic identity and the change in $R^2$ was non-significant $R^2 = .09, F(1,129) = 1.1, p = .31, \beta = .09$.

In the second regression, the unemployment variable was entered at Block 2. The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at Block 1, ethnic identity did contribute significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = .09, F(1,130) = 12.2, p < .01, \beta = .30$ and accounted for 9% of the variation in psychological well-being. Introducing the unemployment variable did not show a change of variation in ethnic identity and the change in $R^2$ was non-significant $R^2 = .09, F(1,129) = .41, p = .52, \beta = -.05$.

In the third regression, the graduate school education variable was entered at Block 2. The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at Block 1, ethnic identity did contribute significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = .08, F(1,130) = 12.2, p < .01, \beta = .31$. 

.26 and accounted for 8% of the variation in psychological well-being. Introducing the graduate school education variable added to the change in variation in ethnic identity and the change in $R^2$ was significant $R^2 = .12, F(1,129) = 3.02, p = .08, \beta = .15$. Therefore, this hypothesis was partially supported.

Table 13. Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses Predicting the Relation between Acculturation and Psychological Well-Being through Mediating Variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Block 1</th>
<th></th>
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<th>Block 2</th>
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<td>$SE_B$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE_B$</td>
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<td>.32</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.33</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<td>.86</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.14</td>
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<td>.32</td>
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<td>$F$ for change in $R^2$</td>
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<td>.13</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.28</td>
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<td>.10</td>
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<td>.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>$F$ for change in $R^2$</td>
<td>14.8**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Full-time employment, unemployment, and graduate school were collapsed and dummy coded prior to analysis.

*p < .05, **p < .01

To examine the relation between acculturation and psychological well-being through the mediating effects of full-time employment, unemployment, and graduate degree education, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed. Three separate, two block hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted with psychological
well-being as the dependent variable. All the hierarchal multiple regressions are presented in Table 13. In all three regressions, acculturation was entered at Block 1 of the regression to control for acculturation responding.

In the first regression, the full-time employment variable was entered at Block 2. The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at Block 1, acculturation did contribute significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = .10, F (1,130) = 14.8, p < .01, \beta = .33$ and accounted for 10% of the variation in psychological well-being. Introducing the full-time employment variable did not show a change of variation in acculturation and the change in $R^2$ was non-significant $R^2 = .12, F (1,129) = .86, p = .36, \beta = .08$.

In the second regression, the unemployment variable was entered at Block 2. The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at Block 1, acculturation did contribute significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = .10, F (1,130) = 14.8, p < .01, \beta = .32$ and accounted for 10% of the variation in psychological well-being. Introducing the unemployment variable did not show a change of variation in acculturation and the change in $R^2$ was non-significant $R^2 = .10, F (1,129) = .86, p = .77, \beta = -.02$.

In the third regression, the graduate school education variable was entered at Block 2. The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that at Block 1, acculturation did contribute significantly to the regression model, $R^2 = .10, F (1,130) = 14.8, p < .01, \beta = .28$ and accounted for 10% of the variation in psychological well-being. Introducing the graduate school education variable added to a change in variation in acculturation and the change in $R^2$ was significant, $R^2 = .13, F (1,129) = 3.5, p = .06, \beta = .16$. This hypothesis was partially supported.
Summary

This chapter presented the main outcomes of the study. Frequency and descriptive analyses revealed that out of 139 self-identified Albanian-Americans between the ages 19 and 38, 97.8% of them listed a country outside of the United States as their place of birth while 2.8% were born in the U.S. The average age of participants was 29.7 (SD = 5.45). The majority of the sample was single (49.6%) and over half of the sample (52.6%) had completed some college or had a college degree. In terms of immigration, half of the participants reported on arriving to the U.S. as immigrants (33.1%) or refugees (28.8%).

Pearson correlation analyses showed that acculturation was positively correlated with ethnic identity $r = .50, p < .01$ and psychological well-being $r = .32, p < .01$ indicating that as participants reported higher levels of ethnic identity, they also tended to report higher levels of acculturation and psychological well-being. The Pearson correlation analysis also revealed that ethnic identity and psychological well-being were positively correlated $r = .29, p < .01$. Thus, as participants reported higher levels of ethnic identity, they also tended to report higher levels of psychological well-being. The first two hypotheses were thus rejected showing statistically positive relationships while the third hypothesis was supported by showing a statistically significant positive relationship.

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine if acculturation and ethnic identity were predictive of psychological well-being for the entire sample. The model summary from the regression analyses showed that the set of predictor variables accounted for a significant variance in the dependent variable, psychological well-being, with a moderate effect size, therefore confirming the hypothesis.
To test the hypothesis whether psychological well-being is a function of multiple factors, and more specifically, whether gender, length of residence in the United States and the ethnicity of the spouse moderate the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, and acculturation and psychological well-being, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted. The analyses showed that in both cases, ethnic identity and acculturation, gender and length of residence accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being. To the contrary, ethnicity of the spouse did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being therefore confirming only a part of the hypothesis.

Lastly, in order to test whether ethnic identity and acculturation were related to psychological well-being through mediation variables of education and employment, hierarchical regression analyses were executed. The analyses showed that full-time employment and unemployment did not show a change of variation in either relationship. The graduate school variable added to a change in variation in both relationships, ethnic identity and psychological well-being as well as acculturation and psychological well-being, therefore confirming only a portion of the hypothesis.

Results showed that ethnic identity, acculturation, and psychological well-being were all positively correlated with one another. In addition, results showed that both, ethnic identity and acculturation, affected the psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants in United States. The association between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, and acculturation and well-being were further moderated by
gender and length of residency in the United States and mediated through graduate school education.

Chapter five offers a more detailed discussion of the findings and their implications.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being among Albanian immigrants in the United States. Acculturation and ethnic identity represent crucial issues that affect the general psychological well-being of immigrants; however, they have mainly been studied as individual subjects or in the case of Albanian-American immigrants, not studied at all. The purpose of this study was to examine how these variables are correlated to each other as well as how they affect one another. Although there is some research in this area, most of the studies focused on the Asian and Latino communities, leaving the European communities, especially the Eastern European immigrant communities, aside.

Summary and Analysis of Key Findings

This study demonstrated how acculturation of immigrants to the mainstream culture (or lack thereof) and ethnic identity are correlated with their psychological well-being. The study further examined the effects of acculturation and ethnic identity on the overall psychological well-being. The results showed that as participants reported higher levels of ethnic identity, they also tended to report higher acculturation levels. In addition, participants reporting higher levels of acculturation reported higher levels of psychological well-being. Finally, as participants reported higher levels of ethnic identity, they also tended to report higher levels of psychological well-being. Higher acculturation and ethnic identity scores were associated with higher scores of psychological well-being.
for the entire sample. This showed that the predictor variables accounted for significant variance in the dependent variable, psychological well-being.

In terms of moderating effects and whether psychological well-being was a function of multiple factors, the analyses showed that in both cases, ethnic identity and acculturation, gender and length of residence accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being. The ethnicity of the spouse did not account for a significant part of the variance in psychological well-being; therefore the hypothesis was confirmed partially. The strength of the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being, and ethnic identity and psychological well-being strengthened if the participant was a woman who has been a resident in the United States for a longer period of time. This is a very important finding and in tune with related research. A study conducted by Motti-Stefanidi (2008) on acculturation and adaptation of immigrant adolescents in Greek urban schools showed that Albanian girls were more likely than boys to identify with Western values that allow women greater freedom. Similarly, a study conducted by Papadopoulos (2015) on the effects of socio-demographic variables on acculturation of Albanian immigrants in Greece showed that integration of immigrants was increased by female gender. This may be due to the fact that Albanian women may belong to the group of immigrants who acculturate well, especially in Western cultures that grant women equal rights.

In addition, the analyses of mediating effects of education and employment between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, and between acculturation and psychological well-being, showed that in both cases, ethnic identity and acculturation,
full-time employment and unemployment did not show a change of variation in ethnic identity or acculturation. The graduate school variable added to a change in variation in both, ethnic identity and acculturation, therefore confirming only a portion of the hypothesis. This showed that the relationship between acculturation and psychological well-being and ethnic identity and psychological well-being was explained by highly educated participants. These findings may be biased by the fact that a large portion of the participants of the study were highly educated.

**Correlation among Acculturation, Ethnic Identity, and Psychological Well-Being**

A great amount of research has been devoted to understating the process of acculturation, especially in relation to psychological well-being (Tsai, Chentsova-Dutton, & Wong, 2002). In the United States, the majority of research on acculturation has focused on the Hispanic community with early studies specifically targeting research with Hispanic-Americans (Negy & Woods, 1992). The indication for the influence of acculturation on psychological well-being in these studies was inconsistent. While acculturation is extensively researched and used, there is still controversy on how to define and measure acculturation in terms of psychological well-being (Rudmin, 2006). Although acculturation and psychological well-being are related, psychological well-being is considered a consequence of acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010). Empirical data between these two variables have not been well-studied.

In this study, Pearson correlation analyses were used to examine the direction and strength of the relationships between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being. Contrary to what was expected, acculturation was positively correlated with
ethnic identity; as participants reported higher levels of ethnic identity affirmation, they also tended to report higher acculturation levels. Similarly, contrary to what was expected, acculturation was positively correlated with psychological well-being and as such, participants reporting higher levels of acculturation reported higher levels of psychological well-being. Keeping in mind that the Albanian culture is of collectivist nature, these findings are inconsistent with similar studies. Early studies showed that due to the high value of collectivism in eastern cultures, the aspiration of keeping ethnic connections tended to be particularly strong for Chinese international students (Triandis, 1989). Similarly, studies on Latino college students showed that collective self-esteem was related to ethnic identity (Umaña-Taylor, 2002). Nevertheless, these findings may be a result of the characteristics of the sample, more specifically the high education and employment rate of the participants. Albanians in general tend to be very proud of their ethnicity and roots but throughout history have had to adapt to different cultures during Balkan wars.

Similar to acculturation studies, most of the ethnic identity studies to date have focused on the Asian and Hispanic ethnic identity. Most of these studies were not prominent as they showed discrepancies in their results. Other empirical attempts have focused on the self and ethnic identity and the impact that they have on each other. Research so far has indicated that ethnic identity and psychological well-being are positively correlated (Phinney, 1989, Roberts et al., 1999; Smith et al., 1999).

As it was expected, the present study revealed that ethnic identity and psychological well-being were positively related. Thus, as participants reported higher
levels of ethnic identity, they also tended to report higher levels of psychological well-being. This, again is in tune with the pride that Albanians have towards their ethnic identity.

The Effects of Acculturation and Ethnic Identity on Psychological Well-Being

Both, acculturation and ethnic identity have been examined as predictors of psychological and emotional well-being, but the findings have not been consistent or conclusive. In early studies, it has been reported that immigrants’ acculturation level (i.e., the degree to which one adopts mainstream cultural values, English usage, and mainstream social affiliations) contributed to mental health (Nagata, 1994) and psychological adjustment (Mehta, 1998; Nguyen, Messe, & Stollak, 1999). In contrast, it has also been reported that various ethnic group members could have relatively low levels of acculturation, but reasonably high levels of self-esteem (Yu & Berryman, 1996).

The model summary from the regression analyses of the present study showed that acculturation and ethnic identity accounted for significant variance in the dependent variable, psychological well-being with both, acculturation and ethnic identity, being in the positive direction. As it was expected, higher acculturation scores were associated with higher scores of psychological well-being. Similarly, as it was expected, higher ethnic identity scores were associated with higher scores of psychological well-being for the entire sample.
Moderating and Mediating factors

The studies of moderating and mediating factors between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being have been very limited. The majority of acculturation measures that were developed during the 1980s and 1990s concentrated primarily on activities related to culture such as language, food choices, the media used, and the choice of friends (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992). More recent studies have included factors such as identifications with the culture of origin as well as that of the United States (Zea et al., 2003). In terms of ethnic identity, most of the studies have used collectivism and social support as moderating or mediating effects. This study tested whether psychological well-being is a function of multiple factors, and more specifically, whether gender, length of residence in the United States, and the ethnicity of the spouse moderate the relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being, and acculturation and psychological well-being. The analyses showed that in both cases, ethnic identity and acculturation, gender and length of residence accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, whereas the ethnicity of the spouse did not account for a significant proportion of the variance in psychological well-being, therefore confirming only a part of the hypothesis. This is contrary to what was expected, as Albanians in general aim toward inter-ethnic marriages. However, these findings may be due to the high level of education and employment characteristics of the sample.

Further, the study tested whether the association between ethnic identity and psychological well-being and between acculturation and psychological well-being was
mediated through education and employment. The analyses showed that in both cases, ethnic identity and acculturation, full-time employment and unemployment did not show a change of variation in ethnic identity or acculturation. Graduate school added to a change in variation in both, ethnic identity and acculturation, therefore confirming only a portion of the hypothesis. This showed that the Albanian-American psychological well-being in terms of acculturation and ethnic identity was mediated through education, specifically graduate level education and not the type of employment.

**Implications of the Study**

This study adds to the limited existing literature on immigrant acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being. Previous research has indicated that the influence of acculturation on psychological well-being is weak or unclear. Other studies have shown that acculturation and psychological well-being are related where psychological well-being is considered a consequence of acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010). In terms of ethnic identity, research so far has indicated that ethnic identity and psychological well-being are positively correlated (Phinney, 1989, Roberts et al., 1999; Smith et al., 1999). The results of this study have shown that both, ethnic identity and acculturation are correlated with psychological well-being. Similarly, this study has shown that acculturation and ethnic identity affect the psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants in the United States. This relationship was further moderated by gender and length of residency in the United States and mediated through graduate school education. Therefore, the results of this study are in coordination with the
results of many recent studies of acculturation that show a rather positive outcome for immigrants. Specialists, researchers, and policy makers may want to focus on the importance of the association between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being when designing programs, studies, and policies that aspire to understand and advance the well-being of immigrants. The use of such findings to develop public policies and programs should be a major focus of current efforts to improve the psychological well-being of all acculturating groups and individuals.

In terms of public implications, these consistent results may aid the development of policies and program applications that improve the outcomes for all acculturating groups in different societies, public institutions, ethno-cultural groups, and even individuals. The data can also aid in expanding the dialogue between researchers and practitioners in the field and for advocating for collaboration between interdisciplinary fields. The final results will also add to existing literature about immigrant mental and behavioral health.

In addition, for public institutions such as those dealing with education, health, and justice, this study may aid by helping them move toward broader multicultural structures and practices by the removal of practices that exclude acculturating individuals and groups and through the insertion of practices that include the cultural and psychological qualities that acculturating individuals or groups value.

University education programs for teachers, counselors, and psychologists must place stronger importance on acculturation, ethnic diversity, and the way immigrants adapt to other cultures other than their own. Policies may be created to train these
professionals to promote positive feelings toward diversity and develop quality programs designed to meet the needs of all immigrants regardless of ethnic background. The data adds to the current existing literature in presenting the problems of immigrant acculturation and ethnic identity and it shows the need for community-based service necessity.

Lastly, in terms of clinical implications, the results of this study may be important for mental health professionals by providing a better understanding of immigrant clients’ experiences with immersion into a dominant culture. Keeping in mind the collectivistic nature of the Albanian culture and the strong emphasis that they place on family and society, this study may help mental health professionals by reminding them of the importance of creating a safe and comfortable environment for this particular population or similar acculturating groups.

The rapid change of society in terms of culture, gender, religion, and ethnicity may help teachers, counselors, and therapists find these results useful in understanding, teaching, and empowering immigrants with whom they work.

Limitations of the Study

This study is among a few that assesses acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being among the Albanian-American immigrant community in the United States. It also serves as the first studies to assess how acculturation and ethnic identity are correlated and impact psychological well-being among the Albanian-American immigrant community. However, there are several limitations that should be
noted when interpreting the results. First, the sample size used in the study, through sampling by convenience, was relatively small, which could potentially limit generalizability. In addition, generalizability might also be limited by the age group used which primarily consisted of young professionals aged 21-35. Second, all the participants had to fill out the survey in English using a computer. In the future, an Albanian translated version of the survey along with a pen-and-paper version of the survey may yield more accurate data. Third, the cross-sectional design used in this study did not allow for the variables to be measured over time which can be challenging for variables such as acculturation and ethnic identity since they can change over time. A more preferred method for studying acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being, and how they affect one another as well as how they are correlated, would be a longitudinal study. The fourth limitation of the study was related to the scales used to measure acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being. Although these scales are prepared to be used with minority groups, they might not adequately measure the Albanian-American experience. While the reliability of these scales was adequate, Albanian-Americans as a tight knit community might have answered the questions based on what they felt was acceptable to the wider community. Other limitations include the use of an online platform in order to collect the data which lead to a high non-response rate.


**Recommendations for Future Research**

The study of acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being among the Albanian-American community should continue in the future. Initially, future studies should expand the generalizability of data by diversifying the sample demographics as well working with larger sample sizes. In addition, Albanian translated versions of the survey along with a pen-and-paper version of the survey should be provided as they may yield more accurate data. Likewise, taking into consideration the growing number of the Albanian-American community in the United States, future research should focus on constructing scales that pertain to this community in particular, similar to the scales developed for the Asian and Latin Diasporas. Specially designed scales, which may also be translated into the Albanian language, are more likely to produce more accurate results. Lastly, longitudinal studies should be used to study, understand, and better track the acculturation and ethnic identity changes in this community. Longitudinal studies may provide better opportunities to assess the progress of acculturation and ethnic identity through the years. Conducting studies which research issues that are correlated to and affect psychological well-being among these individuals, may help in the future to better understand and support the members of the Albanian-American community in the United States.

**Conclusion**

The current study contributed by helping understand the importance of acculturation and ethnic identity on the overall immigrant psychological well-being.
Acculturation and ethnic identity are two influential terms when it comes to defining psychological well-being in immigrant populations. Acculturation or cultural adaptation helps immigrants adapt to the mainstream society. Ethnic identity on the other hand, has been labeled as a component of awareness, self-labeling, attitude and behavior that results in individuals’ identification with a particular group as well as the emotional attachment to that group. Earlier studies on acculturation and ethnic identity showed that immigrants who acculturated to the mainstream culture were more likely to forget the traditions of their ethnic culture. In recent years, the studies have shown that acculturation and ethnic identity can be viewed as two independent practices that can happen simultaneously to a person. This may mean that the development of a new cultural identity, which belongs to the mainstream culture, does not necessarily mean that one cannot keep their ethnic identity as well. The results of this study showed that both, ethnic identity and acculturation were correlated to and affected the psychological well-being of Albanian-American immigrants in the United States and therefore supporting Umana-Taylor & Shin (2007). This relationship was further moderated by gender and length of residency in the United States and mediated by graduate school education.

According to the outcomes of this study, it is practical to suggest that acculturation and ethnic identity are ongoing processes that affect individuals as well as communities. The results of this study aid in supporting the existing literature by adding new information on a community that has not been studied before.

Although continuous research will be needed to further examine the factors which may influence the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological
well-being, this study provided several implications for public policy makers as well as clinical practitioners. Lastly, this study serves as a reminder of others’ experiences in immersing into a new culture.
REFERENCES


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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: Power Analysis

<table>
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<th>G*power</th>
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Where the effect size was a correlation, it is listed in the R column. Otherwise, it was converted to a correlation coefficient.
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| **Birman and Persky (2005)**        | Relationship between ethnic identity and psychological well-being mediated by length or residency: Identifying as Russian | $p < .001$  
$n = 351$ | $-.20$ | 153 |
|                                     |                                                                             |      |                    |
| **Reddy (2002)**                    | Relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being mediated by gender: | $p < 0.01$  
$n = 132$ | $.26$ | 90 |
|                                     |                                                                             |      |                    |
| **Reddy (2002)**                    | Relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being mediated by gender | $p < 0.01$  
$n = 132$ | $.28$ | 77 |
|                                     |                                                                             |      |                    |
| **Lahti and Mähönen (2012)**        | Relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being mediated by length or residency: Anticipated | $M = 9.49$  
$SD = 3.97$ | $.28$ | 77 |
|                                     |                                                                             |      |                    |
| **Lahti and Mähönen (2012)**        | Relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being mediated by length or residency: Perceived | $M = 9.49$  
$SD = 3.97$ | $.52$ | 21 |
|                                     |                                                                             |      |                    |
| **Nekby (2010)**                    | Relationship between acculturation, ethnic                                | $n = 3216$  
p not reported | $0.18$ | 189 |

131
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Average sample size: 135 participants
APPENDIX B: Participant Recruitment

Email to the Albanian-American Associations for Participant Recruitment

Dear xxx members,
My name is Albina Balidemaj and I am a doctoral candidate in International Family and Community Studies at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina. I am also a member of the Albanian-American population in the United States. I am writing to you in regards to a dissertation project titled “Acculturation, Ethnic Identity and Psychological Well-Being of Albanian-American Immigrants in the United States” which is being conducted by me and Dr. Mark Small as principal investigator.

The main purpose of this study will be to investigate the relationship between issues that have not received sufficient previous attention, specifically, the relationship between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being among the Albanian-American population in the United States. Further, the study will investigate the effects of acculturation and ethnic identity on psychological well-being.

To be involved in the study, all participants must be between 21 to 35 years old and self identity as an Albanian-American immigrant man or woman born outside of the United States and associated territories. Participants are asked to fill out an online survey which will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. All participants of this study will be given an opportunity to submit their name into a drawing for a series of gift cards. The winners of the incentives will be selected randomly and the selected winners will be e-mailed an Amazon gift card to the e-mail address provided.

- $25.00 Amazon Gift Card (1 available)
- $50.00 Amazon Gift Card (1 available)
- $100.00 Amazon Gift Card (1 available)

To participate in the study, please click on the following link: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YC95LHW

To enter your name for the gift card drawing, please email us your name at: albanian.american.study@gmail.com

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time at abalide@g.clemson.edu.

Thank you,
Albina Balidemaj
INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING OUT THE SURVEY:

Thank you for participating in this study. You are asked to fill out the following survey that will take about 20 minutes to complete. This research will help to identify the correlation between acculturation, ethnic identity and psychological well-being for the second generation Albanian-Americans. Furthermore, this study will help to develop a better understanding of how ethnic identity and acculturation affect the psychological well-being of the second generation Albanian-Americans.

Please note that your responses and any identifying information will be kept confidential during and after the completion of this research.

The result of this survey will be presented as part of a dissertation study.

Instructions:

1. Please answer the survey questions to the best of your knowledge.

2. There are no wrong answers to any of these questions.

3. Your response to all the questions will facilitate proper evaluation. However, you may skip any questions that you do not want to answer.

4. Press the submit button after completing the survey.

Thank you for your cooperation.
Subject: Consent to participate in a research study
Title of Research: Acculturation, Ethnic Identity and Psychological Well-Being of Albanian-American Immigrants in the United States
Principal Investigator: Dr. Mark Small, Clemson University, msmall@g.clemson.edu
Student’s name: Albina Balidemaj, abalide@g.clemson.edu

Description of the Study and Your Part in It
Dr. Mark Small with Albina Balidemaj is inviting you to take part in a research study. Dr. Mark Small is an Associate Director of the Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life, Albina Balidemaj is a student at Clemson University, running this study with the help of Dr. Mark Small. The purpose of this study is to understand how the second generation of Albanian-Americans acculturates, what their definition of ethnic identity is and how these two factors are correlated with and affect their psychological well-being. Your part in the study will be to fill out the survey provided to you. It will take you about 20 minutes to be in this study.

Risks and Discomforts
There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. However, the following referral number is provided if you feel distressed or need to have access to health care professionals:

• Clemson University Counseling and Psychological Services: 1-864-656-2451

Possible Benefits
The anticipated benefits associated with participation will include an increased awareness of the acculturation, ethnic identity, and psychological well-being of the second generation Albanian-Americans in the United States. In addition, the overall findings of this research will add to the literature in the field of Albanian-American cultural studies and to the immigration studies in general.

Incentives
As an incentive for participating in the study, you will be given an opportunity to submit your name into a drawing for a series of gift cards. The winners of the incentives will be selected randomly and the selected winners will be e-mailed an Amazon gift card to the e-mail address provided. To enter your name for the gift card drawing, please email us your name at: albanian.american.study@gmail.com. In addition, a final copy of the results will be distributed to all participants.
• $25.00 Amazon Gift Card (1 available)
• $50.00 Amazon Gift Card (1 available)
• $100.00 Amazon Gift Card (1 available)

**Protection of Privacy and Confidentiality**
The information collected for of this study will remain confidential during and after the completion of research. The participants will remain anonymous throughout the study and after its completion.

**Choosing to Be in the Study**
You do not have to be in this study. You may choose not to take part and you may choose to stop taking part at any time. You will not be punished in any way if you decide not to be in the study or if you stop taking part in the study.

**Contact Information**
If you have any questions or concerns about this study or if any problems arise, please contact Dr. Mark Small at Clemson University at msmall@clemson.edu or Albina Balidemaj at abalide@g.clemson.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights in this research study, please contact the Clemson University Office of Research Compliance (ORC) at 864-656-6460 or irb@clemson.edu. If you are outside of the Upstate South Carolina area, please use the ORC’s toll-free number, 866-297-3071

**Consent**
I have read this form and have been allowed to ask any questions I might have. I agree to take part in this study.

Participant’s signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________
APPENDIX D: Questionnaires

Demographic Questionnaire

In this section, we are asking for a small amount of background information, so that we can better understand your responses.

1) Your gender is:
   Male
   Female
   Prefer not to answer

2) Your age is: __ __ years

3) You were born outside of the United States and its territories:
   Yes
   No (please stop the survey)

4) Place of birth:
   Kosovo
   Albania
   Macedonia
   Serbia
   Montenegro
   Other ___________ (please specify)

5) You arrived to the U.S. as a/an:
   Immigrant
   Refugee
   Asylum seeker
   On a visa (Scholarship/Work)
   Other ____________ (please specify)
6) Your age at immigration was: __ __ years old

7) Your primary reason for immigrating to the U.S.:
   Work/Financial Opportunities
   Family Reunification/Marriage
   Education
   War/Ethnic conflict
   My family brought me
   Other _____________ (please specify)

8) Your native language is:
   Albanian language
   English language
   Slavic language
   Other _____________ (please specify)

9) Your level of English proficiency is:
   Native
   Fluent
   Good
   Fair
   Poor

10) At your current residence, you speak: (Choose one)
    English language
    My native language
    Combination English and my native language
    Other _____________ (please specify)

11) Your marital status is:
    Single (never been married)
    Engaged
    Married
    Separated/Divorced
    Widowed
    Other _______________
12) Your spouse’s ethnicity is:

Kosovar
Albanian
Macedonian
Serbian
Montenegrin
American
Albanian-American
American-Albanian
I am not married
Other _______________ (please specify)

13) You are currently enrolled as a student:

Yes
No
Yes, but currently on a leave

14) You are:

a full-time student
a part-time student
I am not a student

15) You received your highest level of education in:

Outside of the U.S.
In the U.S.
I have no degree

16) Your highest level of education (U.S. equivalent) is:

Less than high school
High school degree/GED
Some college, associate degree
College degree
Masters
Doctorate/Medical Degree
Other training
17) You are employed:
   Yes
   No

18) Your employment is:
   a full-time job
   a regular part-time job
   odd jobs
   self-employed
   unemployed

19) Your income is: (Choose one)
   Less than US $10,000
   $10,000- $29,999
   $30,000-$49,999
   $50,000-$79,999
   $80,000-$99,999
   $100,000 or more

20) You have ________ children. (How many?)

21) Your children were born in the United States:
   Yes
   No
   I have no children

22) Your religion is:
   Muslim
   Jewish
   Christian
   Orthodox
   Unaffiliated (atheist or agnostic)
   Prefer not to answer
   Other ________ (please specify)
23) During the time when moving from your country of origin to the U.S., you experienced: (mark all that apply)

- War
- Witness injury or violent death (e.g. homicide, suicide)
- Death of a child
- Death or permanent separation from other family member/loved one
- Hunger
- Other traumatic event

Thank you!
Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) Scale

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM)

In this country, people come from many different countries and cultures, and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. Some examples of ethnic groups are Latino, African American, Mexican, Asian American, Chinese, and many others. These questions are about your ethnicity or your ethnic group and how you feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in: In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be __________________________

Use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(5) Strongly agree  (4) Agree  (3) Neutral  (2) Disagree  (1) Strongly disagree

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.
2. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.
3. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.
4. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.
5. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.
6. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.
7. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.
8. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.
9. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.
10. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.
11. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.
12. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.
13. My ethnicity is
   (1) Asian or Asian American, including Chinese, Japanese, and others
   (2) Black or African American
   (3) Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
   (4) White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American, not Hispanic
   (5) American Indian/Native American
   (6) Mixed; Parents are from two different groups
   (7) Other (write in).

14. My father's ethnicity is (use numbers above)
15. My mother's ethnicity is (use numbers above)
Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA) Scale

Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA)

Please circle one of the numbers to the right of each question to indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement.

Many of these questions will refer to your heritage culture, meaning the original culture of your family (other than American). It may be the culture of your birth, the culture in which you have been raised, or any culture in your family background. If there are several, pick the one that has influenced you most (e.g. Irish, Chinese, Mexican, African). If you do not feel that you have been influenced by any other culture, please name a culture that influenced previous generations of your family. Your heritage culture (other than American) is:

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Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB)

3. Ryff’s Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB), 42 Item version

Please indicate your degree of agreement (using a score ranging from 1-6) to the following sentences.

1. I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.

2. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.

3. I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.

4. Most people see me as loving and affectionate.

5. I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.

6. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.

7. My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.

8. The demands of everyday life often get me down.

9. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.

10. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.

11. I have a sense of direction and purpose in life.

12. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.

13. I tend to worry about what other people think of me.

14. I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.

15. When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.

16. I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.

17. My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.

18. I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.

19. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.

20. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.

21. I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.
22. I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends.
23. I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.
24. I like most aspects of my personality.
25. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.
26. I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.
27. I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.
28. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.
29. I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.
30. In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.
   It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.
31. I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.
32. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.
33. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.
34. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.
35. My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.
   I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.
36. I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.
37. I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.
38. I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.
39. I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.
40. When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.