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PSYCHOLOGICAL TRANSITION DURING ACCULTURATION
Japanese Immigrants Attending Finnish Immigrant Education Program

ABSTRACT

In recent years, with the increase in immigration, particularly in Europe, there has been a growing demand for quality immigrant education to integrate immigrants into the local culture. The acculturation of immigrants is of particular interest in terms of both education and employment. Based on this social background, this study investigates the acculturation process of Japanese immigrants studying under the Finnish education system by following the psychological transition of the immigrants.

In the past half-century, research has been conducted on the process of acculturation of immigrants using various approaches. This study is one of them, adopting Berry's two-dimensional acculturation model as a starting point and the trajectory equifinality approach to illustrate what cultural challenges they confront and how they handle them. Migrants encountered three key challenges during their integration program studies: learning, unfamiliar power distance, and the individualism of their classmates. Emotional support from others and cognitive learning were identified to be elements that assisted migrants in going through this process. After facing the aforementioned obstacles, all migrants took steps toward integration, with their trajectories diverged into four principal trails, three of which converged on 'reasoning.' It was suggested that this reasoning was a crucial factor that played an important role in migrants' integration. The existence of '*nattoku*,' an overarching phenomenon referred to as agreement, comprehension, emotional acceptance, and value discovery, is suggested by the author in the psychological background of immigrants seeking reasoning.

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1 INTRODUCTION

When a person immigrates to a different country from the one they grew up in, acculturation is bound to occur (Berry, 2005). Every immigrant who arrives in a new country experiences this cultural transformation, in other words, acculturation. Previous research on acculturation has shown that immigrants achieve higher levels of adaptation when they successfully integrate their identity with that of the host country. This means that they suffer less from the stress of cultural friction. On the other hand, some immigrants show lower self-esteem, anxiety, uncertainty, and lower well-being. This is facilitated by perceived incompatibilities of the host country's cultural traits and characteristics.

Cultural transformation stress is not unitary, but multidimensional. It is a complex interplay of stress caused by language, occupation, interpersonal relationships, and social structure and its pressures. Several studies have linked these varied factors to unfavourable health outcomes for immigrants, such as depression and anxiety (Bilewicz et al., 2021, p.179).

Immigrants living in Finland are no exception, but no studies have investigated their dynamic psychological transition of Japanese immigrants in terms of cultural transformation and acculturation in Finland. This study will highlight how immigrants confront cultural differences and undergo psychological transitions.

According to Statistics Finland (2020), there are 4,440,031 people of foreign origin in 2020 in Finland, which is about 8 percent of the total population of Finland. Today, cross-border migration is family-based, work-based, study-based, and humanitarian aid-based (United Nations, 2019), and the birth of Japanese migrants can be attributed to the first three factors. Although there is no clear data on the background of Japanese people living in Finland today, the participants in this study are family-based, that is, they started to live in Finland for the reason of marriage. According to Martinez-Callaghan and Gil-Lacruz (2017), while most Japanese who have immigrated to Europe are considered to

be white-collar professionals and thus immune from the difficulties faced by less-skilled immigrants, Japanese living abroad also face problems of adaptation and identity.

There is very little data on Japanese immigrants living in Finland. This is presumably because there are no waves of mass migration from Japan to Finland, and most of them are due to individual migration projects that are not coordinated or sponsored by public institutions. However, whereas the number of Japanese immigrants is not very large, about 2,000, they have established a society among those with Japanese roots, with the existence of Japanese language schools and Japanese associations. Nevertheless, there is currently no research on the psychology of Japanese people living in Finland, except for some joint projects.

Qualitative research was employed in this study. While numerous research methods in psychology are continually being developed and improved, this study uses the trajectory equifinality approach (TEA), a research method that visualizes irreversible human psychological transitions. TEA is distinguished by its reliance on systems theory (von Bertalanfy, 1968/1973), which considers humans as open systems, and its "emphasis on the flow of time as experienced by individuals (Kiminami et al., 2020, p.533)", rather than dismissing time and treating it as an external entity. It's a methodology for capturing phenomena that employs a variety of concepts.

2 ACCULTURATION AS A CULTURAL LEARNING PROCESS

2.1 Acculturation and Integration

During these past 50 years, one of the most inevitable concepts in the research field of psychology of immigrants has been **acculturation.** Acculturation is a term meaning "a process of cultural and psychological change that occurs as a result of contact between a cultural group and its individual member (Walker et al., 2007, p117)". The initial interest in acculturation goes back to concerns about the impact of Dominance of Europeans over colonies and indigenous peoples (Berry, 2004, p28). Later, the focus was on how immigrants, with and without their will, changed once they were established in the host society. More recently, the debate has focused on how ethnocultural groups relate to each other and change as a result of their attempts to coexist in culturally plural societies peoples (Berry, 2004, p28).

One of the most important terms in the field of acculturation research is **integration**. Despite the fact that this term is a core concept in acculturation research, its definition differs in the literature and remains ambiguous. Research on how the term integration is used shows that it is used in five main ways (2008, Boski). The best known of these is Berry's approach, which will be discussed in more detail in the next subchapter, which defines acculturation in terms of four dimensions (integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization). In that model, integration is defined as the phenomenon that "occurs when individuals are able to adopt the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture while maintaining their own culture" (Worthy, 2020, p315). This definition will be adopted in this paper.

The other four categories are "cultural recognition and evaluation", "functional/partial specialisation", "switching between identities and frames" and

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"constructive marginality with ethnic relativism". Empirically, these are known to be separate constructs, sometimes negatively correlated (Boski, 2008).

The term **'integration'** in politics refers to a series of policies targeted at immigrants. The historical context of the term integration is reminiscent of previous European immigration policies. In Europe, there have been periods of extreme assimilationism and radical multiculturalism, both of which ended in failure. As a result, this concept of integration has become a political term in national policy models (Favell, 2001). The universal concept of integration, which extended throughout Europe, entailed restructuring a country's social and political space in order to assist new immigrants in adjusting to their new surroundings. Correspondingly, integration as a political term has become the selective extension to migrants of social, cultural, legal, and political rights and opportunities that were formerly reserved for nationals only. Unfortunately, the concept of integration's political success does not necessarily reflect its statistical advantages in social scientific study. One of the challenges is that concepts employed in the field of migration studies, such as integration, assimilation, multiculturalism, interculturalism, racism, ethnicity, and so on, are also utilized as instruments in the politics of migration issues. As a result, the term "integration" encompasses analytical notions as well as normative conceptions and idealized images of society, all of which have extremely varied emotional and attitudinal subtleties and implications for various groups and settings.

2.2 The history of acculturation theory - group or individual?

In 1967, Graves introduced the concept of psychological acculturation, which means that an individual participating in a situation of cultural contact changes under the influence of both the external culture and the changing culture to which the individual belongs (Berry, 2004, p.28). According to Graves (1967), There are two reasons to distinguish the external culture from the changing culture. The first reason is that cross-cultural psychology considers that individual human behaviour interacts with the cultural context in which it occurs, so that separate concepts and measurements are needed at the two levels. The second reason is that not all people enter and participate in culture in the same way, and not all people change in the same way (Berry, 2004, p.28). Thus, If all people who

migrate to a country with a particular culture acculturate in the same way, then acculturation can be said to be unitary. In practice, however, the results of acculturation vary widely from individual to individual. Some adapt well, others less so, leading Graves hypothesise that the internal culture of the individual immigrant is one determinant of acculturation. Some years later, Ward and Kermedy (1994) evaluated Graves's view as one that shifted the perception of cultural transformation from a view that was often perceived as a group-level phenomenon to one that was an individual-level phenomenon. In this way of understanding, acculturation indicates each individual's personal experience of psychological and behavioural change.

However, Graves' definition is only showing the trigger of cultural transition, which is the contact with other cultures/groups of people. Moreover, the definition of psychological acculturation is still vague. It is unclear, for example, if it refers to all transitions caused by contact with other cultures or only cultural transitions. Therefore, many psychological researchers have tried to recognise the extent and patterns, in order to be able to measure the intensity, or capture the category of each individual's psychological acculturation. Through these further research, the definition of psychological acculturation became more explicitly about the psychological/behavioural transition which is related to the home culture and the host culture. More specifically, it has been regarded as a constant attitude or intentionality, and the typification of the measurement of those attitudes and intentionalities.

Subsequently, Berry and Kim (1988) comprehended acculturation as transitions of individuals, which collocate with the cultural transitions of a group of people. Furthermore, Ward and Rana-Deuba (1999) position the idea of the so-called **Berry's two-dimensional acculturation model** as having been built on Graves' (1967) concept of psychological cultural transformation. Berry et al. (1989) conducted a conceptual analysis of 'culturally transformative attitudes' from empirical studies of four immigrant groups, which was the first measurement of Berry's two-dimensional acculturation model in the study of culturally transformative attitudes. This two-dimensional acculturation model contains two axis of host (do immigrants value maintaining relationships with the larger society?) and ethnic (do immigrants value maintaining their identity and

characteristics?), and those axis divide immigrants into the four groups shown below, depending on how they answer to the both questions above (Figure 1).

Identification with Host Culture

	Low	High
Maintenance of Heritage Culture High	Separation	Integration
Low	Marginalization	Assimilation
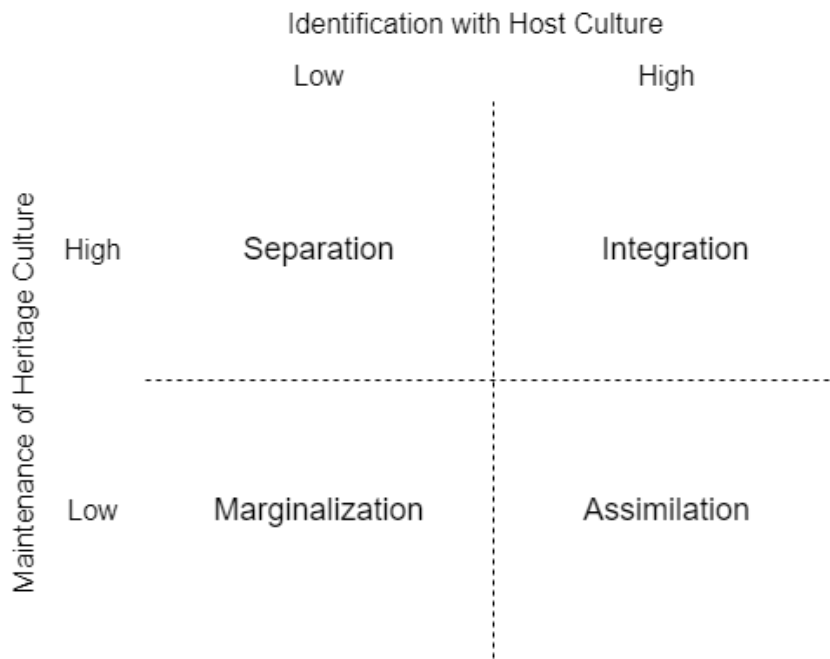
Figure 1 Berry's bi-dimensional acculturation model

The following four concepts make up this model.

Separation occurs when an individual rejects the dominant or host culture in order to maintain his or her culture of origin. Separation is often induced by immigration to ethnic minorities.

Marginalization occurs when an individual rejects both their own heritage culture and the dominant host culture.

Assimilation is when an individual adopts the culture of the dominant or host culture rather than the individual's own heritage culture.

Integration occurs when individuals adopt the culture of the dominant or host culture while maintaining their own heritage culture. Integration is often used interchangeably with biculturalism. (Worthy, 2020, p315)

Berry's model has been functioned as a distinguished framework in the acculturation research field. For example, Ward (1994) valued this model as one of the most remarkable effects for the research field and facilitated building the theory of cultural transition. Consequently, Ward (1994) advocated a modified version of this model, with a change in measurement. As a result, both models

have often been used as basic models, explaining the conflict between immigrants' ethnicity and the host community.

Whereas Berry's model certainly systematised cultural transformation, another important question is raised: what does acculturation mean for individuals? Berry (1988) published a paper, claiming a direct relationship between acculturation and immigrants' mental health. According to Berry's theory, both variables, the acculturation level and mental health, are undoubtedly related, and acculturation can be observed when the cultural transition process worked well. Nevertheless, the opposite could happen; when immigrants are not able to acculturate, it leads them to suffer from mental stress.

Consequently, Berry and Sam (1997) stated that the appropriate approach to measure the level of acculturation difficulty is to measure psychopathologically, for instance, depression or other mental ailments, although the difficulty depends on the individual. Later, Berry (2006) looked at the issue of acculturation closely from the perspective of mental health. He claimed that the experience of cultural frustration, when immigrants try to integrate into the host society, harms individuals, and causes mental rupture.

As described above, studies on the effect of acculturation, especially in negative ways, had developed based on clinical psychological perspectives. However, researchers also recognised that there is a limitation of comprehending individual "symptoms" as a result caused only by individuals themselves. Berry(1980) also claimed that unlike traditional psychological research which tends to interpret acculturation as individual adaptation actions, it would be more appropriate to understand that it is the individual action that occurs after they go through group-level contact, confront, and adaptation. Viruell-Fuentes (2007) also advocated that it is impossible to understand immigrants' mental health only with their individual factors, and the societal statement around them has to be taken into account.

Summarizing the transition of the perspectives of this research field, the cultural transition was first regarded as a group phenomenon, but it was converted to clinical psychological research (Graves, 1967), and the proceeding research defined it as it is an individual phenomenon based on the background of the group-level transition process. This sociopsychological perspective accelerates multi-dimensional measuring research, such as analysing two

different contexts, such as depression and discrimination. In other words, clinical psychological point of view antecedent, and sociopsychological view was added later. Berry (2005) concluded that to understand group-level acculturation, researchers also need to understand the social circumstances, both the culture they are from, and the host culture they are now in. The former includes the active motivation of immigrating, and the latter includes how tolerant toward immigrants the host community is, or their level of multi-culturalism. Individual-level acculturation, on the other hand, is the general adaptation process for any people in a new environment. According to Berry, some people integrate easily while others do not, but in the process, psychological factors such as well-being or self-esteem, and sociocultural factors such as the relationship with the people around the person or the ability to complete tasks, are complexly intertwined (Berry, 2004, p.29).

2.3 Critical aspects on Berry's model of acculturation

If there is group-level and individual acculturation, what is their relation? In earlier research of Berry, it was hypothesised that there is a phase of contact, and the phase of conflict following, and lastly the phase of adaptation (Berry, 1980). Consequently, in his later research, it was assumed that the first phase of acculturation is group-level, followed by the phase of individual-level acculturation, and lastly individual adaptation (Berry, 2005). However, until now, the time-wise relations between those phases were not precisely perceived, even though it has been hypothesized or assumed to have some kind of flow like above. Do they have causality between phases? Or is it simply a mutual relationship with co-occurrence? It is also worth noting whether if there are variations of acculturation, such as developing individual acculturation without going through the group-level acculturation. These have been remaining vague about this acculturation theory.

Considering the remaining issue about acculturation theory, there are several concerns to be remarked. The first subject is the need for a detailed empirical study of acculturation itself: whether acculturation occurs in all mobile groups or individuals, and if not, what causes it and how it occurs.

Secondly, whereas it is discussed in a lot of research in the psychology field, some questions Berry's model does not have conclusive answers. For example, what and how exactly do those four elements correspond for, psychologically and in real life? The situation of migrants classified into the four categories is not fully understood. In particular, the diversity of integration and marginalization seems to be insufficiently understood. Furthermore, It has been argued that integration is the most favourable for adaptation. The severity of the other types of psychological adjustment varies, ranging from marginalization (Sam & Berry, 1995) to assimilation (Ward et al., 1994), with assimilation having a better sociocultural adjustment (Ward et al., 1994). It must be explained what accounts for the diversity in adaptive valence among types, and if examples of adaptation are found in more than one type, what they are and how they differ qualitatively. Additionally, there is doubt on the equality of evaluation for all four dimensions. In this acculturation theory, it is undoubtedly believed that integration is the best phase for immigrants to adapt to their new environment. Excluding some research on other phases such as marginalization or assimilation conducted by Ward (1994), integration has been almost always supposed as a goal to aim for immigrants, and it has not been discussed about other types of adaptation.

Third, mental health overall in this theory has been vague in some respects, whereas the model has been developed based on the clinical psychological findings. Here, I will note five issues to be discussed about mental health in this acculturation theory. First, in this context, stressor and the reactions caused by acculturation is not explicitly divided or defined. Whereas the acculturation process is regarded as a stressor by tradition and consequently it causes acculturation stress such as depression, it changes depending on research and it is ambiguous in numbers of them. Second, it is unclear what exact elements of the acculturation process become a stressor, and what does not. Third, ambitiousness lies in the term well-being. In the field of study of acculturation, the affirmative face of immigration has been phrased as well-being, which has no detailed concreteness. Fourth, stressors, other than culture and its difference, are often neglected, whereas the socio-economical side of immigrants' life has undoubtedly a significant effect on their mental health. Lastly,

what variables are used to evaluate immigrants' situations comprehensively, and what value mental health has in/among those variables?

Despite the aforementioned criticisms, Berry's model is still utilized in a variety of studies. This is due to the fact that the model is still the most fundamental form for understanding acculturation processes. Many researchers, including Berry, have analysed a range of variables to understand acculturation, and numerous researchers, such as Ourasse (2005) and Jang (2007), eventually attempted to divide data to create a four-category classification of the bi-dimensional model. Berry's model is the most effective and versatile of the theories designed to visualize what manner of phenomenon acculturation is.

2.4 Recent Models of Acculturation

Since its creation, psychologists have disputed and revised Berry's model of acculturation, but the two-dimensional model is not the only model of acculturation, and there are efforts to capture acculturation in a completely new way. The following are some of the recent acculturation models that have been developed and refined.

In the 21st century, it is commonly argued that the focus on cultural stress neglects the motivation for cultural adaptation (Rudmin, 2003, Fathi et al., 2018, p.3). The acculturative learning model was primarily focused on the motivation of the immigrants themselves, as the model was developed in the context of this discussion.

The acculturative learning model consists of three steps: cultural motivation, cultural learning, and personal change. According to this concept, there are four primary types of acculturation learning. There are four ways to learn acculturation in this model: (1) knowledge of the new culture, (2) education, and (3) behavior imitating the new culture, and (4) assistance from someone who is knowledgeable about the host culture and is willing to help the individual adapt. In this acculturation learning paradigm, financial position and prejudiced beliefs are also crucial factors that determine how a person learns about a second culture. (Castro, 2006).

The multidimensional individual differences acculturation model (MIDA) was proposed at the same time as the acculturative learning model. MIDA was

originally validated on Canada's first-generation Iranian immigrants (Safdar et al., 2003) and then empirically verified on additional immigrant groups in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Three crucial factors predict immigrants' acculturative attitudes and adjustment outcomes in the MIDA model: (1) psychological resources, (2) co-ethnic ties, and (3) annoyance. The MIDA model also assesses different adaption approaches, such as attitudes toward retaining the heritage culture (separation) and learning the new culture (assimilation). These acculturation strategies are utilized as mediators to link the psychological components of the MIDA model to the outcomes (Safdar et al, 2003). Co-ethnic relationships indicate separation or maintenance of the old culture in this mediation circumstance, while separation predicts in-group contact. Separation and psychophysical suffering are both predicted by annoyance. Assimilation or adoption of a new culture is predicted by psychosocial resources, while out-group contact is predicted by assimilation. According to the MIDA model, cultural attitudes and coping capacities are more intrinsic determinants of health consequences than numerical variables.

Lastly, Atefeh et al. (2008) introduced the multidimensional intercultural training acculturation model (MITA), a relatively new acculturation model. The MITA model is supported by a number of theoretical methodologies in the fields of social, clinical, and cross-cultural psychology (Fathi et al., 2018, p.5). Acculturation attitudes (Berry, 1997) and intercultural communicating competence (ICC, 2003) was also utilized to define intercultural sensitivity. Empathy from prosocial behaviour (Bar-Tal, 1976), emotion regulation strategies of Gross (1998), and evaluation theories such as (1) context selection, (2) situation alteration, (3) attention deployment, (4) cognitive transformation, and (5) response-focusing tactics are all things to consider were used to conceptualize socio-emotional competence (Atefeh et al., 2008, p.5). In the MITA model, four components are indicators of mental health and sociocultural adjustment. These indicators are (1) intercultural competence, (2) socio-emotional competence, (3) intention to return to home country, and (4) experience of traumatic events (Atefeh et al., 2008, p.5).

For the reason of being a relatively new model of acculturation, the number of practical usages of MITA is fairly limited. What is emphasized here is the value of the variables collected and figured minutely. This model has a high possibility

of being guidance for scrutinizing immigrants' acculturation process, compared to other models of acculturation. Yet, researchers must acknowledge that the relations among the variables might differ in practical research. Similarly, time is not explicitly regarded in the proposed approach (Fathi et al., 2018, p.10). Depending on the length of stay in the host country, intercultural and social-emotional competence, desires to return home, and their associations with acculturation, socio-cultural adaptability, and mental wellness may fluctuate (Atefeh et al., 2008, p.5). As a result, time must be tracked separately for practical purposes, in a way that may later be linked to the model.

3 FINLAND AS A HOST COUNTRY OF MIGRATION

3.1 Integration Policies and Training in Finland

3.1.1 Integration of Immigrants from the Economic Sphere

When immigrants arrive in a new country and are unable to find work right away, they seek education in order to acquire some qualifications or qualities. Europe has created integration strategies and training for refugees and immigrants through a variety of vocational programs, innovative projects, and other short-term aid methods (Benton et al. 2014, p.15 ; Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, 2017). Finland is no exception, with extensive policies and training for migrants implemented through a variety of vocational programs, creative projects, and other short-term support systems (Benton et al. 2014, p.15). All migrants having a continuous residence permit in Finland are eligible to participate in integration training under the conditions (outlined later), according to the Act on Promotion of Migrant Integration.

In policy and research, the terms 'integration' and 'inclusion' are interchangeable, with both terms meaning the creation of chances for political and socioeconomic engagement (Carmel and Cerami, 2011, p.1150). This is because Finland's (and other countries') greatest problem is to overcome excessive unemployment and labour market mismatches among refugees and migrants (European Commision, 2017; Finish Ministry of Interior, 2018). Thus, in the context of immigrant integration programs, successful integration means being able to obtain a job (Masoud, 2019). For that reason, when an individual enters public immigrant education, an individual's integration plan showing how and when an individual obtains a job and is employed must be presented based on a meeting with the Employment and Economic Development Office (työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto, TE). A person must also meet five conditions, which are (1)

have been in Finland for less than three years, (2) be at least 17 years old, (3) be unemployed or to be unemployed, (4) be appropriate and have an individual's abilities suit to the program, and (5) be expected to eventually find employment to be eligible for public migrant education. Integration courses, in a practical sense, aim to give immigrants access to the labour market, thereby transforming them into functioning individuals who can satisfy the demands of a knowledge-based society (Pyykkönen, 2007; Schinkel, 2013). Integration courses, in a practical sense, aim to give immigrants access to the labour market, thereby transforming them into functioning individuals who can satisfy the demands of a knowledge-based society (Pyykkönen, 2007; Schinkel, 2013).

3.1.2 Recent Issues Raised in Immigration Integration Policy Research

Finland is regarded as having the best integration policy in the world (Huddleston et al., 2015), although other researchers caution that the economic perspective has too much impact. According to Heikkilä et al (2022), it is crucial to investigate what is meant by the term 'integration.' She claims that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to successful immigrant integration. Anthias (2013) also suggests the existence of this power gap, arguing that "integration as a practice continues to include obligations towards refugees and immigrants" (Masoud, 2019, p.54), and that there is a risk that integration becomes a unilateral adaptation or restrictive process, resulting in inclusion not being achieved.

Shortening immigrants' pathways to education and employment is one of the goals of the Finnish integration policy (FMI, 2018). As a countermeasure to the increased unemployment rate of immigrants, as well as their lengthy integration training phase, a new activation model has been discussed (KELA, 2018). According to the activation model, if an unemployed person is inactive for at least 65 days, their average monthly support amount of around EUR 600 is reduced by 4.65%. This paradigm is applicable to anybody who is unemployed, but it exacerbates discrimination and puts pressure on immigrants who are having difficulty obtaining work (OECD, 2018). It restricts them by forcing them to rush into any integrated training program or even temporary work. This positions immigrants to be constantly dependent on welfare benefits due to their precarious income situation (Yijälä and Nyman, 2017; Masoud, 2019, p.55). Integration

training as an activation mechanism has had minimal success in raising employment rates, according to research, as immigrants continue to get long-term and redundant integration training (Kurki et al., 2018; Masoud, 2019, p.55).

To close these power gaps, a bottom-up approach is necessary. (Heikkilä, 2022) While the the public's opinion of Finland's integration policies is that of a "developed" and "role model" (Keskinen et al., 2009), recent research shows that as long as immigrants participate in work practice and integration training, even in educational programs that do not match their previous experience, or even if they are participating in or having difficulty finding work, they are seen as integrated (Masoud, 2019).

This study definitively differentiates the integration and economic perspectives, focusing particularly on psychological and cultural integration. The aim is to go into great detail on the psychology of immigrants which have been overlooked in immigrant integration education and study. This study focuses on the ordinary daily lives of immigrants who were studying integration programs. and the surprises that they have encountered. The study provides the opportunity to see a previously unknown component of integration programs by investigating what immigrants perceive, experience, feel, think, and cope with when their own culture and Finnish culture intersect.

3.2   Dimensions of Japanese and Finnish cultures

This study investigates the process of acculturation of Japanese immigrants in Finland. Acculturation is the change in artefacts, traditions, and values that occurs when two or more cultures come into touch. Therefore, in this research, it is crucial to know the notable aspect of Japanese culture, which is the starting point of immigrants' cultural background, and the Finnish culture as a host culture, in order to trace their psychological transition. The following **Hofstede's six cultural dimensions** were explained to the interviewees who participated in this study, and were discussed with the author.

The six cultural dimensions theory of Hofstede is a framework for analyzing cultural variations between countries, which is frequently used to examine the impact on a business context. Six categories are identified as the component to define culture: (1) power distance index, (2) collectivism vs.

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individualism, (3) uncertainly avoidance index, (4) femininity vs. masculinity, (5) short-term vs. long-term orientation, (6) restraint vs. indulgence (Hofstede Insights, 2020). This chapter will compare Japanese and Finnish cultures based on these six components. Original data was collected through surveys by International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) first between 1967 and 1973, and was later extended and updated until now.

(1) Power Distance Index

Every single power apportionment, such as wealth, authority, physical and mental ability is not equal by nature. However, different countries confront and deal with inequality in different ways. The degree to which the less powerful individuals and groups or institution (such as a family) accept and anticipate power to be divided unequally is measured by power distance. It represents inequality (more vs. less), but from the bottom up rather than from the top down. In other words, the level of inequality in a society is supported by followers, not by leaders. How they accept the power inequality lying between the people with power, such as parents, teachers, and bosses, is the concept of this category (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

In this category, Finland scores 33, and Japan scores 54. This means that Finish culture expects to lessen the inequality of power, while it is relatively accepted as a natural manner to have inequality of power in Japanese culture. This means that Finnish people expect people with power to treat their children, pupils and subordinates equal as them, and at the same time, people with power expect the people with less power to act spontaneously. On the other hand, Japanese people expect powerholders such as parents, teachers, bosses, and politicians to be superior and intelligent, that they know the clear answer for problems or how to deal with issues better. Respecting the elderly is a virtue in this culture. Score 54 means that Japan has a slightly stronger but notable feature above than international average.

(2) Collectivism vs. Individualism

In the six-dimensional model, individualism is defined as the feature of the society in which individual interests take precedence over in-group interests. In a society with individualism, the relations between in-group members are loose. People are expected to take care of only themselves and their relatives. Collectivism is vice

versa. In the cultures with collectivism, people are integrated into the in-group with a strong connection with other members. In the countries with this cultural feature, members are safely protected if they pledge their loyalty to the group. How the culture takes balance with individuals and group is the key concept of this section (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

In this section, Finland scores 63, and Japan scores 46. The higher the score is, the stronger feature of individualism is observed. This means that Finnish culture has an explicit feature of individualism, while Japanese culture has neither of the strong features. In a country like Finland, children generally grow up in a nuclear family or even smaller ones such as with single parents, without seeing their relatives too often. Thus, children tend to develop an "I" point of view to grasp the situation or environment around them. Showing their honest idea, belief, and feeling is the element of reliability. Avoiding a conflict of opinions is relatively low prioritized, as it is believed that the conflict is one process of productive discussion. It is hence be appreciated to communicate explicitly and directly, and individuals are responsible for the quality of communication.

On the other hand, Japan does not have a strong feature of individualism nor collectivism, unlike Finland. Whereas it is common to grow up in a nuclear family, the bond of relatives is also strong. Harmony within their in-group is highly prioritized, which ends up making people avoid conflicts, and face-saving way of communication is appreciated. Other way said, they tend to "read" what people think in their mind as they are noticeably concerned about the group member's personal honour. Thus, an indirect way of communication is often seen in Japan, so that they are able to acknowledge people's ideas without having explicit and clear verbal communication.

(3) Uncertainty Avoidance Index

Uncertainty avoidance is an indicator concerned with the way society copes with the fact that the future is unpredictable. Culture determines the anxiety and fear of future uncertainty and the methods, beliefs and institutions for avoiding it. Countries with higher scores on this aspect have higher levels of uncertainty avoidance. Countries that prioritize avoiding uncertainty can be described as religiously intolerant of change and deviations in their behaviour (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Finland has a score of 59, indicating that it is concerned about avoiding uncertainty. People in these cultures are known to be rule-abiding and diligent. Working people understand the worth of hard effort and have a "time is money" mentality. While accuracy and punctuality are vital, innovation is less so.

Finland is a country with relatively high uncertainty avoidance, while it is not comparable to Japan. Japan has the highest anxiety and aversion to an uncertain future in the world, with a score of 92. This is assumed to be owing in great part to Japan's geographical features. Typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions are all common occurrences in Japan, and these ever-present threats pose a constant threat to daily life. People must be fully prepared for unforeseen events under these circumstances. This value pervades all sectors of society, to the point where every possible action is based on the utmost level of predictability. In other words, many elements of Japanese life are 'ritualized.' At weddings and funerals, there are particular standards and manners on what to wear and how to behave, and similar rites are practiced throughout Japan. In terms of education, there are not only entrance and graduation ceremonies at schools, but also opening and closing ceremonies at the start and end of terms, as well as 'morning homerooms' and 'afternoon homerooms' in everyday school life. In Japan, these ceremonies are held everywhere students go to school. In both government and industry, unusual activities are frowned upon. The topic of risk avoidance is very important in Japanese companies, and a lot of time is spent on it, therefore vulnerabilities must be thoroughly recognized before beginning a project. It is difficult to modify a pattern once it has been established, therefore few novel ventures are undertaken and the status quo is emphasized. One of the reasons why change in Japan, whether political, economic, or educational, is difficult is because of this desire for certainty avoidance (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

(4) Femininity vs. Masculinity
According to Hofstede's indications, people in masculine cultures are motivated by a desire to 'be the best,' whereas feminine cultures are motivated by a desire to 'enjoy what they are doing.' Winning the competition, succeeding, and achieving something is more essential and drives society in countries with high ratings on this dimension, i.e. masculine countries. To put it another way, victory

is valued. In contrast, in countries with low scores, i.e. feminine countries, quality of life is valued above standing out and winning (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Finland has a low score of 26 with a predominantly feminine society. Quality of work, solidarity, and equality are emphasized in the labour force, and managers' role is considered as achieving consensus on these matters. In a feminine society, happiness motivates people more than social position or accomplishment. Flexibility and free time are favoured as motivators for a fulfilling personal life.

Japan, on the other hand, scores 95, making it one of the world's most masculine cultures. However, it lacks the assertiveness and competitive personal behavior associated with a masculine culture, despite its soft collectivism. Competition amongst groups, on the other hand, is fierce. As early as preschool sports days, children learn to compete for their own group (traditionally white team versus red team). Employees in Japanese companies are more empowered when they are part of a winning team alongside their peers. The desire of perfection and excellence in all parts of life, including manufacturing, service (restaurants and hotels), and presentation, is another expression of masculinity in Japan (gift wrapping and food preparation). Another manifestation of their masculinity is the fabled Japanese workaholic (Hofstede Insights, 2020). Women still have a hard time climbing the corporate ladder in Japan, where long masculine working hours are the norm.

(5) Short-term vs. Long-term Orientation

Long-term and short-term orientations are indicators of how societies deal with the challenges that will arise in the present and future within the context of the past. Countries that score low on this dimension, i.e. cultures that emphasise short-term orientation, are more vulnerable to social change because of their emphasis on norms and traditions (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Finland received a score of 38 and has a culture that emphasizes short-term perspective. People are focused with finding absolute facts in normative categories in this type of culture. They are under pressure to deliver fast results and are less prepared to spend in the long run. The business world is characterized by a quarterly profit emphasis and a demand for speedy transactions.

Japan, on the other hand, scores 88 and is one of the most long-term-minded societies. History exists before and after an individual's existence begins and is intertwined with it, which is believed natural. Fatalism has been discovered in the Japanese in order to locate individual lives within greater currents. There is a pervasive value system in which virtue and practical example influence one's life. Long-term growth and survival are more important to Japanese businesses than short-term success. Investment rates and capital are critical, and the economic model is based on growing market share progressively over time. Companies, such as Matsushita Electric Industrial Company, have chosen a business model that aims to develop cooperative relationships with shareholders while also contributing to society for the benefit of future generations (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

(6) Indulgence vs. Restraint

The last cultural dimension to be introduced is indulgence and restraint. In countries with high indulgence, i.e. high scores, the emphasis is on enjoying life and acting motivated by basic human needs and impulses. On the other hand, in countries with a restraint culture, i.e. countries with low scores, it is seen as more important to practise the duties assigned to them than to enjoy life freely. These cultural factors have a significant impact on a child's socialisation. The environment and methods of a child's upbringing are determined by these cultural factors (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Finland has a score of 57, which is a slightly more indulgent culture, which suggests that it has a 'laissez-faire' culture. Children grow up more spontaneously and freely in indulgent societies, are more engaged in enjoying life, and have the desire to do what they want when they want to do it. This indulgent society also supports the free use of personal capital.

Japan has a considerably lower score of 42 and a cultural profile that is relatively restrained. Children who grow up in a restrained culture are more conservative and place less focus on managing their leisure time and enjoying the moment. Enjoyment is less essential than duty and self-control. Doing what needs to be done when it needs to be done is respected, and the society is described as diligent, cynical, and pessimistic. People recognize that society's

standards constrain and define their behavior, and they frequently believe that indulging themselves is inappropriate (Hofstede Insights, 2020).

Finally, the Japanese and Finnish cultures and their differences are summarised below in the context of this study. In Finnish culture, there is a preference for equality between people in positions of power and people without power, such as teachers and students. There is a strong tendency to individualism and to make oneself the core of one's thinking. It is a feminine country, where equality and solidarity are valued at work. Achieving results in a short time is more important than tradition. And there is a strong enthusiasm to enjoy life, which is positive and optimistic.

In Japan, teachers are seen as superior to students and as having clearer answers to problems. Group harmony is a priority and indirect expressions tend to be favoured to avoid conflict. Japan is a country where uncertainty avoidance is one of the most important things in the world, and people prepare for uncertain situations by clarifying and sharing all elements of events and tasks. Japan tends to be masculine, with an emphasis on competition and the pursuit of perfection in the workplace. They have a long-term orientation and seek to achieve a single goal across generations. The culture is pessimistic and repressive, with little emphasis on leisure time.

4 TRAJECTORY EQUIFINALITY APPROACH IN CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

4.1 Trajectory Equifinality Approach (TEA) as a New Qualitative Research Method

The main line of research on immigration in Finland is frequently addressed from an economic perspective, as stated in Chapter 3, and the reality of migration is still largely veiled in obscurity. From a classical economic standpoint, integration is measured in terms of employment status, i.e. 0 or 1. Heikkilä (2022) warns against this trend and argues the crucialness of bottom-up forms of research that reflect the reality of migration

In that regard, qualitative research is most likely the methodology today required in the immigrant research sector. Qualitative research focuses on specific examples, attempting to capture them in their cultural, social, and temporal contexts, as well as to comprehend people's own behaviours and narratives in the environment in which they live (Busetto, 2020). It is expected to reveal realities that cannot be observed just through statistical metrics, which embrace an all-or-nothing systematic approach to integration.

The Trajectory Equifinality Approach (TEA) is a qualitative research method for determining the characteristics of those who "eventually reached the same destination," that is, what the individual experienced from historical, cultural, and social aspects, as well as from his or her own inner world, while travelling multiple paths to the same destination. (Kamibeppu & Fukuzawa, 2018)

Traditional psychology has held the belief that intelligence is a personal trait that should be quantified and measured in some way. There is a strong propensity to believe that we have an intelligence that is apart from the rest of the world. This theory is no longer valid. The Trajectory Equifinality Approach, like other current psychology notions, rejects the notion that human intelligence is

independent from the outside world, instead viewing humans and their surroundings as a system. In other words, the Trajectory Equifinality Approach views humans as an open system that is always interacting and reacting with the environment, rather than a closed system insulated from it. The Trajectory Equifinality Approach uses an irreversible time line to depict the genealogy of life, and this diagram is the final outcome. This is called a diagram of the Trajectory Equifinality Model. Below is a simple diagram that explains the concept (Figure 2).
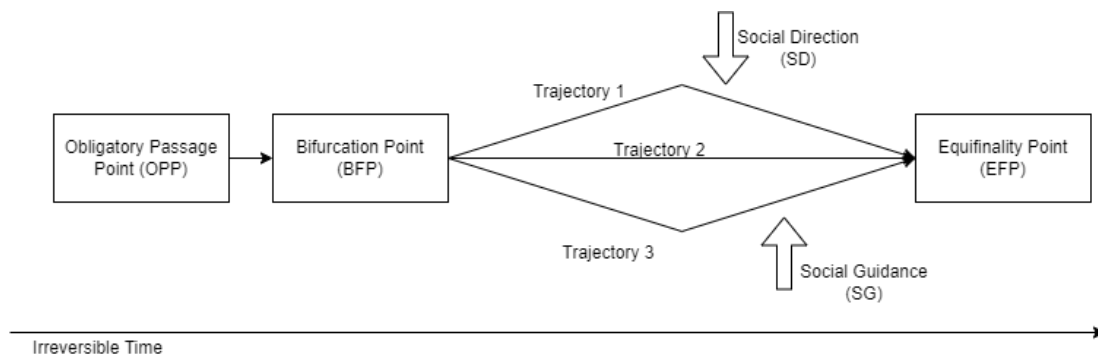
Figure 2 An example of a general TEM diagram

It is a visual representation of how life branches out and converges with irreversible time, indicated at the bottom of the image. The concepts that make it up will be presented in the next chapter.

4.2 Basic concepts that make up the Trajectory Equifinality Model (TEM)

In this chapter, the basic concepts that make up the Trajectory Equifinality Model (TEM) are introduced, according to the trajectory equifinality model guidance (Yasuda and Sato, 2019). The terms that are important for understanding this model are shown in bold.

In the Trajectory Equifinality Approach, people living in the irreversible flow of time are considered to have multiple paths of action and choice, as shown in the diagram as Trajectories 1 to 3 (figure 2). However, it does not mean that there is an infinite range of paths that allow free choice and action. There is a point

(**final**) at which we equally (**equi-**) reach a certain steady-state due to historically, culturally, and socially embedded space-time constraints (Yasuda, 2005; Kiminami et al., 2020, p.533). This is the **equifinality point (EFP)**. This approach is implied in the concept of equifinality, and EFP is conceptualized as a convergence point that embodies equifinality. According to Sato et al (2017), a proponent of TEM, all open systems are characterized by equifinality, that is, they follow different paths to reach similar outcomes. To give an example, for humans starting from birth, death is the point where everything converges equally for everyone, which is an equifinality point of this example. The trajectory equifinality approach begins by establishing this equifinality point and "inviting" those who have experienced it to participate in the study.

Another key concept that appears in the Trajectory Equifinality Model (TEM) is **trajectory**. Trajectory is a concept introduced by Valsiner (2000) to show the multiplicity of developmental pathways, and it is a concept that represents the variety of pathways to an equifinality point (Matsuda et al., 2019, p.1884). The trajectory equifinality approach emphasizes the equifinality of human development (change over time) within the context of personal and cultural constraints. The idea is that although human development is diverse in a sense, it is subject to a number of pharmaceutical and cultural constraints in the broad sense of the word, and therefore, the development of humans is limited to a certain extent. To illustrate, in the 16 hours between waking up in the morning and going to bed at night, we can theoretically do anything we want, but what people who live according to the cultural norms of modern society actually do is to eat breakfast, go to work, work for 8 hours, come home and eat dinner. In other words, it is reasonable to assume that individual differences do not spread out endlessly, but are controlled to some extent by the environment. Furthermore, the junction of these multiple paths is called the **Bifurcation point (BFP).** In other words, it is a state in which multiple feasible paths are prepared for a given experience.

The concept of **Obligatory Passage Point (OPP)** was introduced into TEM by Sato and other TEM proponents in the course of their empirical research. It is an experience that almost everyone goes through in order to reach a particular equifinality point, and it is a concept that facilitates finding opportunities that constrain individual diversity. It can be classified into three types: institutional,

customary, and consequential. Institutional obligatory passage points are typically those that are prescribed by law, such as admission to a compulsory education program. Customary passage points are those that are not required by law but are experienced by many people. A consequential obligatory passage point is something that is neither institutional nor customary, but is experienced by many people as a result. Natural disasters and wars are examples of this.

Lastly, the concept of **social direction (SD)** and **social guidance (SG)** will be introduced. Even if people try to approach the equifinality point that we have set, there may be forces at work that prevent them from doing so, and vice versa. In this case, the social pressure that prevents people from reaching the EFP is called social direction (SD). As the equifinality point dealt with in TEM is often a misalignment between the desires and goals of the individual and the goals provided by society, which is the reason why social orientations are conceptualized as a force that causes individuals to move in the opposite direction. Conversely, social forces that support approaching EFPs are called social guidance (SG). This is when social institutions and cultural values support the attainment of EFP. It is important to note that both social direction (SD) and social guidance (SG) are not individual interests, but rather forces that support the approach of the equifinality point.

Three similar terms appear in this paper: trajectory equifinality approach (TEA), trajectory equifinality model (TEM) and TEM diagram, and the usage of these terms is as follows. The term "trajectory equifinality approach" (TEA) refers to the concept of humans as open systems with access to a radial pathway. The trajectory equifinality model (TEM) is a methodology that depicts this by using terms such as EFP, BFP, OPP, SD, SG, etc. A TEM diagram is the actual diagram drawn using that model, not the concept or method, but the output result itself.

5 METHODS

5.1 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to unravel the psychological transition during the acculturation process of Japanese immigrants. In order to achieve it, the following two questions will be set as research questions and each will be answered.

1. **What kind of challenges have Japanese immigrants experienced in acculturating into Finnish culture?**

As mentioned above, acculturation is "a phenomenon that occurs when two different cultures come into contact with each other" (Lawton and Gerdes, 2014, p.386). In order to track the psychological transition that accompanies acculturation, it is necessary to focus on the specific culture that immigrants carry and what challenges arise due to cultural differences.

2. **What aspects have helped them in their acculturation process?**

Human psychology varies greatly depending on the relationship with external factors (Fathi et al. 2018). Therefore, in order to capture the psychological transition of immigrants with higher resolution, it is necessary to study what external factors help immigrants to integrate themselves into Finnish society when they face difficulties due to cultural differences.

3. **What kind of psychological transition is identified during acculturation?**

This question is based on the answers to research questions 1 and 2. The relationship between the challenges faced by migrants as identified in question 1 and the helpful aspects identified in question 2 during the psychological transition of acculturation will be depicted using the trajectory equifinality model.

5.2 Research Design

Given the fact that qualitative research is distinguished by its adaptability, openness, and responsiveness to the context (Busetto et al, 2020, p.2),

qualitative interviews are suitable for collecting empirical data to capture the psychological transition of Japanese immigrants living in Finland. The analysis included two qualitative research methods: content analysis and the trajectory equifinality model (TEM). Content analysis was used to answer research questions 1 and 2, whereas TEM was used to answer research question 3.

To show and clarify the psychological transition of Japanese immigrants, integration is set as the final point to be reached, which is equifinality point (EFP), and the procedure to get there is depicted in a trajectory equifinality model diagram (TEM diagram). The trajectory equifinality approach, like other qualitative studies, gathers individuals who have had experiences that are relevant to the study topics, with the criteria being (1) passage of a certain obligatory passage point (OPP) and (2) attaining a specific equifinality point (EFP). The former is in other words, the latter is to have reached a specific equifinality point (EFP). In other words, the former is an experience that is sufficient for study involvement. This signifies that "enrolling in a migrant education school in Finland" is an OPP in this study. Japanese immigrants who met these two criteria were collected using social media.

5.3 Research Data Collection

5.3.1 Interviews

Interviews were conducted from December 2020 until February 2021. Each participant had three open-ended interviews through Zoom. Deep interviews utilizing trajectory equifinality model (TEM) approaches were used to conduct each interview, which lasted one to two hours and was done three times per participant.

In the first interview, I asked about the interviewee's history, i.e., how she moved to Finland, what their school were like, and whether there were any cultural conflicts. The interviewees reflected on Berry's acculturation model and positioned themselves. In the second interview, the researcher and each participant reviewed the data obtained from the first interview and further discussed the content in depth. The researcher inquired for their perspectives on each item in the second interview, referring to Hofstede's six dimension cultural

model. We read the material of the first and second interviews together in the third interview to corroborate the facts. This is a crucial step in ensuring that the interviewer is appropriately assessing the interviewee's intentions and to objectify oneself. The interview guide is attached as appendix 1.

5.3.2 Participants

Participants are three Japanese immigrants living in Finland, who has moved to Finland for the reason of marriage. Participants were chosen with the condition of having attended Finnish language courses provided by the Employment and Economic Development Office (Työ- ja Elinkeinotoimisto, TE), and their current employment status.

The background of each interviewee will be described below (Table1). The names of all participants are pseudonyms.

Hana (female, aged 20s) was an exchange student at a Finnish university when she was an undergraduate student in Japan. She met her current husband there and moved to Finland in 2016. Being unemployed, she registered herself with TE as a job seeker soon after her migration. After two weeks of attending a citizen's course on Finnish culture, she began attending a language school referred to her by TE. After three practical training internships, she took a job aptitude test offered by TE. When she graduated from the school after three internships, she took a vocational aptitude test offered by TE, where participants answer a series of questions and be told what occupations would suit them best. Whereas she wished to do her fourth internship in dentistry, she was not able to find a place that would accept her, so she did her internship at a cafe and graduated from the language school. After graduation, she enrolled in a vocational school for dental assistants and studied for two years before graduating. Currently, she is working as a dental assistant at a dental clinic.

Yuta (male, aged 20s) met his current wife in Japan and spent six months of their married life in Japan. He then quit his job in Japan at his wife's request and moved to Finland in 2017. After registering with TE as a job seeker, he studied at a language school and then attended VALMA, a course for immigrants. VALMA included Finnish language classes, Finnish culture classes, and career seminars. After completing VALMA, he started to attend a vocational school for

practical nurses, as he wished to work with people directly, which was different from his previous job, and because he knew that the industry was in shortage. He is currently doing practical training and studying to graduate in 2022.

Makiko (female, aged 40s) began dating a Finnish man with the intention of marrying him, and they moved to Finland and got married in 2011. She registered herself with TE as a job seeker, and six months after moving to Finland, she started attending a Finnish language course organized by a vocational school. She had a hard time finding places for practical training, but after practising at two workplaces, she graduated. She was unemployed for a while after graduation, but when she attended a job seminar for immigrants organized by TE, there happened to be a person looking for a Japanese worker, and she accepted a job. She worked on a project to attract Japanese tourists to the Seinäjoki region as part of their tourism policy. The project ended after six months, but she continued to work on tourism projects for a year after that. After that project is over, she was unemployed for a while, but started to help her husband with his business as he started his own business. Now she is also working occasionally as a freelance export consultant and translator.

Table 1 The list of the participants

Name	Gender	Age	Current occupation
Hana	Female	20s	Dental assistant
Yuta	Male	20s	Student at practical nurse vocational school
Makiko	Female	40s	Office assistant

5.4 Data Analysis

The interview was recorded and transcribed in Japanese, which resulting 92 pages (font: Yu Mincho, size: 12, line space: 1). Coding was done based on the transcriptions, and codes were assigned to the data. This study conducted a content analysis of the transcribed interviews, referring to the methods of content analysis by Sato et al. (2009) and Elo & Kyngäs (2008). The analysis procedure is as follows. The transcripts for analysis were repeatedly read carefully, and in order to clarify the main concept of cultural transformation, sentences and

paragraphs that summarized the ideas of the Japanese immigrants about the challenges they faced with regard to the statements to be analyzed were extracted. Next, they were categorized according to the similarity of semantic content, and those that faithfully reflected the categorization were designated as subcategories. Furthermore, the semantic content was examined and made into main categories. The units of analysis are words and sentences based on interview logs.

Following the content analysis, a TEM diagram was built based on the categories of the immigrants' experiences. Each sticky note (Post-it®) was assigned to be written one category or subcategory, and the temporal relationships of each category and subcategory were identified on paper along a drawn non-reversible time axis, while the interviewees were inspected several times to ensure that the meanings of the analysed sentences and paragraphs were appropriately captured and validated. The Trajectory Equifinality Model guideline (Yasuda and Sato, 2019) was then used to fill in the missing concepts and trajectories.

The first research question will be answered by inductive content analysis. The categories were produced by extracting the parts of the interview logs that mentioned the same or similar content. The second research question is what aspects helped the immigrants in the acculturation process. The answer to the second research question is also presented by inductive content analysis. The categories were constructed by extracting the parts of the interview logs that mentioned the same or similar content. The third research question is: what kind of psychological transitions in acculturation can be identified? This question is to be answered deductively using the trajectory equifinality model (TEM). The role of the categories and subcategories extracted from the first and second research questions in psychological transition during acculturation will be shown in the trajectory equifinality model figure (TEM figure).

5.5 Ethics

The study was ethically designed in accordance with the Guidelines for Ethical Review of Qualitative described by Walker et al (2005). In qualitative research

there are some notable ethical obligations that the researcher must follow. In the interests of informed consent, the nature and design of the study were explained to and agreed with the participants in advance. Careful attention has been paid to the privacy of the data, including the use of pseudonyms and a range of ages and places of residence, to ensure that the products of this study do not identify or disadvantage any individual. Interviews were conducted in such a way as not to evoke painful thoughts or memories, so that the study would not be detrimental to the participants. The information provided was then re-confirmed by the participant in several interviews within the three interviews to ensure that the power relationship between the researcher and the participant was not affected. Furthermore, in terms of data protection, the researcher transcribed the data herself and stored the data in a private domain.

6 RESULT

6.1 What kind of challenges have Japanese immigrants experienced in acculturating into Finnish culture?

A list of main categories and subcategories is shown below (Table 2).

Table 2 Challenges in acculturation in Finnish educational culture

Challenges in acculturation in Finnish educational culture
Challenges in learning
Unclear instructions
Ambiguous goals
Unclear methods
Loneliness during learning
No Japanese peers
No other immigrant students
The Challenge of unfamiliar power distance with teachers
The Challenge related to the individuality of classmates

As Table 2 shows, three main categories of challenges related to acculturation in Finnish educational culture were identified: challenges in learning, the challenge of unfamiliar power distance with teachers, and the challenge related to the individuality of classmates. More details about each category are given below, including quotes from the interviews.

6.1.1 Challenges in learning

Two subcategories were identified for the challenge in learning. The first was unclearness of instruction; participants described unclear goals for learning and unclear teaching methods.

When studying in the immigrant education program, participants were perplexed by their teachers' unclear instructions. This was noticed most powerfully by one migrant during the examinations, when immigrants felt a

significant ideological divide between him and the lecturers. Yuta, for example, believed that the exams were designed to help him understand what he had learned in class, whereas the teacher's instruction and feedback were aimed around passing the test. Yuta was perplexed by this.

I was puzzled by the different ways of thinking about testing between me and the teachers. Here, the purpose of the test was to pass. I thought of tests as a tool to verify my knowledge, what I learned. In Japan, they would tell me the correct answer afterwards and I would know what I hadn't understood. You also tend to get feedback from the teacher. But in Finland, they don't tell you the wrong answers. (Yuta)

He was confused by the test instructions' ambiguity. When taking exams, he believed it was vital to write concise and precise answers to the questions, despite the fact that individuals who wrote more were given higher marks. Because the evaluation criteria were not mentioned anywhere, he inferred that there was a cultural clash between Japanese and Finnish cultures.

The instructions are also vague. It's like, "Describe a specific topic," and I don't know what to write about. For example, I felt uncomfortable to find out that the more students wrote, the better it was. I wanted to check my answers after the test, but it ended with "you passed". I think there is a significant difference between getting a perfect score and getting 80% of the answers right. (Yuta)

The teacher's way of evaluation also seemed to be vague. If I was absolutely wrong, of course they would correct me, but basically they just said that I was generally good. they did not tell me how to make it better. (Makiko)

It's notable here, for example, Yuta and Makiko's descriptions of the ambiguity of evaluation criteria in classrooms. One of the core aspects taught in Finnish teacher training programs that should be clarified is evaluation criteria. The researcher and the participants had no way of knowing what qualifications the teachers in these examples had, but it's plausible that this is attributable to

personality factors rather than cultural gaps. What is important here, however, is how the participants actually perceived and dealt with the situation. It was incorporated into the data since the participants believed the problem was caused by cultural differences.

The second subcategory of learning challenges was loneliness during learning. Here, two main levels of isolation were observed. The first is the lack of other Japanese learners and the second is the lack of other immigrant learners.

I was the only Japanese person in my class. I didn't make many friends from other countries, for example from Russia, because Russian students gathered together and talked in Russian. (Makiko)

It was hard because all the students on the course (note by author: a vocational course to be a dental assistant) *were Finnish except me. It was tough. (Hana)*

As previously mentioned, Japanese immigrants are not numerous in Finland, therefore it is uncommon to have other Japanese students in the same class, whether in language classes or vocational schools. Loneliness is an unavoidable difficulty for immigrants learning in such an environment.

6.1.2   The challenge of unfamiliar power distance with teachers

During the interviews, six aspects introduced by Hofstede's six-dimensional model based on Hofstede Insights (2021) was discussed. The immigrants were mostly concerned about two issues among six aspects. The first was power distance.

Teachers' attitudes and teacher-student relationships were frequently a cause of concern for the immigrants, according to the interviews. This was owing to the fact that Japan and Finland had different power distances. Japan has a high power distance index, while Finland has a low power distance index, as discussed in Chapter 3. To put it another way, there is an inequality of power between teachers and students in Japan, and it is considered natural for teachers to tell students what to do and for students to follow their instructions

precisely. Finland, on the other hand, is a society in which the authority - in this case, the instructors - expect the students to consider them as equals and for the teachers to expect spontaneous behaviour from the students. The interviews revealed that the Japanese had a difficult time understanding these cultural conflicts. Japanese immigrants were unimpressed by the lack of one-way directives from teachers, which they were accustomed to in Japan.

Although I had heard at the beginning of the study that the teacher was only a helper and the students needed to learn actively on their own, it was not easy to adapt. (Makiko)

It often seemed to me that the teacher had no passion for teaching. (Yuta)

Since I had learned to study by memorizing and understanding what the teacher said in Japan, I just waited for the teacher to take action. (Yuta)

The immigrants stated that they were habituated to the Japanese educational culture's power distance. Some immigrants claimed that because they were not used to approaching teachers in a proactive manner, some of these immigrants ended up studying just enough to complete a minimum of their assignments.

6.1.3 The challenge related to the individuality of classmates

Another cultural aspect that makes the challenges faced by immigrants is Finnish individualism, as it was mentioned earlier that Japanese and Finnish cultures are also opposites in Hofstede's model. In particular, it was the Finnish individualism that they found culturally conflicting in their interviews. They stated that they were "wondering", "shocked", and "scared" at the cultural differences. One showed an example of Finnish culture being individualistic.

There were a limited number of internship locations, some of which were convenient and many that were very inconvenient. No one wanted to go to inconvenient places. Usually, in that class, the atmosphere was rather "let's

all work and cooperate together". But when we started talking about profit and loss, it instantly became like a survival game. There were people who had cars and people who didn't, but even those who had cars started giving reasons such as "I have work" or "I have kids". In Japan, I guess everyone would be thinking about everyone else. So, I was expecting a discussion, but it didn't happen. It became a battle to protect their own rights. They really didn't give in. I was surprised. (Hana)

Some of the immigrants faced this challenge during her internship with regard to the management structure of her workplace.

Finland is definitely an individualistic country. There are differences in the quality in the way people do their work, even if they are doing the same job. It is left up to the individual how to work and what to do. In Japan, I guess people would share information so that everyone can give the same answer to the same question, for example. But in Finland, there is no such easy-to-understand manual. I think it would be more efficient to share more information with each other at the workplace. I cannot help feeling that if you just make a piece of paper, everyone can do the same quality of work. (Makiko)

The interviews indicated the challenges that Japanese immigrants face when attempting to study in Finnish educational institutions. There were three main issues, according to them. The first was challenges related to learning itself, which revealed that they were impaired from an overall instructional ambiguity, which was an ambiguity in the methods and criteria for assessing their learning, as well as a sense of loneliness due to the lack of other Japanese and immigrants on the course. The second was an unfamiliar balance of power. In Finland, there is no distinct power difference between teachers and pupils, as there is in Japan. This has perplexed the immigrants, who have had to adjust their learning methods and mindsets as a result. The third challenge is Finnish culture's individuality. Japan, according to the Hofstede Index (2021), is rather collectivist, whereas Finland is distinctly individualistic. The conflict between Japanese culture, which avoids conflicts of opinion and respects organizational harmony,

and Finnish culture, where individual interests are respected and communicating one's feelings is an element of trustworthiness, formed the immigrants feel insecure in the school environment.

These are the challenges that Japanese immigrants confront. The answers to the second research question below will reveal how migrants dealt with these challenges and what benefited them.

6.2 What aspects have helped them in their acculturation process?

A list of main categories and subcategories is shown below (Table 3).

Table 3 Supporting aspects in acculturation into Finnish educational culture

Supporting aspects in acculturation into Finnish educational culture
Emotional help from other people
Help from family
Help from other immigrants
Face-to-face meetings with other immigrants
Online discussions
Cognitive learning
Trying to find a reason causing challenges
Learning from experience

Immigrants are found to benefit from two key aspects: emotional support and cognitive learning.

6.2.1 Emotional help from other people as a supporting aspect

The first identified supporting aspect for immigrants to acculturate is emotional support, which is provided through social engagement and interaction. They obtain support by conversing with others and reflecting on occurrences. Two subcategories were identified: help obtained from family members, such as partners and their relatives, and help obtained from other immigrants. Furthermore, the support received from other immigrants was classified into two categories: online and in-person.

They discuss with their families about various conflicts that arise between cultures and seek ideas about them from the nearest local family member. Here are a few particular examples of emotional support they receive from their family.

I came home and clinged to my husband in tears. I told him I was scared. But then again, he said that Finland seems to be like that. You don't take your own loss for the other person's gain. (Hana)

I asked my husband, "Is this normal in Finland?" (Hana, Makiko)

My wife also said that Finns have a certain way about them. My wife herself seems to think in the short term compared to my Japanese friends of the same generation. (Yuta)

My husband often tells me that my ideas don't fit into the Finnish work environment. (Makiko)

In addition to their families, immigrants also find emotional support through interaction with other immigrants living in a similar situation as them.

When I see someone (a Japanese living in Finland) complaining about the same conflict that I feed for example on Twitter, I feel like I'm not the only one who is bothered by it.

I also learn a lot from what other Japanese people are saying online.

Sometimes it's refreshing to be listened to. You can empathize and be empathized with. (Makiko)

When you are surrounded by Finns and talking to Finns, you may think, "Oh, am I wrong?" but when someone says the same thing as me, I can understand that it's not that I'm crazy, but that it's a cultural difference. (Yuta)

The results above suggest that asking their local family members about Finnish culture and having it explained to them provides emotional stability for Japanese migrants studying in Finland. It was also demonstrated that they received similar

emotional support from online connections and empathy with other Japanese immigrants who were experiencing similar difficulties.

6.2.2 Cognitive learning as a supporting aspect

The second category of support is cognitive learning based on the immigrants' own experiences. Two aspects of this cognitive learning category were identified: active learning, which is the willingness to analyse and reason about problems, and passive learning, which is the learning of nature and local culture through repeated experiences.

One immigrant initially expected the instructor to give instructions in a top-down fashion. However, as she progressed through the course and studying, she realised that she was being asked to come up with her own solution, rather than simply following a monotonous manual.

I had been confused by the vagueness of the instructions given by a teacher. However, in hindsight, I am convinced that they meant that I should think of a way to do things that suited me. In practical work, there is never a set answer. If there is a rational reason, you can do it your way. The important thing in work is the result, and there doesn't have to be a single means to get to a problem-free result. (Hana)

Another immigrant, as the one in the previous case, was perplexed by the fact that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to completing the task. Makiko was confused by the fact that various staff members would respond differently to the same inquiry. However, she is now able to explain it in a way that makes sense after analysing and thinking extensively about why this occurs in her own way. She is now able to prevent problems before they occur as a result of her actions.

I think it's important to take a step back and look at the whole picture of the culture of Finland. Maybe the lack of this kind of sharing culture is the result of whittling down the work content to get the job done by 4 pm. (Makiko)

I used to complain at first, but lately I've been trying to change my way of thinking, and when I think I might be in trouble, I check in advance and take countermeasures. (Makiko)

On the other hand, there are cases of passive and natural integration into Finnish culture through habituation over time, even without thoughtful consideration or analysis. Quotes showing this kind of learning through experiences are as follows:

Well, after living here for ten years, my senses have changed without me even noticing. Sometimes when I talk to my Japanese friends, I feel a culture shock. Even though we are both Japanese. (Makiko)

At first, I was surprised at every single thing. Like customer service and so on. But I'm used to it now. (Yuta)

The result showed that immigrants learned a range of things from their own experiences, both actively and passively, and utilized them in their acculturation. Immigrants demonstrated an in-depth comprehension of the culture through active learning, in which they pondered situations and attempted to interpret them by providing their own answers. Acculturation was also promoted by familiarisation based on the passage of time.

These are the factors that aided immigrants in coping with difficulties while studying in Finland. Emotional support from others, such as family members and other immigrants, was provided not only in person but also online, which benefited immigrants. Immigrants' cognitive learning, both positive and negative, also assisted them in overcoming the challenges caused by the cultural gap, making them feel as though the difficulties were no longer difficulties.

6.3 What kind of psychological transition is identified during acculturation?

As a result of the TEM analysis, the answer to research question 3 is represented in Figure 3.
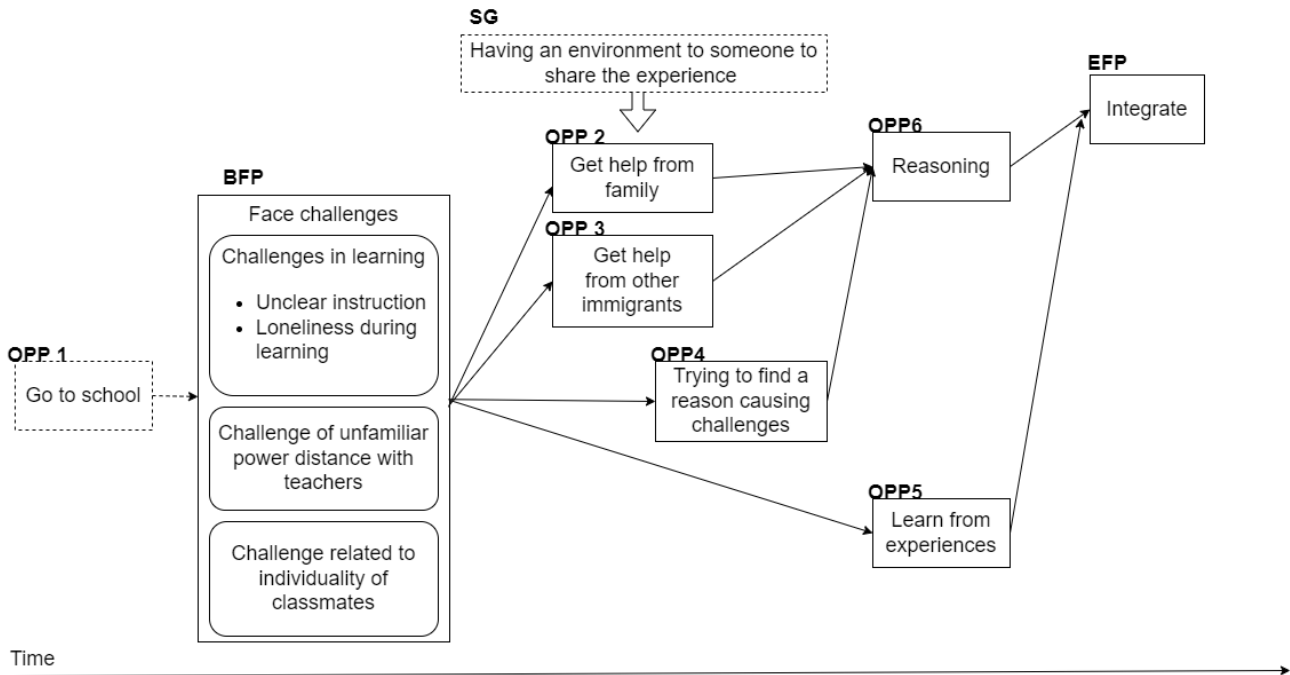

Figure 3 Trajectory equifinality model (TEM) diagram of the integration process

On the basis of Berry's two-dimensional model, there are four possible channels of acculturation that immigrants can follow: separation, marginalisation, assimilation and integration. In this study, the equifinality point (EFP) was set to 'integrate' because all participants were observed to adapt to the Finnish host culture while retaining their own Japanese culture, even though the participants' self-perceptions of their degree of integration varied greatly.

Furthermore, "having a Finnish public immigrant education," which was designated as the first obligatory passage point (OPP1), was used as a criterion experience for drawing participants to the TEM starting line (OPP1). Because all of the participants went to school, we labelled OPP1 as going to school.

A common bifurcation point (BFP) for immigrants is when they experience obstacles caused by cultural incompatibilities. Four main trajectories emerged when faced with a problem: (1) seeking emotional support from family members, (2) seeking emotional support from other immigrants, (3) analysing the situation

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and considering the reasons and background, and (4) learning naturally from the experience. As all participants experienced all of these trajectories, these will also be modelled as Obligatory Passage Points (OPP 2-5).

Three of the four broadened trajectories (OPP2-4) soon converged on a single point: 'reasoning'. In response to the various issues arising from the clash of different cultures, emotional support and cognitive learning led to the development of one's own conclusions as to why the problem occurred and what the cultural values behind the problem were. The diagram illustrates the trajectory of this process of internalisation and eventual integration of Finnish cultural values.

On the other hand, we also observed the trajectory of OPP5, i.e. the trajectory of learning naturally from experience and becoming accustomed to Finnish cultural values Unlike the other three, there was typically no reasoning engaged in this scenario, but rather a spontaneous internalisation of the values by habit, without deliberately considering why the problem occurs. This means that there are two possible trajectories to reach the equifinality point (EFP). The first is the trajectory that immigrants to try to explain the problem using their own reasoning, the second is for them to stop viewing the situation as a problem due to mere habituation.

In addition to the above, the social guidance that facilitates OPP2 'seeking emotional support from family members' and OPP3 'seeking emotional support from other immigrants' was identified. There are locals in all of the participants' families because they all moved to Finland for the purpose of marriage. In particular, all three have a partner who is a local, so they are able to expect their partner's assistance both as a family member and as someone who understands the culture. Moreover, despite the fact that there is not a huge amount of Japanese immigrants in Finland, there is a vibrant community on Facebook and Twitter where they share their stories. Together, they form the social guidance "having an environment to someone to share the experience".

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 Summary of result and its implications

This study attempted to investigate the experiences and psychological transitions that Japanese immigrants exposed to Finnish educational culture undergo through during acculturation through three research questions.

To begin, three categories of challenges faced by Japanese immigrants studying at Finnish institutions were identified: learning in general, power distance between teachers and students, and individualism among classmates and teams. Learning challenges included imprecise and non-specific directions, as well as loneliness while learning. This shows that immigrants moving from a country with a high power distance to a country with a small power distance may frequently find themselves lost, wondering about how to learn. According to Hofstede et al (2010) and Hofstede Insights (2021), Finland has a very tiny power distance, and the number of other countries with a smaller power distance than Finland is extremely limited, consisting primarily of the Nordic countries, as well as New Zealand, Austria, and Israel (Hofstede Insight, 2021). Most immigrants are assumed to be from nations with a power distance larger than Finland. In other words, most foreigners with immigrant education are likely to have come from nations where students learn passively under the control of their instructors and institutions. It has been suggested that this could be a challenging circumstance to adapt to for Japanese and other immigrants.

Immigrants received two types of support throughout their acculturation to Finnish culture: emotional support from others and cognitive learning from the immigrants themselves. In terms of the former, all participants valued emotional support from others, particularly family members, hinting that immigrants with locals in their families, such as those in this study, are more likely to acculturate than immigrants without locals in their families or relatives. Returning to Berry's bi-dimensional model, it is indicated that emotional support from local family

members is a key factor in assisting immigrants in their transition from separation to integration. Separation occurs when people refuse to accept the dominant or host culture in favour of their own. Family support could be an acculturation strategy that facilitates immigrants to get more psychologically connected to the host culture, resulting in positive psychological results.

Immigrants from a similar environment, on the other hand, are assumed to suffer similar acculturation issues because their backgrounds are similar. It is implied that being surrounded by immigrants from similar cultural backgrounds protects immigrants from marginalization and assimilation, as in Berry's model, where they are unable to maintain their own culture. When confronted with certain challenges, a participant of this research presented in the previous chapter questioned whether he was 'wrong' or 'crazy'. However, when he discovered that other Japanese immigrants shared his views about the same issue, he became convinced that the issue was caused by a cultural clash. Integration, a type of acculturation that works well with the host culture of Finland, could benefit from the support of 'compatriots' who are firmly established in their own culture. In that sense, immigrants from countries with a large total population as immigrants residing in Finland, such as Russia, Estonia, Iraq, and Somalia (Statistics Finland, 2020), are more likely to encounter other immigrants from the same country than immigrants from countries with a smaller total population, which can be hypothesised that they will be easier to acculturate than immigrants who are more difficult to meet other immigrants who came from the same country.

Another factor that aids immigrants' acculturation is cognitive learning, which can be active or passive. The latter is more easily described because it is dominated by the force of time, leaving little possibility for external interference of different variables. The former, on the other hand, is an intriguing psychological phenomenon. It implies the existence of a supple resilience that people's attempts to convince themselves and how they adapt when phenomena occur that are not explained by their own cultural norms. All participants of this study who had perplexing episodes had their own explanations for why they were prompted. They conducted diligent penetrate into Finnish culture in order to learn more about it, and they observed closely what lay behind a single problem. This process is, in other words, an effort by migrants to become psychologically integrated into the host culture.

Stories like this were told in the interviews. For immigrants from Japan, where its uncertainty avoidance index is low, the fact that there was no single fixed protocol proposed for a specific procedure is a source of anxiety. However, the immigrants tried to find their own reasons for this issue in Finnish culture. One concluded that Finnish culture is more concerned with results rather than efficiency at work, and as long as the work is carried out without problems in the end, the purpose is considered to have been achieved. Another assumed that Finland's strong culture of respecting family time meant that extra work, such as manual production, was not conceivable in order to finish work at 16:00. It was discovered that comprehending the background behind the problem, even if just in their own way, lessened their anxiety. In this case, the immigrant developed a hypothesis about the problem by combining her experience that there is no manual for uniform work, and the emphasis on results rather than process, and her knowledge that Finland has a culture of going home early and enjoying family time and leisure time. This is one of the most crucial psychological acculturation processes for integration which was observed in this research.

When the psychological transitions of migrants are depicted by TEM, it is noticed that all observed trajectories, with the exception of passive cognitive learning over time, converge on reasoning. This reasoning is highly indicated to play a significant role in the integration process, in which people protect the cultural values of their upbringing while also adapting to the new culture. To put it another way, the finding suggests that a sense of conviction within each immigrant may be an essential step toward integration. Although the manual-making example shown above is an example of active cognitive learning, there have also been cases where participants learned about the characteristics of the host culture through their interactions with others and used this as a justification for dealing with problems without going through cognitive learning.

One question arises as a result of this finding. Why is it so important to give a reason for a phenomenon in order to boost integration? The substantial influence of *'nattoku'* and *'nattokukan'* is one possibility. *Nattoku* means assent, consent, understanding, satisfaction, agreeableness, and so forth, according to the Japanese-English dictionary (Halpern, 2002), but it is a term that embraces much more concepts. *Nattoku* has been studied primarily in the realm of medical nursing as a crucial component in patients' informed consent. Imai et al (2016),

for example, conducted a conceptual analysis of *nattoku* and identified categories such as deepening understanding, emotional acceptance, self-involvement, values, relative benefit, clarity, trust, and fluidity. They also discovered that the reach resulting from a strong sense of nattoku was oriented toward enhancing executive power, mental stability, thought anchoring, satisfaction, trust, self-acceptance, and growth (Imai et al, 2006). Imai et al. defined satisfaction as "a state of deepened understanding and cognitive and emotional acceptance of an occurrence by defining its value and benefit to oneself, and a fluid state formed proactively and in a relationship of trust with others," based on their findings.

Not only in the field of medical nursing, but also in terms of acculturation, which fosters positive acculturation among migrants, it can be inferred that a sense of acceptance is a vital aspect in enhancing such individual agency and trust in the host culture.

This study conducted qualitative research using interviews in order to capture the psychological transitions in immigrants' acculturation. The findings revealed that immigrants confront challenges in areas where Japan and Finland differ significantly, such as power distance and individualism. It was also observed that their interactions with other people and cognitive learning help them cope with such challenges. Subsequently, it was also claimed that reasoning is a significant factor in adapting to Finnish culture while maintaining the immigrants' native self-culture.

7.2 Limitations and validity

During the interviews, immigrants discussed a variety of challenges; however, it was impractical to determine which of these could be used as data for this paper during the interviews, and it was discovered only after the analysis was completed if they were related to culture and the acculturation process. Furthermore, despite the fact that we limited our analysis to acculturation in immigrant education programs, many immigrants faced other issues related to cultural clashes outside of the educational context. Some immigrants stated that cultural clashes inside their families had the greatest impact on them. It is regrettable that many interesting and thought-provoking stories told by immigrants, such as struggles with bilingualism and cultural disputes within the

family, could not be included in this paper. It is intended that investigations on extremely interesting acculturation phenomena that was not able to be utilised as data in this study, such as acculturation at work circumstance and at home, will be conducted in the near future to clarify their psychological transitions.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 Interview Guide

First interview
1. Consent to data use and agreed research aims
2. Background as an immigrant
    a. Personal profile (age, residence, year that they come to Finland)
    b. Year that they come to Finland
    c. Migration aim
    d. Educational Background
    e. when and what kind of immigrant education they received
    f. current occupation
    g. occupation in Japan
3. Berry's two-dimensional model of acculturation
    a. Where would you place yourself in these four categories?
    b. Why is that?
4. have you experienced any culture shock during your education as an immigrant in Finland?
5. If yes, what kind of thing was it?
6. Tell me about it more.
7. Repetition of 5 and 6

Second interview
1. Based on the previous interviews, a TEM diagram has been prepared; please double-check the facts. Does it match the facts, such as what happened before and after?
2. Berry's two-dimensional model of acculturation
    a. Where would you place yourself in these four categories?
    b. Why is that?
3. The six-dimensional culture model of Hofstede
    a. Read and introduce the six items for Japan and Finland together
    b. What are your thoughts on this?
    c. Do you have any experience related to these six topics?
    d. Please provide me further information.
4. Repetition of 3 a-d

Third interview

1. Here is a summary of what was heard in the previous interviews. Please look through it. Is the information presented accurate?
   a. Is there anything you would like to add or recall from the previous hearing?
   b. Objectively speaking, what is your impression of the content of the previous hearing?
2. Tell me more about the culture shock you experienced.
   a. Do you have any ideas as to why this occurred?
   b. What were your reactions?
   c. How did you cope with it?
3. Repetition of 2 a-c