Attachment security and Intercultural adjustment

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1

General Introduction

People are increasingly crossing borders to live in another country, either temporarily as sojourners, for example as exchange students, or to become permanent members of a receiving society, such as immigrants and their children. The UN estimates that in 2017, 258 million people in the world were international migrants. The integration of migrants and their children within societies is one of the most pressing societal issues (European Commission, 2016). As the UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Wu Hongbo put it: "The rise in the number of international migrants reflects the increasing importance of international migration, which has become an integral part of our economies and societies" (Seo, 2016). The smooth intercultural adjustment of sojourners and migrants is important for individuals themselves and for receiving societies. Well-adjusted individuals tend to be better integrated economically, socially and psychologically and thus are more likely to be able to contribute to society (Alba & Foner, 2015). It is therefore not surprising that scholars in the social sciences have become increasingly interested in determinants of effective intercultural adjustment of sojourners and immigrants.

The first studies in the area of intercultural adjustment were driven by the need to understand the psychological and social difficulties that are oftentimes associated with cultural transitions. In 1960, one of the most influential scholars in this field, Kalervo Oberg, introduced the concept of culture shock to refer to these difficulties. Also in recent publications, researchers and professionals acknowledge that sojourners and migrants face multiple challenges, ranging from, for example, grief, loss, and loneliness, language and communication difficulties, to exclusion and discrimination (Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, & Todman, 2008). Moreover, immigrants nowadays are not only faced with transition stress, but also with receiving societies characterized by widespread anti-immigrant and anti-globalization rhetoric, resulting in tensions between racial, cultural and ideological groups (Akkerman, Lange, & Rooduijn, 2016; European Commission, 2016). Not surprisingly, research shows that intercultural transitions and belonging to cultural minorities is associated with reduced well-being (Dimitrova, Chasiotis, & van de Vijver, 2016; Furukawa, 1997; Safi, 2010). Interestingly, however, recent work also increasingly points to the fact that while migration may pose a risk for individuals and groups, cultural transitions may also

provide opportunities for growth (Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013) and increased well-being (Garcia Coll et al., 2012).

Whether individuals or groups succeed or fail to adjust to living in another culture depends on numerous factors on the societal, institutional, organizational, group and individual level (Berry, 1997; Ward & Geeraert, 2016). For example, on a *societal level*, countries' histories of immigration shape the context in which adjustment takes place (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006). On the *institutional level*, policies related to immigration and integration influence which groups of people may immigrate, and how the adjustment of these groups is supported (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). At a *group level*, for example acculturation theory has helped to explain how the orientation of migrant groups towards the new society, as well as the majority members' acceptance of the groups impact their adjustment (Berry, 1997; Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997). Relatedly, it has been shown that processes related to inter- and intragroup relations, such as contact (Allport, 1979; Pettigrew, 1998), patterns of social identification, intergroup threat, inclusion and exclusion (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) influence adjustment outcomes (Charles-Toussaint & Crowson, 2010; Schmitt, Spears, & Branscombe, 2003).

In recent times, interest has also moved towards the *individual level* and has analyzed variables within migrants themselves that may affect adjustment outcomes. More specifically, research has focused on variables such as general personality traits, core self-evaluations, stable motivational factors, and coping strategies (Bak-Klimek, Karatzias, Elliott, & Maclean, 2015; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2013, 2014; Wilson, Ward, & Fischer, 2013). Nonetheless, up until now, the role of individual difference variables for intercultural adjustment is not yet clearly understood (Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, & Sam, 2011; Kosic, 2006; Wilson et al., 2013). In this context, the present thesis focuses on *attachment security* (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980, 1988) as an interpersonal difference variable that may play a significant role as a determinant of intercultural adjustment. Attachment security refers to the extent to which an individual has internalized a positive view of the self and others that results from having mindful, supportive, and caring parents or parental figures during one's

early years of life. The goal of the present thesis is to investigate the role of attachment security for intercultural adjustment outcomes among sojourners and immigrants.

Intercultural adjustment

Definitions of intercultural adjustment vary greatly, depending for example on disciplinary focus or the goals of the research (Zhou et al., 2008). This thesis draws on the most widely applied model of intercultural adjustment by Searle and Ward (1990). These authors define *intercultural adjustment*[1] in terms of two distinct, but related (Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998) dimensions: psychological and sociocultural adjustment. *Psychological adjustment* refers to "how comfortable and happy a person feels with respect to being in the new culture, or anxious and out of place" (Demes & Geeraert, 2014, p. 92). On the other hand, *sociocultural adjustment* refers to being able to navigate through culture effectively (Ward & Kennedy, 1999). Traditional approaches to sociocultural adjustment typically focus on behavioral aspects, adjustment to the social environment, food and eating, or social norms (Demes & Geeraert, 2014). However, in recent years, approaches grounded in sociology and political science have started to focus on *trust*, as an alternative cognitive and/or affective approach to sociocultural adjustment (Crul, Schneider, Keskiner, & Lelie, 2017; Delhey & Newton, 2003). Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998) define trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (p. 395). In this sense, high levels of trust could be regarded as an outcome of successful sociocultural adjustment. Accordingly, immigrants who have successfully navigated through the unwritten rules of a different culture ought to be those who more readily trust others, for example at the workplace or in society more generally. In addition, a focus on trust rather than on traditional indicators of sociocultural adjustment allows for comparisons with the cultural majority on this very same dimension. Such a comparative approach

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[1] Scholars apply the terms intercultural adjustment and intercultural adaptation interchangeably (Searle & Ward, 1990). This applies similarly to sociocultural adjustment/ adaptation and to a lesser degree to psychological adaptation/ adjustment. Intercultural adjustment, the term used in this thesis, is usually used to describe the outcome, while intercultural adaptation is usually used to describe the process.

helps to put the relative standing of immigrants' level of sociocultural adjustment in perspective.

Going abroad and returning back home

In trying to make sense of the experiences of an intercultural transition, scholars and practitioners have long relied on the idea that specific phases of the sojourn pose specific challenges. For example, Lysgaard (1955) described adjustment abroad as a process following a U-shaped curve: "adjustment is felt to be easy and successful to begin with; then follows a 'crisis' in which one feels less well adjusted, somewhat lonely and unhappy; finally one begins to feel better adjusted again, becoming more integrated into the foreign community" (p. 51). Demes and Geeraert (2015) recently investigated stress levels of about 2500 adolescent exchange students prior to leaving their home country and during their stay abroad, using online questionnaires. They found that most participants of their study (92%) experienced no drastic changes in their levels of stress during that time, while 5% experienced changes in stress that resembled an inverse U-curve and 3% experienced changes in stress that resembled a reversed J-curve. This shows that there is little evidence that adjustment follows certain generalizable patterns, such as the U-shaped curve. Moreover, these findings suggest that while intercultural transitions can be highly stressful for some sojourners (Furukawa, 1997; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001), the transition from the familiar environment to living in another country is not necessarily stressful for most adolescents (Demes & Geeraert, 2015; Hutteman, Nestler, Wagner, Egloff, & Back, 2015). In fact, recent studies suggest that going abroad is related to personal growth (Bachner & Zeutschel, 2009; Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013; Hutteman et al., 2015; Mau, Mewes, & Zimmermann, 2008).

Intercultural adjustment research and practice have in recent years begun to acknowledge that one of the important, yet not very well understood phases of the sojourn is the reentry to the country of origin after having stayed abroad (Bosustow, 2005; LaBrack & Bathurst, 2012; Storti, 2001). Similarly, as an extension of the U-curve as suggested by Lysgaard (1955), Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1963) proposed the W-curve, suggesting that upon reentry to the country of origin, individuals face yet another U-curve of adjustment. However, research shows that there is little support for

this idea of a W-curve (Church; 1982; Demes & Geeraert; 2015; Onwumechili, Nwosu, Jackson II, & James-Hughes, 2003; Ward, Okura, Kennedy, and Kojima; 1998). Nevertheless, researchers do suggest that reentry is a crucial phase of adjustment. Returning to the once familiar environment after a stay abroad might be even *more difficult* than adjustment abroad (Chamove & Soeterik, 2006; Kartoshkina, 2015; Szkudlarek, 2010). Returning individuals often report cultural identity and value conflicts, stress, anger, social withdrawal, depression, anxiety, and interpersonal difficulties during their reentry adjustment (Gaw, 2000). However, at the same time, at the positive side, the reentry phase seems particularly relevant for integrating the intercultural learning experience (Bosustow, 2005; LaBrack & Bathurst, 2012; Storti, 2001). This thesis aims to contribute to the understanding of both, adjustment abroad and upon reentry.

Immigrants' adjustment in the work setting and in general society

The present research focuses on adjustment in two specific settings: at work and in society. Researchers and policy makers see employment as a pivotal step for the successful integration of immigrants (de Vroome & Verkuyten, 2014). For example, a common basic principle to promote integration in the EU states that "Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible" (Council of the European Union, 2004, p. 14). However, for immigrants, finding work can be difficult, and discrimination during job applications seems common (Alba & Foner, 2015). Importantly, once immigrants have found employment, very little is known about their experiences at the workplace. As a pivotal context for immigrant adjustment, part of the research in this thesis will specifically focus on the work context, more specifically on immigrants' trust at the workplace.

In addition to intercultural adjustment at work, this thesis focuses on immigrants' intercultural adjustment in society. In recent years, societal developments such as the economic crisis (Lindström & Giordano, 2016) and widespread anti-immigration attitudes (European Commission, 2016; Kriesi & Pappas, 2015) are likely to have led to increased feelings of insecurity among immigrants and cultural minorities (Dagevos & Huijnk, 2014; Vrooman, 2009). Immigrants are often the first to

be affected by detrimental economic developments, such as a recession (Mortensen & Chen, 2013; Statistics Netherlands, 2012). Immigrants and their children (second generation immigrants), especially when having a cultural background that is relatively distant from the receiving society, are also more inclined to experience discrimination, than members of the cultural majority (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Smith, 2010). In the Netherlands and other Western countries, conflicts between the cultural majority on the one hand and immigrants or cultural minorities on the other, are seen as the biggest societal problem by a majority of people (Vrooman, Gijsberts & Boelhouwer, 2014). Voices in society and among politicians arise that emphasize the need to regulate numbers of immigrants and their freedom to express or live according to their cultural traditions. Accordingly, the question about the implications of the described societal developments for trust levels among immigrants is an important one.

Attachment security

Attachment security is an intrapersonal characteristic that may, as will be argued below, play an important role as a determinant of intercultural adjustment. Attachment security can be understood as a "felt sense, rooted in one's history of close relationships, that the world is generally safe, that other people are generally helpful when called upon, and that I, as an unique individual, am valuable and lovable, thanks to being valued and loved by others" (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2013, p. 287). According to Bowlby (e.g., 1969, 1988), from an evolutionary perspective, it is adaptive for infants to rely on attachment figures for protection, comfort and support, in order to survive. As children grow up, these attachment figures and the way they have been interacted with are gradually internalized as mental representations. More specifically, a child interacting with mindful and supportive attachment figures is likely to internalize a positive representation of others, referred to as a positive working model of others. It has learned that others are dependable and competent, and through this internalizes a sense of security and safety. Through the reassurance of others, a child is also likely to develop a positive model of the self, stemming from the belief that it is worthy of love. Children who do not receive this kind of parenting are at risk of developing insecure attachment.

Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), who studied attachment among adolescents and adults developed an integrative model of attachment based on two dimensions referring to either a positive or negative model of others combined with a positive or a negative model of self (see Figure 1.1). In this model, individuals with a positive model of both, others and the self, have a *secure attachment style* (also referred to as attachment security). Individuals with negative models of both, others and the self, are described as having a *fearful attachment style*. Having internalized a positive model of others and a negative model of self is referred to as a *preoccupied attachment style*. Finally, individuals with a negative model of others and a positive model of self are referred to as having a *dismissing attachment style*.

Positive model of other

Positive model of self   **Secure** | **Preoccupied**   Negative model of self

Dismissing | **Fearful**

Negative model of other
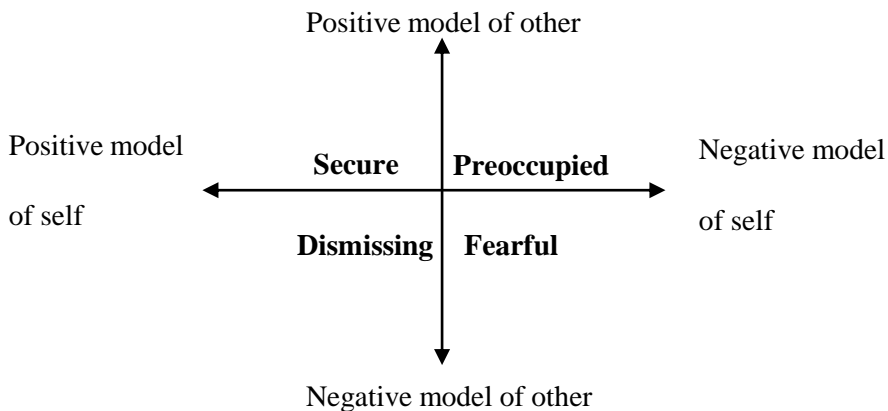
Figure 1.1. Four attachment styles (adapted from Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991).

Up until now, there is quite some evidence for a positive impact of attachment security on intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes among non-migrants (and reversely a negative impact of insecure attachment; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2010). For example, being securely attached seems to protect against threat and distress, may stimulate prosocial behavior and is related to effectiveness in unfamiliar situations (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999). Moreover, individuals with high levels of attachment security show high cognitive openness (Mikulincer, 1997), more compassion for others

(Gillath, Shaver, & Mikulincer, 2005), and less negative reactions towards members of out-groups (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2001). Attachment is relatively stable, and is transmitted across generations (Sette, Coppola, & Cassibba, 2015).

The studies presented in this thesis are going to examine the predictive value of attachment security with regard to indicators of intercultural adjustment. As Bowlby (1973) put it: "There is a marked tendency for humans, like animals of other species, to remain in a particular and familiar locale and in the company of particular and familiar people" (p. 147). Sojourners and migrants have clearly deviated from this general tendency to stay with what is familiar. The disruption of social connections with others, together with the distress of intercultural transitions create a setting, in which the attachment system is likely to be highly activated. Surprisingly, even though attachment theory seems particularly applicable to sojourner and migrant adjustment, research examining the value of attachment for intercultural adjustment is still in its infancy.

The impact of individual differences on adjustment

Bowlby (1980) claimed that attachment security contributes to feelings of personal worth, self-efficacy and effective coping. Indeed, empirical evidence suggests that secure attachment is positively linked to "well-being, to more adaptive forms of coping with stress and regulating affect, and a reduced likelihood of developing psychological disorders" (Gillath, Selcuk, & Shaver, 2008, p. 1652). In that sense, attachment security can be regarded as an individual difference concept that fits the *stress and coping* framework, which has been primarily used in order to explain psychological adjustment. The stress and coping approach to understand intercultural adjustment builds on earlier models about the impact of life events and proposes that individuals' psychological well-being in response to aversive situations is dependent upon appraisal and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Hence, it is not surprising that individual difference variables related to resilience (e.g., emotional stability, self-efficacy, self-esteem) have proved to be highly useful predictors of psychological adjustment (Bak-Klimek et al., 2015). Attachment security might also strengthen individuals' abilities to deal effectively with distress that can arise from intercultural

experiences and can therefore be expected to positively contribute to psychological adjustment.

What is the role of attachment security for sociocultural adjustment? Sociocultural adjustment is often studied from a *culture learning* perspective, which relies on "the core assumptions that cultural novices have difficulties managing everyday social encounters and that the culture-specific skills needed to negotiate a new cultural milieu can be acquired through the learning process" (Wilson et al., 2013, p. 901). How could attachment security help individuals with culture learning and sociocultural adjustment? The broaden and build cycle of attachment security (Fredrickson, 2004; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007) states that "positive emotions broaden the scopes of attention, cognition, and action and that they build physical, intellectual, and social resources" (Fredrickson, 2004, p. 1369). Indeed, there is empirical evidence suggesting that individuals with high levels of attachment security are curious, cognitively open, eager to explore novel situations (Feeney, 2007; Mikulincer, 1997), and creative problem solvers (Mikulincer, Shaver, & Rom, 2011). Another argument that could help to clarify the theoretical relationships between attachment security and sociocultural adjustment is that attachment theory is regarded as "at its core, a theory of prosocial behavior" (Shaver, Mikulincer, Gross, Stern, & Cassidy, 2016, p. 878). That is, individuals with high levels of attachment security, who have developed a positive model of self and others, and who feel comfortable with interdependence and intimacy, are more likely to acknowledge and accept other peoples' needs, and to be more empathic and compassionate (Gillath et al., 2005; Shaver et al., 2016). Together, the broaden and build cycle of attachment security and findings that link attachment security to prosocial behavior underline that attachment security might be an important determinant of sociocultural adjustment.

In sum, there is reason to expect that individuals with high levels of attachment security are more likely to succeed in intercultural adjustment. There are two explanations as to why attachment security may lead to successful adjustment: via its role as a coping factor and through enhanced cultural learning. It must be noted that these two explanations are probably not mutually exclusive or independent processes describing how attachment security may lead to successful intercultural adjustment. Rather, they seem to refer to intertwined processes that set individuals with high levels

of attachment security at an advantage in unforeseeable and complex situations. There are some studies that have investigated the role of attachment for both indicators of intercultural adjustment. Preliminary studies, for example among Brazilian immigrants in the UK (Sochos & Diniz, 2012), German, Russian, Polish and Hungarian immigrants in the Netherlands (Polek, Wöhrle, & Van Oudenhoven, 2010), Chinese Indonesians in the United States of America (Handojo, 2000), Chinese university students in the United States of America (Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006), Dutch emigrants living in different countries (Bakker, Van Oudenhoven, & Van der Zee, 2004), expats (Pater, Vianen, Derksen, & others, 2003), children of expats (Van der Zee, Ali, & Haaksma, 2007) and second generation Moroccan adolescence in the Netherlands (Alonso-Arbiol, Abubakar, & van de Vijver, 2014) indeed suggest that attachment security is positively related to both psychological and sociocultural adjustment.

This thesis seeks to further the knowledge about the role of attachment security for intercultural adjustment in several ways. Firstly, it aims to investigate the link between attachment security and various indicators of psychological and sociocultural adjustment in three different study populations, adolescent sojourners, immigrant employees and immigrants in society. Moreover, for the attachment framework being a useful framework for understanding intercultural adjustment, it needs to explain variance in intercultural adjustment *above* competing frameworks that have already proven to be meaningful predictors of such outcomes. Until today, only two studies provide preliminary evidence for the incremental value of attachment above competing individual difference variables (Bakker et al., 2004; Van der Zee et al., 2007). The focus of this dissertation is on the individual difference variables *self-esteem*, *intercultural traits* and *dispositional mindfulness*. Below, these possible predictors of intercultural adjustment that have been investigated in this dissertation will be briefly introduced and reviewed with regard to their role for intercultural adjustment.

Self-esteem describes an individual's sense of self-worth (Rosenberg, 1979). Numerous studies have shown that self-esteem is positively related to intercultural adjustment (Johnson, Kristof-Brown, Klein, & al., 2003; Nesdale & Mak, 2003). For example, Johnson and colleagues (2003) found that self-esteem, as part of the higher-order construct of core self-evaluative traits (including generalized self-efficacy, locus

of control, and emotional stability), was positively related to psychological, social and professional adjustment outcomes among expats. Although self-esteem and secure attachment are conceptually linked, both referring to a sense of self-worth, it is likely that attachment explains variance in adjustment beyond self-esteem. More specifically, attachment security not only refers to a positive model of self, but also to a positive model of others. Accordingly, attachment security is a more relational and a less evaluative concept than self-esteem, and this relational aspect is essential for successful intercultural adjustment.

A second category of individual difference variables to be investigated in this thesis are *intercultural traits*. The Big Five personality framework is the most widely studied broad measure of personality, which has found to explain intercultural adjustment (Caligiuri, 2000; Demes & Geeraert, 2015; Huang, Chi, & Lawler, 2005; Ward, Leong, & Low, 2004). However, as the scope of these traits is broad, it has been argued that these traits might be unable to capture the subtle and specific traits needed in order to master intercultural adjustment. Therefore, Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000; 2001) proposed their intercultural personality framework, which is constituted by the five intercultural traits emotional stability, flexibility, openmindedness, social initiative, and cultural empathy. *Emotional stability* is defined as the tendency to remain calm in stressful situations. *Flexibility* refers to the tendency to change behavior if novel and ambiguous situations demand this. *Openmindedness* is defined as an open attitude towards culturally different others. *Social initiative* describes actively approaching social situations and taking initiative. *Cultural empathy* refers to individuals' ability to empathize with the thoughts, behaviors and feelings of culturally different others. These five intercultural traits are tailored to assess specific aspects of personality that are thought to be especially important for successfully managing intercultural situations.

The intercultural personality framework has been investigated extensively in relation to intercultural adjustment. For example, the five intercultural traits have been shown to predict intercultural adjustment among university students (Leong, 2007; Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002), migrants (Bakker et al., 2004), expatriates (Peltokorpi & Froese, 2012; Van Oudenhoven, Mol, & Van der Zee, 2003), children of expatriates (Van der Zee et al., 2007), as well as affective reactions to stressful

intercultural situations (Van der Zee, Van Oudenhoven, & De Grijs, 2004). Moreover, the five traits reliably predicted variance in behavioral competence among job applicants beyond the Big Five (Van Der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003). In sum, high levels on the five intercultural traits are expected to be positively related to intercultural adjustment success.

Mindfulness has been defined as the ability to pay "attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). Previous work on the role of dispositional mindfulness for different types of adjustment, e.g., adjustment to living with serious disease, has shown that it is positively related to intrapersonal functioning, and relatedly, psychological well-being (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007; Keng et al., 2011). There is also evidence that mindfulness is positively related to interpersonal functioning (Brown & Kasser, 2005; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Dekeyser, Raes, Leijssen, Leysen, & Dewulf, 2008; Quaglia, Goodman, & Brown, 2015).

Moreover, there is evidence that levels of mindfulness can be increased through training (Quaglia, Braun, Freeman, McDaniel, & Brown, 2016). For example, several studies have found that mindfulness training reduces stereotyping and prejudice (Djikic, Langer, & Stapleton, 2008; Lillis & Hayes, 2007). Mindfulness is included in this thesis as a promising concept to explain intercultural adjustment, as well as an interesting candidate for comparison against attachment security, because of its positive relations to psychosocial functioning, and based on its trainability.

Importantly, in the studies presented in this thesis it is assumed that attachment security explains variance in intercultural adjustment, above intercultural traits, self-esteem and dispositional mindfulness. Preliminary evidence for this assumption has been presented by Van der Zee and colleagues (2007), who have shown incremental predictive capabilities of attachment styles above intercultural traits in explaining intercultural adjustment among expatriate children and adolescents. The present thesis strives to provide further evidence that attachment security is able to account for additional variance in intercultural adjustment above intercultural traits, self-esteem and dispositional mindfulness, thereby strengthening support for the idea that attachment security is a highly useful concept for understanding intercultural adjustment.

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Attachment security as buffer

So far, the direct relationship between attachment and adjustment has been discussed: high levels of attachment security are expected to positively relate to successful adjustment, because attachment security enables individuals to cope effectively, and to learn the unwritten rules of the new culture. In addition to this *presumed* direct link between attachment security and adjustment, as will be argued below, high levels of attachment security may facilitate adjustment by reducing the negative impact of stressors (see Figure 1.2 for a conceptual model). We refer to this as the *buffer hypothesis*.

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                    │   Attachment security   │
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│    Stressors    │─────────────────────▶│ Intercultural adjustment │
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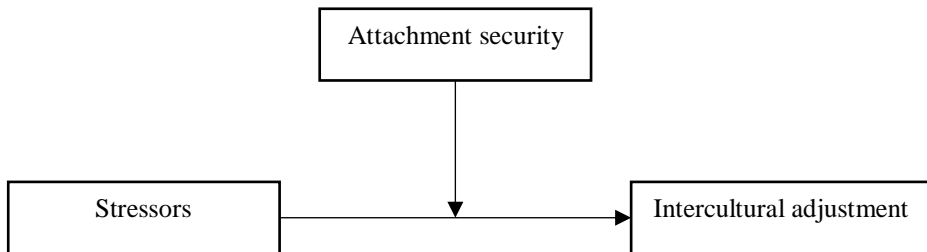
Figure 1.2. The buffer hypothesis.

Migrants face multiple stressors in their lives. Stressors can hamper intercultural adjustment, as they reduce well-being and limit the cognitive and affective capacity to view others in positive ways (Ward et al., 2001). However, research has shown that stressors do not affect everyone in the same way. For example, coping theories show that intra- (e.g., personality and skills) and interpersonal (e.g., social support) resources may protect individuals against the detrimental effects of stressors (Hobfoll, 1989; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Attachment security, as an intrapersonal resource (being resilient and prosocial) may help individuals to better deal with stressors in their lives and hence experience higher levels of intercultural adjustment. An investigation of the buffer hypothesis of attachment security might therefore increase our understanding with regard to why high levels of attachment security are beneficial for intercultural adjustment.

In line with this, Vanheule and Declercq (2009) found that security guards reporting a critical and distressing incident were less likely to show high levels of burnout, when they reported high levels of attachment security. A longitudinal study by Segel-Karpas, Bamberger and Bacharach (2013) similarly showed that individuals with high attachment security were less affected by adverse income effects associated with retirement. There is also evidence with regard to the buffering role of attachment security among migrants. Sochos and Diniz (2012) investigated the role of attachment in the relationship between sociocultural difficulties and psychological distress among Brazilian immigrants living in the UK. They found that migrants with high levels of attachment security were less distressed by experiences of sociocultural difficulties than individuals with low levels of attachment security. Apparently, in addition to a direct effect on adjustment, attachment security may also act as a resource that protects migrants in the face of stressors. The present thesis tests the buffer hypothesis by focusing on the protective role of secure attachment against the detrimental effects of three stressors on intercultural adjustment: financial distress (Lindström & Rosvall, 2016), unfair treatment (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002) and distrust in political institutions (Sønderskov & Dinesen, 2015).

Overview of the chapters

Each of the following three empirical chapters addresses one or more of the above mentioned questions with the aim of understanding the role of attachment security for intercultural adjustment of sojourners and immigrants. Every chapter describes one or two cross-sectional survey studies. Following this introductory chapter, *Chapter 2* investigates adolescent sojourners' intercultural adjustment in two phases of the sojourn, while abroad and upon reentry, by means of a cross-sectional questionnaire study. The primary goal is to investigate the unique predictive properties of attachment styles, while controlling for the impact of intercultural traits and mindfulness in explaining intercultural adjustment. In both phases, intercultural adjustment is operationalized as psychological adjustment and social adjustment.

The study described in *Chapter 3* investigates adjustment at the workplace among first- and second-generation immigrant employees, and cultural majority employees. The first goal of this study is to test whether first-generation immigrants are

less likely to adjust at the workplace compared to cultural majority and second-generation immigrant employees. The second goal of the study is to investigate whether attachment security is beneficial for workplace adjustment. As in the chapter 2, the predictive value of attachment security in explaining adjustment is contrasted against the predictive value of other potentially relevant personality characteristics, in this case self-esteem and intercultural traits. In this study, adjustment at work is operationalized as workplace trust.

Chapter 4 examines the buffering role of attachment in the stressor-adjustment relation. A study is described focusing on immigrants' adjustment in society, conceptualized as social trust (trust in other people, also referred to as generalized or horizontal trust). The first goal of this study is to investigate whether lower social trust among different immigrant groups can be explained by elevated levels of stressors (financial distress, unfair treatment and distrust in political institutions), in comparison to members of the cultural majority. The second goal is to investigate whether attachment security is related to adjustment, and whether attachment buffers against the detrimental consequences of stressors on adjustment. Moreover, this study explores the possibility that the relations between stressors, attachment and adjustment differ for immigrants and cultural majority members.

Finally, *Chapter 5* summarizes and discusses the evidence from the empirical chapters. This concluding chapter aims to embed the separate findings into an integrated theoretical framework and to derive suggestions for future research.

Chapter

2

The Role of Intercultural Traits, Attachment Styles and Dispositional Mindfulness for Intercultural Adjustment Abroad and Upon Reentry among Adolescent Sojourners

A yearlong stay abroad is popular among high-school students (Weichbrodt, 2014). Going abroad creates possibilities for personal growth (Bachner & Zeutschel, 1994; Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013; Hutteman, Nestler, Wagner, Egloff, & Back, 2015; Mau, Mewes, & Zimmermann, 2007), improved language and intercultural learning (Hansel, 2008; Spenader, 2011), enhanced self-efficacy in communication (Milstein, 2005), and increased global engagement (Paige, Fry, Stallman, Josić, & Jon, 2010). However, staying abroad may also imply psychological and social challenges (Furukawa, 1997; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960), especially upon reentry to the home country (Chamove & Soeterik, 2006; Gaw, 2000; Kartoshkina, 2015; Szkudlarek, 2010; Young, 2014). Szkudlarek (2010) points out that despite its associated difficulties regarding psychological and social readjustment, reentry "still remains largely neglected and underestimated in the sojourner's transition trajectory" and that "reentry should become an issue of the highest priority to both sojourning individuals as well as people managing the reentry transitions of travelers" (p. 1).

In the current study, we investigate the role of intercultural traits, attachment styles and dispositional mindfulness for intercultural adjustment of adolescent sojourners. The selection of these individual difference frameworks is based on Buss' (1991) and Caligiuri's (2000) personality and evolutionary theories, which state that high levels on key personality traits provide advantages in specific situations. First, we examine the role of intercultural traits for sojourner adjustment, because they have previously been shown to explain intercultural adjustment abroad in various settings and populations (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2013, 2014). Second, we investigate the role of attachment styles, that seem to influence psychosocial functioning of individuals in general (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2010), but also seem potentially influential in explaining intercultural adjustment among adult samples (Polek, Wöhrle, & Van Oudenhoven, 2010; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006), as well as among children and adolescents (Van der Zee, Ali, & Haaksma, 2007). Lastly, we are interested in the role of dispositional mindfulness, which has shown to be related to psychological and social functioning, but, to our knowledge, has not yet been investigated empirically in relation to intercultural adjustment.

In the following, we provide our definition of intercultural adjustment and descriptions of the two phases of adjustment, before we turn to a discussion of the three

individual differences frameworks (intercultural traits, attachment styles, dispositional mindfulness) and their expected relations to intercultural adjustment.

Two dimensions of adjustment

The current study draws on the most widely applied definition of intercultural adjustment, the two-dimensional approach of Ward and Kennedy (1999). The first of these dimensions is *psychological adjustment*, which refers to how happy an individual is. The second dimension is sociocultural adjustment which refers to being able to use "culturally appropriate skills and to negotiate interactive aspects of the host environment" (p. 660; Ward & Kennedy, 1999). In contrast to cultural elements of this definition, however, the current study focuses solely on its social elements. More specifically, we define successful *social adjustment* in both phases of the sojourn as the availability of supportive others in times of need.

Two phases of adjustment

In the current study, we investigate two phases of adolescents' intercultural adjustment: while abroad and upon reentry. Both phases of adjustment have found to be associated with personal growth (Bachner & Zeutschel, 1994; Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013; Hutteman et al., 2015; Kartoshkina, 2015; Mau et al., 2007) as well as psychosocial difficulties (Chamove & Soeterik, 2006; Furukawa, 1997; Kartoshkina, 2015; Szkudlarek, 2010; Young, 2014). Yet, reentry adjustment might be more difficult than adjustment abroad. For example, Chamove and Soeterik (2006) found that 61% of their returning high-school students reported difficulties upon reentry, with grief scores comparable to individuals experiencing loss from death. Among the commonly reported difficulties that sojourners experience during reentry are cultural identity conflicts, value conflicts, stress, anger, social withdrawal, depression, anxiety, and interpersonal difficulties (Gaw, 2000).

Even though reentry has been shown to be challenging, and is regarded by some authors as the most important stage of sojourning (Bosustow, 2005; Storti, 2001) and intercultural learning (LaBrack & Bathurst, 2012), research has so far primarily focused on the experiences abroad. Therefore, this study investigates the roles of the three individual difference frameworks not only among abroadees (adolescents

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adjusting abroad), but also among returnees (adolescents adjusting in their country of origin following a stay abroad). Previous research shows that both phases of intercultural adjustment – being abroad and having returned from abroad – provide opportunities for growth and setbacks. In this study, we expect that the hypotheses presented below hold in both phases of intercultural adjustment.

Intercultural traits

A well-known model of personality is the Five Factor Model (FFM), which distinguishes between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and intellect/ autonomy (Costa & McCrae, 1992). It has shown to be able to account for intercultural adjustment outcomes (Caligiuri, 2000; Furukawa & Shibayama, 1993; Huang, Chi, & Lawler, 2005; Ward, Leong, & Low, 2004). However, because personality dimensions underlying this model are broadly defined, they might lack precision predicting intercultural success. Therefore, Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001) developed a personality model including five *intercultural traits* which specifically capture dimensions of personality that are related to effective functioning in culturally diverse settings. These intercultural traits have shown to explain variance in intercultural adjustment beyond demographic variables (Van Oudenhoven, Mol, & Van der Zee, 2003), self-efficacy (Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002), cultural intelligence (Ward, Fischer, Zaid Lam, & Hall, 2008) and Big Five traits (Bakker, Van Oudenhoven, & Van der Zee, 2004; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000; Van der Zee, Zaal, & Piekstra, 2003).

The first intercultural trait is *cultural empathy*, referring to empathy with respect to feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of culturally dissimilar others. Those with high scores on this dimension can quickly learn to understand (cultural) scripts and aspects of interpersonal behavior that are new and unfamiliar, and are able to respond accordingly. The second trait, *openmindedness*, is defined as an open and unprejudiced attitude toward cultural differences. Rather than seeing cultural differences as black or white, individuals who are openminded postpone their judgment. High levels of openmindedness could be conducive to intercultural adjustment as it is helpful in dealing with cultural differences, both on an intrapersonal level (e.g., their reactions with respect to identity conflicts, worldview conflicts) and on an interpersonal level

(e.g., postponing judgment reduces negative interpersonal affect, which helps individuals to remain receptive in interpersonal situations). Third, *social initiative* refers to the tendency to actively approach interpersonal situations. This dimension distinguishes individuals who are socially disengaged or who have adopted a wait and see strategy from those who are vigorously engaged in maintaining or expanding social relations. Fourth, *emotional stability* is defined as the ability to stay calm during distressing situations. Individuals with high scores on this dimension are better able to cope with uncertainty and lack of control that often characterizes intercultural situations. The fifth and final trait is *flexibility*. It is defined as the ability to deviate from learned or routine cognition and behavior. Intercultural situations render some of the learned cognitions and behaviors as invalid or ineffective, as these cannot simply be ported to the new culture. Therefore, individuals with high scores on flexibility more easily adjust to unfamiliar and novel situations (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001).

Empirical evidence for relations between intercultural traits and the two dimensions of adjustment has been found in various migrant groups: among adult migrants (Bakker et al., 2004), expatriates (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2003), university students (Leong, 2007), and expatriate children and adolescents (Van der Zee et al., 2007). Importantly, based on a review of findings regarding the role of intercultural traits for intercultural adjustment, Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2013) suggested two dimensions underlying these five traits, pointing at two different roles that personality can play in an intercultural setting. More specifically, they refer to the two traits of emotional stability and flexibility as *stress-related traits*, which cause individuals to feel less distressed in the face of uncertainty and loss of control. Openmindedness, social initiative and cultural empathy are considered to be *social-perceptual traits* that are related to perceiving intercultural situations as challenging, and to exploring the possibilities that come along with new cultural perspectives and encounters. In the present study, the assumption was that whereas stress-related traits may, because of their stress-reducing nature, particularly be related to indicators of psychological adjustment, especially social-perceptual traits may facilitate cultural learning, and may therefore be linked to social adjustment. More specifically, we expect:

H1a: Emotional stability, flexibility, openmindedness, social initiative and cultural empathy are positively related to psychological adjustment of high-school exchange students. We predict the relation of emotional stability and flexibility with psychological adjustment to be stronger than the relation of openmindedness, social initiative and cultural empathy with this outcome variable.

H1b: Emotional stability, flexibility, openmindedness, social initiative and cultural empathy are positively related to social adjustment of high-school exchange students. We predict the relation of openmindedness, social initiative and cultural empathy with social adjustment to be stronger than the relation of emotional stability and flexibility with this outcome variable.

Attachment styles

Attachment styles are widely studied individual difference variables for understanding intra-, and interpersonal processes (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2010). In the current study, we draw on Bartholomew and Horowitz's (1991) model, which makes a distinction between four attachment styles. These attachment styles are derived from the combination of having internalized either a positive or a negative working model of self and others. The s*ecure attachment style* refers to the internalization of both, the feeling of being worthy of others' love and the expectation that others can be trusted (positive working model of self and others). In times of distress, securely attached individuals know that there are others to rely on, which is a self-regulatory mechanism that by itself brings relief (Mikulincer, Shaver, Sapir-Lavid, & Avihou-Kanza, 2009). The conceptual opposite of the secure attachment style is the *fearful attachment style* (negative working model of self and others). Individuals with high scores on this attachment style are caught in a downward spiral of interpersonal avoidance and anxiety: they rarely engage others, because social situations induce anxiety. Those with high scores on the *preoccupied attachment style* view themselves as unworthy of others' love (negative working model of self), and strongly rely on others' approval and affection (positive working model of others). Their approach towards relationships

is characterized by overdependence, neediness and increased vigilance towards distressing cues, such as interpersonal rejection. Finally, individuals with high scores on the *dismissing attachment style* have learned that independence from others is the safest strategy when it comes to interpersonal issues, hence they do not trust others (negative working model of others). At the same time, they are characterized by a positive, yet fragile, model of self. Because they maintain this positive working model mostly by deactivating their attachment system (e.g., they strive for self-sufficiency and interpersonal independence), they are unlikely to reap the benefits that trusting others might produce.

Previous studies have shown that attachment styles are related to intercultural adjustment. Furukawa and Shibayama (1993) found that maternal care (measured prior to departure), which can be seen as a proxy for the secure attachment style, predicted high-school students' subsequent intercultural adjustment. Van der Zee and colleagues (2007) showed that attachment styles had predictive value above intercultural traits in explaining intercultural adjustment among expatriate children and adolescents. The ambivalent attachment style (items of the fearful and preoccupied attachment style combined) predicted unique variance in psychological and social dimensions of intercultural adjustment. In line with earlier studies among migrants, our prediction is that the secure attachment style will be positively related to intercultural adjustment, whereas the other three attachment styles will be negatively related to intercultural adjustment outcomes (Bakker et al., 2004; Polek, Wöhrle, & Van Oudenhoven, 2010; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). As secure and insecure attachment styles have previously found to be related to both psychological adjustment and social adjustment, we expect:

> H2: The secure attachment style is positively related to psychological
> and social adjustment; the fearful, preoccupied, and dismissing
> attachment style are negatively related to psychological and social
> adjustment.

Mindfulness

A third individual difference variable that has hardly been investigated in relation to intercultural adjustment is dispositional mindfulness. Mindfulness is the ability to pay "attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4) and has received increased attention in health psychology, due to its positive relations with well-being (Keng, Smoski, & Robins, 2011). Its benefits have been reported in educational and health settings, and it has been shown that it can be trained among adolescents (Zoogman, Goldberg, Hoyt, & Miller, 2014). We assume that mindfulness poses a promising concept in relation to intercultural adjustment because it is related to flexibility and self-regulation (Houde, 2014; Thomas, 2006; Tuleja, 2014; Zegarac, Spencer-Oatey, & Ushioda, 2014). It is seen as an integral part of cultural intelligence (Thomas, 2006), it may help to improve communication in intercultural settings (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000), and to resolve identity struggles that seem to be related to intercultural transitions (Collie, Kindon, Liu, & Podsiadlowski, 2010).

Previous work on the role of mindfulness for different types of adjustment, e.g., adjustment to living with serious disease, has shown that dispositional mindfulness is positively related to intrapersonal functioning, and relatedly, psychological well-being (Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007; Keng et al., 2011). Moreover, mindfulness is positively related to interpersonal functioning. Previous work shows that higher levels of dispositional mindfulness are related to a higher sense of relatedness, connection and interpersonal closeness (Brown & Kasser, 2005; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Quaglia, Goodman, & Brown, 2015) and to effective interpersonal behavior, as exemplified by a lower degree of social anxiety (Dekeyser, Raes, Leijssen, Leysen, & Dewulf, 2008). Therefore, we expect:

H3: Dispositional mindfulness is positively related to psychological
and social adjustment.

Present research

In this study we investigate the relations of three individual difference frameworks, intercultural traits (H1), attachment styles (H2), and dispositional

mindfulness (H3) with two dimensions of intercultural adjustment, psychological and social adjustment, across two phases of adolescents' sojourn, while being abroad and upon return. Moreover, we aim to identify the most important individual difference framework and variables for explaining psychological and social adjustment in the two phases of the sojourn.

As previous research has not been conclusive with regard to answering the question of whether reentry adjustment is more difficult than adjustment abroad, we aim to explore this possibility. Moreover, it is not known whether the structural relations between individual difference variables and indicators of adjustment can be expected to be the same across both phases. On the one hand, both phases can be considered as intercultural transitions. This would support the assumption that the relations between individual difference variables and adjustment do not differ across the two phases. On the other hand, it is possible that the influence of individual difference variables is more pronounced during one phase than during the other. For example, it is possible that the intercultural trait of cultural empathy is especially useful for explaining adjustment abroad, and has little influence on adjustment in the culturally familiar country of origin during reentry. Therefore, the present study explores whether the relations between intercultural traits, attachment styles and dispositional mindfulness and adjustment differs between the two phases.

Method

Procedure and participants

With the help of an internationally operating high-school student exchange organization, providing school and family placement, as well as a support structure, e-mail invitations with links to an online questionnaire were sent out to German abroadees and returnees. Overall, 301 abroadees (39% response rate) and 225 returnees (20% response rate) responded. The response rate was half as high among returnees, possibly because they were not as interested or felt less obligated to participate than abroadees. Abroadees were on average 16.48 years old ($SD = 0.64$). Returnees were on average one year older than abroadees ($M = 17.63$, $SD = 0.58$). In terms of gender, 72.4% of abroadees ($n = 218$) and 72% of returnees ($n = 162$) were female. These

skewed gender distributions have also been observed in other studies: female adolescents are more likely to go abroad than male adolescents (Hammer & Hansel, 2005; Weichbrodt, 2014). At the time of the study abroadees had on average been 5.6 months abroad ($SD = 2.64$, range $= 3 – 12$ months), while returnees had returned to Germany for an average of 7.8 months ($SD = 2.14$, range $= 5 – 17$ months). Abroadees were living in 45 different countries around the world with the five largest groups staying in Brazil ($n = 47$), Argentina ($n = 18$), Costa Rica ($n = 16$), Italy ($n = 15$) and Thailand ($n = 14$). Returnees had lived for a school year in 47 different countries, the largest groups in the US ($n = 58$), Brazil, Thailand (both $n = 14$), Argentina and Bolivia (both $n = 10$).

Measures

Intercultural traits. The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2001) measures five intercultural traits with 91 items. Example items are: "Can put setbacks in perspective" (emotional stability; Cronbach's $α = .84$; .84; the first estimate refers to abroadees, the second to returnees from here on), "Understands other people's feelings" (cultural empathy; $α = .85$; .85), "Gets involved in other cultures" (openmindedness; $α = .77$; .76), "Starts a new life easily" (flexibility; $α = .81$; .78) and "Is often the driving force behind things" (social initiative; $α = .85$; .86). Participants answered on a five-point scale ranging from "not at all applicable" (1) to "totally applicable" (5).

Attachment styles. The Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ, Van Oudenhoven, Hofstra & Bakker, 2003) consists of 22 items measuring secure, preoccupied, dismissing and fearful attachment. Example items are: "I feel at ease in emotional relationships" (secure attachment style; $α = .62$; .76), "I often ask myself, if others like me" (preoccupied attachment style; $α = .81$; .80), "I prefer that others are independent of me, and that I am independent of others" (dismissing attachment style; $α = .63$; .62), and "I feel uncomfortable when relationships with other people become close" (fearful attachment style; $α = .70$; .78). Participants answered on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "not at all applicable" (1) to "entirely applicable" (5).

Dispositional Mindfulness. We used the Five Factors of Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer et al., 2006) to measure dispositional mindfulness. The

four factors nonreactivity, acting, accepting and describing can be computed as a single factor (Baer et al., 2006). Example items are: "I perceive my feelings and emotions without having to react to them" (nonreactivity; α = .67; .72), "When I do things, my mind wanders off and I'm easily distracted"(reversed, acting; α = .78; .78), "I criticize myself for having irrational or inappropriate emotions" (reversed, accepting; α = .86; .84), "I'm good at finding words to describe my feelings"(describing; α = .84; .87). The single second-order factor of dispositional mindfulness was supported by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results, presented below. Therefore, the unidimensional composite scale was used in all further analyses. A five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) "never or very rarely true" to (5) "always or almost always true" was used.

Psychological adjustment. Psychological adjustment was first measured with the five-item Satisfaction With Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985) on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). An example item is: "In most ways my life is close to my ideal". Second, we used a nine-item scale from the RAND 36 Health Survey (Hays, Sherbourne, & Mazel, 1993), with a six point Likert scale ranging from "never" (1) to "always" (6), e.g., "How much of the time during the past four weeks have you felt downhearted and blue?" (reversed). Cronbach's α was .76 and .78 for the SWLS and .87 and .88 for the RAND subscale. The two measures were summed up to form a single composite variable, which was supported by CFA results presented below.

Social adjustment. We used the eight-item emotional-support-with-problems subscale of the social-support-interactions questionnaire to measure social adjustment[2] (SSL-I; Van Sonderen, 1993). Participants answered on a five-point scale ranging from "none of the time" (1) to "all of the time" (5) how often support was available to them.

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[2] We asked each question twice, (1) with respect to the host country and (2) with respect to their previous living location (for the abroad sample this was Germany; for the reentry sample this was their previous host country). We excluded this retrospective social support from our analyses as an indicator of social adjustment, because it was only weakly related to social adjustment among abroadees ($r = .20$, $p < .001$).

An example item is: "Does it ever happen that people give you good advice?".
Cronbach's α was .91 in both samples.

Control variables. We included gender, as well as characteristics of the host national culture as control variables that could be related to intercultural adjustment. Previous research about the relation between characteristics of the host culture and adjustment is mixed, as some studies found support for the idea that adjustment is more difficult in specific countries (Dunbar, 1992; Searle & Ward, 1990; Torbiorn, 1982; Ward & Searle, 1991), while others do not (see Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013). In this study, an objective measure of host national culture was used, based on Hofstede's six cultural dimensions, *power distance*, *individualism*, *masculinity*, *uncertainty avoidance*, *long term orientation* and *indulgence*. The country scores were accessed online (Hofstede, 2016) and linked to host countries in our dataset, if available (14 – 19% of the scores were unavailable). In each sample separately, we used mean replacement for these missing values. A MANOVA with the six dimensions of host national culture as dependent variables and group as independent variable showed that the two groups differed significantly on these dimensions ($F(6,519) = 13.27$, $p < .001$), and univariate statistics showed that differences existed on each dimension (all ps < .001). Means and standard deviations of the host national culture dimensions are shown in Table 2.1[3]. The countries of abroadees showed higher scores on all host national culture dimensions, except for long term orientation and indulgence, which were higher among returnees. All dimensions were therefore included as covariates in all regression analyses.

Confirmatory factor analyses

We used confirmatory factor analyses to test whether the data fitted the conceptual framework. Throughout the analyses, to decrease model complexity, parcels of items were used instead of single items, whenever possible (if the number of items used is greater than five, items are assigned to three parcels). Models included covariances between independent latent factors, and between dependent latent factors.

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[3] Means were transformed to indicate differences between the host national culture and Germany. The score of Germany were subtracted from the score of the host national culture.

Adequate model fit was indicated by CFI > .90 (Bentler, 1990) and RMSEA < .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The model fit was acceptable for intercultural traits (CFI = .93, RMSEA = .080 [.068; .092]; CFI = .90, RMSEA = .093 [.079; .107]), dispositional mindfulness (CFI = .95, RMSEA =.053 [.040; .067]; CFI = .96, RMSEA =.052 [.034; .068]) as well as for intercultural adjustment (CFI = .96, RMSEA = .070 [.053; .087]; CFI =.98, RMSEA = .047 [.019; .071]). Investigations revealed problematic model fit indices only for attachment styles (CFI = .84; RMSEA = .085 [.074; .096]; CFI = .84, RMSEA = .098 [.086; .110]). After we removed items with high cross-loadings or low item loadings and reduced the number of items to 11, our data showed an acceptable model fit (CFI = .91, RMSEA = .073 [.056; .091]; CFI = .95, RMSEA =.055 [.029; .078]).

Composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were calculated and are shown in Table 2.1. The second-order mindfulness factor showed low CR and AVE, but was otherwise in line with findings by Baer and colleagues (2006). For abroadees, CR was below the recommended .7 and AVE was below the recommended .5 for three of the four attachment styles. For returnees, CR and AVE were problematic for the dismissing attachment style. Because the correlations between the attachment styles (see appendix) were in line with previous studies, we proceeded with testing our hypotheses.

Analytic strategy

In order to investigate the relations between the individual difference variables with psychological adjustment and social adjustment (H1-H3), we first computed Pearson's correlations. Next, we investigated whether one of the three frameworks was more important in explaining adjustment than the others, by testing whether it explained unique variance in psychological and social adjustment above and beyond the others, using hierarchical regression analyses. More specifically, we evaluated model improvement due to inclusion of a given individual difference framework in a second step, above another individual difference framework entered in a first step, predicting psychological- and social adjustment.

Lastly, in order to identify the most important predictors of psychological and social adjustment in the two phases, we conducted relative importance analyses

(Grömping, 2007; Johnson & Lebreton, 2004; Kruskal & Majors, 1989). This was based on the LMG metric of the R-package RELAIMPO, which determines the unique proportion of each predictor variable with respect to each outcome variable in each phase. The LMG metric estimates the importance of each predictor, relative to the total explained variance, by averaging unique contributions across all possible orders of predictors. All predictors were included in the models, because even predictors without significant regression estimates can add to the overall variance explained (e.g., when predictors are correlated).

Exploratory multigroup confirmatory factor analysis using all variables revealed that constraining item loading to be equal across the two groups (metric invariance) did not lead to a deterioration in model fit (deterioration of model fit was determined by a change in CFI > .01), with ΔCFI < .001. However, when we additionally constrained item intercepts to be equal across the two groups (scalar invariance), ΔCFI was .14, suggesting that one or more variables were not invariant across the groups. Subsequent analyses of independent and dependent variables separately showed scalar invariance for the independent variables (ΔCFI = .003), but lack of scalar invariance for the dependent variables (ΔCFI = .053). This means that the adolescents in the two phases answered differently to the items measuring the dependent variables. This lack of measurement invariance prohibited us to directly compare the mean differences in adjustment outcomes, as well as relationships between individual difference variables and outcomes across the two groups (e.g., by means of using phase (1 = abroad; 2 = reentry) as a moderator of the structural relationships).

We conducted all analyses separately for abroadees and returnees, and included covariates in all regression analyses. Because individual difference variables can correlate highly, we performed multicollinerarity diagnostics for all regression analyses. The variance inflation factor (VIF) did not exceed the value of 5 on any of the covariates and individual difference variables, indicating no problems of multicollinearity.

Results

We were interested in the relations of individual difference factors with psychological adjustment and social adjustment in two phases of a sojourn: abroad and

upon reentry (H1-3). Our first hypothesis was that the intercultural traits were positively related to psychological and social adjustment. Correlational analyses largely supported this prediction (see Table 2.1). Unexpectedly, flexibility was unrelated to psychological and social adjustment, and cultural empathy was unrelated to psychological adjustment upon reentry. Correlational analyses also provided partial support for the second hypothesis that the secure attachment style was positively, and the insecure attachment styles (preoccupied, fearful, and dismissing) were negatively related to psychological and social adjustment. Contradictory to our prediction, however, the dismissing attachment style did not correlate significantly with psychological and social adjustment during both phases. Finally, the results of this analysis supported the third hypothesis that dispositional mindfulness is positively related to psychological and social adjustment. In sum, correlational findings mostly supported our expectations (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Means, standard deviations, composite reliabilities (CR), average variances extracted (AVE) and correlations

Variables	Abroadees (N = 301)						Returnees (N = 225)					
	M	SD	CR	AVE	Psychological adjustment r	Social adjustment r	M	SD	CR	AVE	Psychological adjustment r	Social adjustment r
Control variables												
Gender (0 = male; 1 = female)	0.72	0.45			-.05	.15**	0.72	0.45			.04	.12
Host national culture dimensions												
Power distance	26.90	19.03			-.09	-.01	19.60	18.38			.04	.07
Individualism	-26.71	20.31			-.12*	-.06	-10.34	28.95			-.03	-.06
Masculinity	-17.11	18.65			-.01	-.05	-13.03	16.06			.04	.11
Uncertainty avoidance	5.46	17.61			.06	.21**	-2.31	17.95			.08	.12
Long term orientation	-40.04	19.28			-.10	-.11	-45.85	17.15			.06	-.07
Indulgence	13.14	18.58			.13*	.06	17.49	15.45			.01	.04
Intercultural traits												
Cultural empathy	4.09	0.41	0.82	0.60	.28**	.32**	4.03	0.40	0.79	0.55	.11	.17*
Openmindedness	4.01	0.37	0.74	0.50	.32**	.27**	4.00	0.36	0.74	0.49	.25**	.08
Social initiative	3.62	0.50	0.83	0.61	.42**	.26**	3.67	0.51	0.85	0.66	.31**	.23**
Emotional stability	3.24	0.50	0.87	0.69	.55**	.18**	3.19	0.48	0.86	0.67	.54**	.28**
Flexibility	3.52	0.45	0.78	0.55	.30**	.16**	3.56	0.41	0.73	0.51	.09	.03

(table continues)

Variables	Abroadees (N = 301)						Returnees (N = 225)					
	M	SD	CR	AVE	Psych. adjustment r	Social adjustment r	M	SD	CR	AVE	Psych. adjustment r	Social adjustment r
Attachment styles												
Fearful attachment	2.12	0.68	0.62	0.37	-.31**	-.14*	2.28	0.81	0.74	0.50	-.37**	-.26**
Secure attachment	3.72	0.65	0.43	0.29	.30**	.28**	3.67	0.76	0.66	0.50	.36**	.27**
Preoccupied attachment	2.81	0.98	0.81	0.60	-.37**	-.22**	2.83	0.90	0.78	0.55	-.40**	-.37**
Dismissing attachment	3.08	0.63	0.56	0.31	-.02	-.03	3.17	0.61	0.54	0.29	.03	-.07
Mindfulness	3.42	0.47	0.63	0.31	.44**	.22**	3.30	0.47	0.63	0.31	.53**	.28**
Dependent variables												
Psychological adjustment	3.98	0.64	0.76	0.62		.44**	3.72	0.70	0.86	0.76		.44**
Social adjustment	3.92	0.85	0.89	0.74			4.35	0.68	0.90	0.75		

Note. $* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001$

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Next, we examined which framework was the most important in explaining adjustment, using hierarchical regression analyses[4], and identified the most important predictors of adjustment using relative importance analyses (see Table 2.2). Firstly, in further support of hypothesis 1, we found that the intercultural traits were the most important framework explaining psychological adjustment abroad (explaining variance above and beyond attachment styles and dispositional mindfulness) and explaining unique variance in all analyses, except for social adjustment upon reentry. The results of the relative importance analyses (Table 2.2) further underlined and specified these findings, by showing that the intercultural trait of emotional stability was the most important predictor of psychological adjustment abroad, and (together with dispositional mindfulness) upon reentry, and that the intercultural trait of cultural empathy was (together with the secure attachment style) the most important predictor of social adjustment abroad. Moreover, these findings supported our prediction that stress-related intercultural traits (emotional stability) would be more strongly related to psychological adjustment (H1a), while social-perceptual traits (cultural empathy) would be more strongly related to social adjustment (H1b).

Secondly, in further support for the role of attachment styles for intercultural adjustment (H2), attachment styles posed the most important explanatory framework for social adjustment upon reentry (explaining variance above and beyond the other frameworks), and explained unique variance in all other analyses (except in psychological adjustment abroad). The results of the relative importance analyses further specified these findings by showing that the preoccupied attachment style was the most important predictor of social adjustment upon reentry. In addition, the secure attachment style was (together with cultural empathy) the most important predictor of social adjustment abroad.

Thirdly, unlike intercultural traits and attachment styles, dispositional mindfulness did not emerge as the best explanatory framework in any of the regression analyses. In support of hypothesis 3, dispositional mindfulness explained unique

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[4] See appendix for results. For the regression analysis predicting reentry psychological adjustment, flexibility showed a significant negative estimate ($\beta = -.19$, $p < .05$). As the correlation was positive ($r = .09$, $p = .17$), the variable was removed from this analysis.

variance in reentry psychological adjustment. In further support of hypothesis 3, dispositional mindfulness was, together with emotional stability, the most important predictor of psychological adjustment upon reentry.

Table 2.2
Relative importance of intercultural traits, attachment styles and mindfulness in variance accounted for in psychological and social adjustment abroad and upon reentry

Variable	Psychological adjustment		Social adjustment	
	abroad	reentry	abroad	reentry
Control variables				
Gender	<.01	<.01	.08	.04
Power distance	.02	<.01	<.01	<.01
Individualism	.04	<.01	<.01	<.01
Masculinity	<.01	<.01	<.01	.05
Uncertainty avoidance	<.01	<.01	**.17**	.04
Long term orientation	.01	.03	.03	.01
Indulgence	.01	<.01	.01	<.01
Intercultural traits				
Cultural empathy	.06	.02	**.18**	.04
Social initiative	.10	.05	.08	.07
Emotional stability	**.30**	**.25**	.03	.09
Flexibility	.04		.02	.03
Openmindedness	.06	.04	.09	.01
Attachment styles				
Secure	.06	.10	**.15**	.09
Preoccupied	.08	.12	.07	**.28**
Fearful	.05	.09	.01	.08
Dismissing	<.01	<.01	<.01	.03
Mindfulness	.14	**.27**	.07	.11
Total R^2	.42	.45	.25	.26

Note. Total R^2 is the total amount of variance explained in the dependent variable by all predictors. Relative importance estimates are the proportional contribution and are calculated to sum up to 1. Bold estimates are the strongest estimates per column.

In sum, these findings show that intercultural traits, attachment styles and dispositional mindfulness are related to psychological and social adjustment in two phases of the sojourn abroad, and upon reentry, to varying degrees. For *psychological adjustment* abroad, the intercultural traits provide the single best predictor: emotional

stability. For social adjustment in the phase of reentry the attachment styles provide the single most important predictor: the preoccupied attachment style. For *social adjustment* abroad and psychological adjustment upon reentry, there is neither a clearly dominant framework nor predictor.

Due to a lack of invariance of the outcome measures, tests with regard to mean differences in outcomes and with regard to differences in structural relations were biased. The finding that despite showing higher levels of social adjustment (g_{Hedges} = .55), returnees had lower levels of psychological adjustment than abroadees (g_{Hedges} = -.39) should be interpreted with caution. Accordingly, the structural relations between independent and dependent variables could not be reliably compared across the two settings. Finally, the results showed that Hofstede's cultural dimension of uncertainty avoidance was a positive predictor of social adjustment among abroadees.

Discussion

The present study aimed to identify which individual difference frameworks and variables are important for adolescent sojourners' psychological and social adjustment during two phases: abroad and upon reentry to the country of origin. In line with our hypotheses, we found that each of the three individual difference frameworks explained unique variance in either psychological- or social adjustment, at least in one phase, with the exception of dispositional mindfulness with respect to social adjustment. Interestingly, different variables emerged as most important predictor across phases of the sojourn (abroad vs. reentry) and across dimensions of intercultural adjustment (psychological versus social).

Predicting psychological adjustment

The first important finding is that emotional stability was by far the most important predictor of psychological adjustment abroad and, together with dispositional mindfulness, the best predictor of psychological adjustment upon reentry (H1a). This finding is consistent with earlier research pointing to the importance of emotional stability for intercultural adjustment (Furukawa, 1997; Van der Zee et al., 2007; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2003; Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002). It could be argued that the strong relation between emotional stability and psychological adjustment is in

part caused by instruments tapping in similar constructs (DeNeve & Cooper, 1998). Studies that used the intercultural traits framework for studying psychological adjustment of migrants, however, have not always found emotional stability to be the strongest predictor (Leong, 2007; Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002).

Neither attachment styles nor dispositional mindfulness could account for unique variance in psychological adjustment abroad above the intercultural traits. Interestingly, both attachment styles (H2) and dispositional mindfulness (H3) uniquely contributed to the prediction of *reentry* psychological adjustment. Correspondingly, our findings show that the predictive power of the intercultural traits framework with respect to psychological adjustment seems to decrease upon reentry, while the predictive powers of attachment styles and dispositional mindfulness seem to increase. In line with hypothesis 1a, emotional stability, a stress-related trait, was more strongly related to psychological adjustment than socio-perceptive traits, supporting the two-fold distinction of intercultural traits proposed by Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2013). Moreover, the results indicate that high levels of dispositional mindfulness prove particularly useful for psychological reentry adjustment, independent of the impact of emotional stability. This finding is noteworthy, as it underlines the unique value of dispositional mindfulness in explaining psychological reentry adjustment.

Predicting social adjustment

The strongest predictors of social adjustment abroad were cultural empathy (H1b) and the secure attachment style (H2), which are both individual difference variables that indicate proneness to explore. Presumably, being able to read culturally dissimilar others' needs or concerns and being able to engage in trusting relationships was key to developing and maintaining a well-functioning social support structure abroad. With respect to the role of cultural empathy, a study among expat's children failed to find a relationship between this trait and children's sociocultural adjustment (Van der Zee et al., 2007). It is possible that high levels of cultural empathy are more important for building and maintaining a social support network for adolescents who go abroad by themselves than for children or adolescents who go abroad with their family (see also Ali, Van der Zee, & Sanders, 2003). In line with expectation, the findings showed that the role of the socio-perceptive intercultural trait of cultural

empathy was pronounced for social adjustment (H1b). These findings support the distinction between stress-related and socio-perceptive traits, which could be formally tested, for example through confirmatory factor analysis, in future studies.

Similarly to findings by Van der Zee and colleagues' (2007) study about adjustment of expats' children, the preoccupied attachment style was the most important predictor of reentry social adjustment. Individuals with high scores on the preoccupied attachment style are often ambivalent in their relationships with other people, which is observable in their attempts to seek confirmation of their self-worth from others, being overly invested, demanding and needy. Possibly, in reestablishing the relationships with friends and acquaintances in the home environment, returnees with high levels on the preoccupied attachment style do not manage to get the confirmation they need from their social environment and may easily associate disinterest by others in their experiences related to their sojourn as interpersonal rejection.

Abroad versus reentry

In sum, successful adjustment abroad and upon reentry did partially rely on individual difference variables. Emotional stability was important for psychological adjustment in both phases, while dispositional mindfulness was only important for psychological adjustment upon reentry. We found that the secure attachment style and the intercultural trait of cultural empathy best predicted social adjustment abroad, while the preoccupied attachment style best predicted social adjustment upon reentry. We were unable to directly compare the strengths of these structural relations across the two phases of the sojourn (see below, limitations). However, our findings do suggest that there are differences in the relative importance of individual difference between the two phases.

We also explored whether host national culture dimensions were related to sojourners' adjustment and found that uncertainty avoidance was a relatively important predictor of social adjustment abroad. More specifically, when adolescents were living in countries with higher levels of uncertainty avoidance (e.g., Russia; Japan; Portugal), they showed higher levels of social adjustment than students who were living in countries with lower levels of uncertainty avoidance (e.g., Hong Kong; China; USA).

This finding is partly in line with results by Rienties and Tempelaar (2013). In their study, uncertainty avoidance positively predicted social adjustment among 757 international university students in the Netherlands. It is possible that German adolescents, coming from a culture of relative high uncertainty avoidance, appreciate and might be reassured by the social fabric of cultures, which show even higher levels of uncertainty avoidance. In contrast, it might be more difficult for them to establish a functioning social support system in cultures with high tolerance for ambiguity, characterized by unstructured and unpredictable situations.

Implications, limitations and future work

Intercultural adjustment research and practice could profit from findings of this study in multiple ways. The data from the present study suggests that individual difference variables may be useful indicators in deciding who should be sent abroad and who might require increased attention and support. Training of adolescent sojourners should ideally focus on individual variables that can be influenced (Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992; Schnabel, Kelava, & Van de Vijver, 2016), which is more easily accomplished with respect to levels of mindfulness than with respect to the other, more stable, individual difference variables under investigation. Indeed, there is evidence that mindfulness training can help to increase levels of mindfulness, with associated benefits for mental health outcomes (Quaglia, Braun, Freeman, McDaniel, & Brown, 2016), and that mindfulness interventions can be implemented among children and adolescents (Zoogman, Goldberg, Hoyt, & Miller, 2014). As the current study supported the incremental predictive value of dispositional mindfulness with respect to reentry psychological adjustment, it seems a more logical next step to investigate whether mindfulness training could have positive effects on the sojourn experience. It is possible that mindfulness training could not only help adolescent sojourners to become more resilient, but also help them to better integrate their intercultural experiences.

It is important to mention that the dependent variables did not show measurement invariance across the two phases of the sojourn, meaning that respondents answered in structurally different ways to the items measuring psychological and social adjustment. Therefore, we were unable to statistically test for

differences in the strengths of the structural relations between individual difference variables and adjustment outcomes across the two phases of the sojourn. Measurement invariance is an often untested assumption in comparative studies which states that the variables measure their intended constructs in a similar way and without bias across groups. Looking at the separate results for the returnee group, our findings indicate that returnees, despite experiencing relatively high levels of social adjustment, are particularly at risk of experiencing difficulties in psychological adjustment.

In conclusion, these results do suggest that there are differences between the different phases of the sojourn that point at adjustment risks for returnees, underlining the importance of studying the reentry process of sojourners in more depth (Szkudlarek, 2010). A shortcoming of the present study is that it did not assess the influence of adolescents' families and host families on adjustment outcomes (Mirsky & Wittenberg-Szekely, 2007). Van der Zee and colleagues (2007) found that the adjustment of expats' children was related to family cohesion, even though the relation with family cohesion disappeared when emotional stability and the ambivalent attachment style were controlled for. Moreover, future studies should investigate the role of the support provided by the exchange organization, as the support structure can ease stress related to intercultural transitions (Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013). Relatedly, we did not assess the sources of social support. For example, it could be interesting to investigate whether and to which degree other co-nationals might serve as source of social support for students abroad.

It is important to note that due to the cross-sectional design of this study, it is not possible to draw strong conclusions with respect to the causality of relations between individual difference variables and adjustment outcomes. Indirect evidence for assuming that individual difference variables can be best seen as predictors rather than outcomes of adjustment stems from a study by Demes and Geeraert (2015), who investigated 2500 adolescent sojourners in more than 50 countries in a longitudinal design. They found that the influence of pre-departure personality traits on stress (which can also be seen as an indicator of psychological adjustment) was stable throughout the stay abroad.

Finally, before generalizing the present results it is important to take into account that the participants in this research were all German. Future studies should

investigate whether the divergence in predictors of psychological adjustment while abroad versus upon reentry also applies to other samples. For example, it has been suggested that educational strain of the German school system can burden the reentry process (Lohmann, 2008). Similarly, perceived stress seemed to increase upon reentry of Belgian high-school exchange students, who mostly went on to go to university upon returning to Belgium (Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013). To conclude, despite a number of limitations, the present findings support the role of individual differences for sojourners' intercultural adjustment abroad and upon reentry. This has interesting practical implications for educational institutions providing international programs to their students.

Chapter 2: Appendix

Appendix Table 1. Correlations between host nation cultural dimensions, attachment styles, intercultural traits, mindfulness and adjustment. The upper part of the table contains correlations for abroadees, the lower part for returnees.

		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	Power distance	-.57**	.33**	-.02	.13*	-.04	.00	.01	.08	.00	-.05	-.06	-.08	.03	-.01	-.10	-.09	.00
2	Individualism		.07	-.17**	.15*	-.13*	-.05	.08	-.01	-.05	.04	-.06	-.03	-.08	-.07	-.02	-.12*	-.06
3	Masculinity	.36**		.02	.26**	.02	.00	.05	.00	.06	-.09	-.04	.00	.00	-.04	-.01	.00	-.05
4	Uncertainty avoidance	-.53**	-.13		-.15*	.11	-.04	.06	-.07	.02	.04	-.03	.01	.00	.02	.01	.06	.21**
5	Long term orientation	-.23**	.15*	.15*		-.62**	.05	.08	-.02	-.09	-.03	-.05	-.03	-.03	.02	.04	-.10	-.11
6	Indulgence	.28**	.08	-.13*	-.58**		.00	-.08	-.02	.07	.01	.13*	.08	.00	.01	.02	.13*	.06
7	Secure attachment	-.03	-.01	.13*	-.06	.02		-.18**	-.36**	-.19**	.29**	.43**	.19**	.23**	.31**	.19**	.30**	.28**
8	Preoccupied attachment	.04	.01	-.04	.11	-.06	-.15*		.35**	-.10	-.16**	-.43**	-.58**	-.28**	-.16**	-.47**	-.37**	-.22**
9	Fearful attachment	.07	.01	-.02	.12	.01	-.44**	.33**		.21**	-.07	-.30**	-.39**	-.26**	-.15**	-.37**	-.31**	-.13*
10	Dismissing attachment	-.06	-.03	.05	.04	.01	-.20**	-.12	.03		-.12*	.01	.11	.01	.01	.05	-.02	-.03
11	Cultural empathy	.01	-.02	-.04	-.06	.10	.29**	-.13	-.11	-.10		.24**	.12*	.11*	.57**	.22**	.28**	.32**
12	Social initiative	.04	-.02	.00	-.07	.03	.53**	-.19**	-.19**	-.07	.30**		.48**	.37**	.40**	.40**	.42**	.26**
13	Emotional stability	-.05	.01	.01	-.11	.08	.25**	-.57**	-.39**	.10	.17*	.33**		.43**	.26**	.60**	.55**	.18**
14	Flexibility	-.04	-.09	.13	.10	-.10	.23**	-.16*	-.16*	.00	.21**	.34**	.29**		.34**	.23**	.29**	.16**
15	Openmindedness	-.10	-.06	.03	.06	-.09	.20**	-.10	-.09	.08	.58**	.44**	.29**	.37**		.22**	.32**	.27**
16	Mindfulness	-.07	.02	.00	-.03	.01	.24**	-.39**	-.40**	.13	.22**	.28**	.56**	.14*	.27**		.44**	.22**
17	Psychological adjustment	-.03	.04	.08	.06	.01	.36**	-.40**	-.37**	.03	.11	.31**	.53**	.09	.25**	.53**		.44**
18	Social adjustment	-.06	.11	.12	-.07	.04	.27**	-.37**	-.26**	-.07	.17*	.23**	.28**	.02	.08	.28**	.44**	

**p < .01; *p < .05

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Appendix Table 2. Predicting psychological adjustment abroad

Model	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Variables	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	RI
Control variables									
Gender	-.04	.06	-.03	.03	.05	.06	.01	.06	<.01
Power distance	-.27**	-.18**	-.27**	-.19*	-.18**	-.17**	-.18**	-.17**	.02
Individualism	-.27**	-.21**	-.27**	-.21**	-.20**	-.20**	-.19**	-.20**	.04
Masculinity	.10	.11	.10	.09	.11	.10	.09	.11	<.01
Uncertainty avoidance	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.01	.02	.01	<.01
Long term orientation	-.01	-.04	-.01	-.05	-.05	-.05	-.06	-.06	.01
Indulgence	.08	.01	.08	.05	.01	.01	.04	.01	.01
Intercultural traits									
Cultural empathy		.18**			.15*	.16**		.13*	.06
Social initiative		.12*			.08	.11		.07	.10
Emotional stability		.45***			.44***	.39***		.39***	.30
Flexibility		.01			-.01	.02		.01	.04
Openmindedness		.03			.04	.04		.04	.06
Attachment styles									
Secure			.20***		.09		.18**	.09	.06
Preoccupied			-.28***		-.02		-.17**	-.01	.08
Fearful			-.12*		-.05		-.06	-.03	.05
Dismissing			-.01		-.04		-.03	-.05	<.01
Mindfulness				.43***		.11	.29***	.11	.14
ΔR^2 intercultural traits final step		.33***			.16***	.17***			
ΔR^2 attachment styles final step			.19***		.01		.07***		
ΔR^2 mindfulness final step				.17***		.01	.06***		
R^2	.07	.40	.26	.24	.42	.41	.31	.42	1

*** $p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$; RI = relative importance

Appendix Table 3. Predicting psychological reentry adjustment

Model	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Variables	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	RI
Control variables									
Gender	.03	.03	-.03	.07	.01	.06	.01	.02	<.01
Power distance	.01	-.07	.08	.02	.01	-.04	.06	.02	<.01
Individualism	.01	-.01	.11	.08	.07	.03	.12	.09	<.01
Masculinity	.04	.03	-.01	-.01	.01	.01	-.02	-.01	<.01
Uncertainty avoidance	.08	.08	.04	.10	.06	.09	.07	.06	<.01
Long term orientation	.07	.14	.17*	.11	.18*	.14*	.16*	.17*	.03
Indulgence	.06	.05	.08	.06	.08	.07	.07	.09	<.01
Intercultural traits									
Cultural empathy		-.05			-.12	-.08		-.15*	.02
Social initiative		.14*			.03	.11		.01	.05
Emotional stability		.49***			.34***	.33***		.23**	.25
Flexibility									
Openmindedness		.07			.15*	.06		.14	.04
Attachment styles									
Secure			.24***		.18*		.19**	.18*	.10
Preoccupied			-.31***		-.14*		-.21**	-.12	.12
Fearful			-.19**		-.13*		-.10	-.08	.09
Dismissing			.04		-.01		-.01	-.04	<.01
Mindfulness				.54***		.33***	.38***	.29***	.27
ΔR^2 intercultural traits final step		.32***			.10***	.10***			
ΔR^2 attachment styles final step			.28***		.06***		.10***		
ΔR^2 mindfulness final step				.29***		.07***	.10***		
R^2	.01	.33	.30	.30	.40	.40	.40	.45	1

*** $p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$; RI = relative importance

Appendix Table 4. Predicting social adjustment abroad

Model	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	
Variables	β	β	β	β	β	β	B	β	RI
Control variables									
Gender	.14*	.14*	.14*	.19**	.13*	.15*	.16**	.14*	.08
Power distance	.03	.07	.06	.08	.07	.08	.09	.08	<.01
Individualism	.01	.03	.06	.04	.05	.04	.07	.06	<.01
Masculinity	-.04	-.02	-.04	-.04	-.02	-.02	-.04	-.02	<.01
Uncertainty avoidance	.20**	.20***	.23***	.20***	.22***	.20***	.23***	.22***	.17
Long term orientation	-.07	-.09	-.08	-.10	-.09	-.10	-.11	-.10	.03
Indulgence	-.01	-.05	-.03	-.03	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.04	.01
Intercultural traits									
Cultural empathy		.22**			.17*	.20**		.15*	.18
Social initiative		.16*			.08	.14*		.06	.08
Emotional stability		.11			.07	.04		.02	.03
Flexibility		.01			-.01	.01		.01	.02
Openmindedness		.04			.05	.05		.05	.09
Attachment styles									
Secure			.26***		.17**		.25***	.18**	.15
Preoccupied			-.21**		-.12		-.14*	-.10	.07
Fearful			.04		.04		.07	.05	.01
Dismissing			.01		.01		-.01	-.01	<.01
Mindfulness				.27***		.13	.18**	.12	.07
ΔR^2 intercultural traits final step		.14***			.05**	.08***			
ΔR^2 attachment styles final step			.12***		.03*		.07***		
ΔR^2 mindfulness final step				.07***		.01	.02**		
R^2	.07	.21	.19	.14	.24	.22	.21	.25	1

*** $p < .001$; **$p < .01$; *$p < .05$; RI = relative importance

Appendix Table 5. Predicting social reentry adjustment

Model Variables	(1) β	(2) β	(3) β	(4) β	(5) β	(6) β	(7) β	(8) β	RI
Control variables									
Gender	.11	.13*	.06	.11	.10	.14*	.08	.10	.04
Power distance	-.01	-.07	.06	-.01	.02	-.06	.06	.03	<.01
Individualism	-.10	-.12	-.02	-.10	-.03	-.10	-.01	-.02	<.01
Masculinity	.18*	.16*	.14	.18*	.14	.16*	.14	.13	.05
Uncertainty avoidance	.10	.12	.08	.10	.11	.12	.08	.11	.04
Long term orientation	-.15	-.08	-.07	-.15	-.05	-.09	-.07	-.05	.01
Indulgence	-.01	-.05	.01	-.01	-.02	-.04	.01	-.02	<.01
Intercultural traits									
Cultural empathy		.18*			.11	.16*		.10	.04
Social initiative		.20**			.13	.18*		.12	.07
Emotional stability		.27***			.07	.19*		.03	.09
Flexibility		-.14			-.14	-.12		-.13	.03
Openmindedness		-.15			-.06	-.16		-.07	.01
Attachment styles									
Secure			.15*		.07		.13	.07	.09
Preoccupied			-.31***		-.27**		-.28***	-.26**	.28
Fearful			-.08		-.10		-.05	-.07	.08
Dismissing			-.08		-.07		-.10	-.09	.03
Mindfulness				.28***		.15	.13	.11	.11
ΔR^2 intercultural traits final step		.13***			.03	.07**			
ΔR^2 attachment styles final step			.17***		.06**		.10***		
ΔR^2 mindfulness final step				.08***		.02	.01		
R^2	.06	.19	.22	.14	.25	.20	.24	.26	1

*** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; RI = relative importance

Chapter

3

Personality Characteristics and Workplace Trust of Majority and Minority Employees in the Netherlands

Throughout Europe, cultural diversity of the workforce is increasing and the Netherlands are no exception. At the end of 2012, first-, and second-generation[5] minority employees made up about one quarter of the working population in this country (Statistics Netherlands, 2013a). Accessing the job market is more challenging for members of the cultural minorities than for Dutch majority group members, which is visible in longer periods of unemployment (Statistics Netherlands, 2010a) and discrimination (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 2009; The Netherlands Institute of Social Research/ SCP, 2010a, b). Especially first-generation minorities appear to suffer from such disadvantages (Lucassen & Penninx, 1997).

Although a great number of studies have focused on problems and benefits associated with a culturally diverse workfloor (Jackson et al., 1991; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Milliken, Bartel, & Kurtzberg, 2003; Riordan & Shore, 1997; Yang & Konrad, 2011), the question whether, once they are employed, experiences at the workplace of cultural minority employees differ from those of majority employees, has received little attention in the literature (Hofhuis, Van der Zee, & Otten, 2014).

It is widely accepted that trust within organizations is vital to organizational success and the well-being of employees (Argyris, 1962; Fukuyama, 1995; Kramer & Cook, 2004; Shaw, 1997). Trust enhances effective and open communication (Mellinger, 1956; Zand, 1972), collaborative behavior (Gambetta, 1988), problem solving (Boss, 1978) and learning (Song, Kim, & Kolb, 2009). If there is no trust between individuals and towards the employing organization itself, this can have negative consequences, such as lowered job satisfaction, lack of loyalty towards the organization, low levels of intrinsic motivation (Cook & Wall, 1980), less organizational citizenship behavior (Van Dyne, Vandewalle, Kostova, Latham, & Cummings, 2000), less organizational commitment (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002) and higher levels of conflict (Porter & Lilly, 1996). Moreover, the presence of trust within organizations may foster innovative and prosocial behaviors that help create economic advantages (Dasgupta, 2000; Fairholm, 1994). Employees who have

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[5] According to Statistics Netherlands the first-generation migrant status is defined by being born abroad and at least one parent born abroad; second-generation migrant status is defined by being born in the Netherlands and having at least one parent who is born abroad.

constructive and satisfying relationships at the workplace and who trust the organization seem to be a prerequisite for efficiently functioning organizations.

Trust at the workplace is thus a highly relevant component of employees' functioning. But is trust at the workplace equally high for majority and minority employees? While previous studies have found that minority employees show lower levels on trust-related variables than majority employees, such as commitment and identification (Hofhuis, Van der Zee & Otten, 2008), it is yet unclear whether this also applies to workplace trust. Therefore, the first goal of the current study is to investigate whether majority and minority employees differ in trust at the workplace. More specifically, we aim to close the gap in the literature with regard to the question of possible differences in workplace trust between majority employees and, first-, and second-generation minority employees.

The organizational trust literature has been largely concerned with characteristics of trustees (those to be trusted, Mayer & Davis, 1999) and the context in which trust emerges (Davis, Schoorman, Mayer, & Tan, 2000). However, little is known about the role of personality as a determinant of trust at the workplace: "While acknowledging their existence, organizational theorists generally have not evinced much interest in such individual differences, except in so far as they might be reliably measured and used as a basis for screening and selection of more trustworthy employees" (Kramer, 1999, p. 575; see also Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Simmons, Gooty, Nelson, & Little, 2009). Previous investigations showed that employees' personality characteristics indeed influence the degree of trust expressed in the work context (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Hazan & Shaver, 1990; Mooradian, Renzl, & Matzler, 2006). However, in light of increasing cultural diversity of the workforce, the question whether the influence of personality characteristics on trust at the workplace differs across cultural groups remains unanswered. If the influence of personality characteristics on trust at the workplace differs between cultural groups of employees, professionals should tailor personnel selection and training strategies, accordingly. The second goal of the current study pertains therefore to the investigation of individual differences as antecedents of trust at the workplace for majority employees, and first-, and second-generation minority employees.

Definitions of workplace trust and its antecedents

Trust is increasingly investigated in organizational settings. As "an important lubricant of a social system" (Arrow, 1974, p. 23) and the wide range of benefits that trust fosters, it should be regarded as a commodity of organizations (Dasgupta, 2000). Numerous definitions of trust exist; most include positive expectations, taking a risk or allowing vulnerability on part of the employee (see Chughtai & Buckley, 2008, for an overview).

Recent studies have shown that trust in the organizational context could best be differentiated with respect to employees' most relevant targets of trust: their colleagues, their supervisor and their employing organization (Chughtai & Buckley, 2008; Ferres, 2002; Lehmann-Willenbrock & Kauffeld, 2010). Trust in the organization is distinct from the two forms of interpersonal trust in that it does not involve a group of individuals (colleagues) or a person (the supervisor), but a rather abstract entity with humanlike characteristics (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). In alignment with the definition of trust as proposed by Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998), we define workplace trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of [another]" colleagues, the supervisor and the organization (p. 395).

The need to treat workplace trust as multidimensional, even though this is rarely done, is supported by studies showing that workplace trust dimensions differentially predict work outcomes. For example, trust in the supervisor is more strongly positively related to job performance and job satisfaction than is trust in the organization (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), trust in colleagues is more strongly related to information sharing between and across teams than is trust in the supervisor (Mooradian et al., 2006), trust in the organization is uniquely related to affective commitment while trust in the supervisor is uniquely related to idea creation and implementation (while controlling for the influence of the other targets of trust; Lehmann-Willenbrock & Kauffeld, 2010).

Due to our aim to investigate the influence of personality on workplace trust, it is important to clarify the distinction between workplace trust and trait trust. While

trait trust is the general willingness of individuals to trust others, a relatively stable individual difference variable (Rotter, 1980), facets of workplace trust are specific, temporal, and situation dependent states (see also Fleeson & Leicht, 2006). Trait trust and dimensions of workplace trust can furthermore be distinguished by their respective antecedents: trait trust is rooted in early rearing experiences and genetic predisposition (Allport, 1961; Erikson, 1950; Sturgis et al., 2010), interpersonal facets of workplace trust are informed by employees' evaluations of the trustworthiness of the respective target of trust, and trust in the organization depends on employees' judgments about organizational structures (including fairness perceptions with regard to policies, regulations and practices).

Most of the conceptual work on workplace trust emphasizes the importance of employees' trait trust (Bigley & Pearce, 1998; Chughtai & Buckley, 2008; Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995) and there is ample evidence that employees' trait trust is positively related to dimensions of workplace trust (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007). The meta-analysis by Colquitt et al. (2007) showed that trustors' trait trust predicted unique variance in trust at the workplace, even when controlling for perceived ability, benevolence and integrity of the target of trust. The question which traits influence workplace trust has largely remained unanswered.

Differences between three cultural groups of employees

This study is unique, because it compares workplace trust between cultural majority, first-, and second-generation minority employees. First-, and second-generation minority employees comprise a considerable and increasing proportion of the Dutch workforce (Statistics Netherlands, 2003, 2013a). One difference between first-generation minority employees and second-generation minority employees is that the former have spent only a part of their lives in the Netherlands, whereas the latter have lived in the Netherlands their whole lives and consequently are more accustomed to Dutch culture and therewith Dutch organizational culture.

Another difference may pertain to the salience of being an immigrant. Compared to second-generation minority employees who are raised within the context of the new society, first-generation minority employees are more likely to have a salient immigrant identity. This increased salience of being an immigrant may reinforce

perceptions of in- and out-group differences at work, which undermines trust (Brewer, 1979; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Van Knippenberg, De Dreu, & Homan, 2004).

Cultural minority employees experience the workplace differently than majority employees. For example, minority employees more often experience discrimination at the workplace than majority employees (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 2009). Hofhuis, Van der Zee and Otten (2008) found that minority employees were more likely to leave Dutch governmental institutions than majority employees because they felt less at home in the organization. Especially difficulties with the supervisor seemed to be a more pronounced reason to leave the organization among minority employees than among majority employees.

With respect to trust, additional challenges can arise for cultural minority employees at the workplace. There is evidence that trust differs between cultures (Bjørnskov, 2008; Fukuyama, 1995; Huff & Kelley, 2003; Inglehart, 1999) and positive trust scores of the Netherlands rank among the top of the world. For most immigrants this means living in a country where a trust culture has evolved that extends its reach beyond family and friendship structures (Realo, Allik, & Greenfield, 2008). These cultural differences might also translate to lower levels of workplace trust, especially for first-generation employees, who are most likely socialized in countries with lower generalized trust than in the Netherlands.

Moreover, pressure from majority employees on minority employees to assimilate to Dutch organizational culture could suppress the emergence of workplace trust among minority employees. A study in the Netherlands by Oerlemans and Peeters (2010) found that while minority (mostly first-generation) employees preferred a dual pathway of adapting to the host culture while maintaining their own cultural heritage (integration strategy), majority employees wanted "immigrants to completely adapt to the Dutch culture, without maintaining aspects of their heritage culture" (assimilation strategy, p. 472).

Cultural differences and related challenges are thus typically more pronounced for first-generation minority immigrants than for second-generation immigrants (Lucassen & Penninx, 1997). Overall, it seems that first-generation minority employees are more prone to experience low workplace trust than second-generation employees.

Based on the given empirical evidence, we cannot straightforwardly predict whether second-generation minority employees will differ from majority employees, in terms of workplace trust. Therefore our first hypothesis only contrasts first-generation minority employees with both second-generation minority employees and majority employees.

> *H1: First-generation minority employees have lower workplace trust*
> *than majority employees and second-generation minority employees.*

Personality and workplace trust

Which aspects of employees' personality are related to dimensions of workplace trust? Most of the conceptual and empirical work on antecedents of dimensions of workplace trust has focused on trait trust. Possibly due to the intuitively appealing and empirically supported link between trait trust and state trust, few studies have investigated which aspects of employees' personality influence dimensions of workplace trust.

For example, Mooradian et al. (2006) found that agreeableness positively influenced trust in colleagues and trust in the supervisor. A study by Bergman, Small, Bergman and Rentsch (2010) found that extraversion and emotional stability were positively related, but agreeableness, the trait which is usually described in terms of interpersonal warmth, and includes the sub-facet trust, was unrelated to trust in others in newly formed teams. Evans and Revelle (2008) examined the predictive value of the Big Five and trait trust in an investment game and found that of the Big Five only agreeableness positively predicted trusting behavior. Interestingly, when trait trust was introduced in the model, the effect of agreeableness was no longer significant, suggesting that broad measures of personality have little predictive value with regard to trusting behavior, when more specific and theoretically aligned traits are considered at the same time. In the current study, we therefore investigate the impact of narrow and specific traits in relation to workplace trust.

The first trait that we included in the current study is *self-esteem*. Self-esteem is defined as an individual's sense of self-worth (Rosenberg, 1979), entailing positive thoughts and feelings individuals have about themselves which is also based on how positively they believe others perceive and evaluate them (Shrauger & Schoeneman,

1979). Its positive implications have been demonstrated extensively in the organizational context (Judge & Bono, 2001; Pierce & Gardner, 2004). Self-esteem may play an important role in workplace trust for several reasons. Anthony, Wood and Holmes (2007) showed that a high self-esteem can buffer against cues of rejection in social situations. Individuals with low self-esteem refrained from joining a group when acceptance by a group was ambiguous, while the willingness of individuals with high self-esteem to join a group was not affected by ambiguity of acceptance. Moreover, there is evidence that individuals with a high level of self-esteem feel more included in groups and assume that others accept them more readily than individuals with a low level of self-esteem (Leary, Tambor, Teardal, & Downs, 1995) suggesting that it is "essentially a meter that serves to monitor, regulate, and maintain interpersonal attachments, and it is designed to motivate behaviors to increase inclusion and forestall rejection" (Leary & Baumeister, 2000, p. 24). It is therefore likely that employees high in self-esteem tend to trust others at their workplace more readily than employees low in self-esteem. Therefore, we expect:

> *H2: The higher employees' self-esteem the higher is their workplace trust.*

The *secure attachment style*, the second trait we consider in the current study, refers to the ability of individuals to engage in trusting relationships. Of all traits assessed in the current study, the secure attachment style is conceptually most closely related to trait trust. It is a relational personality characteristic entailing self-worth derived from the feeling that supportive others would be available should one be in distress (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Mikulincer, Shaver, Sapir-Lavid, & Avihou-Kanza, 2009). From this stance, securely attached individuals are willing to explore and take risks, and as a consequence are able to establish and maintain satisfying and trusting interpersonal relationships. The applicability of attachment theory to understanding the interpersonal functioning of adults has been studied extensively (see for example Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Earlier studies found that attachment security is an important antecedent for desired interpersonal and work-related outcomes (Davidovitz, Mikulincer, Shaver, Izsak, & Popper, 2007; Hazan & Shaver, 1990;

Simmons et al., 2009) and adjustment in intercultural settings (Handojo, 2000; Polek, Wöhrle, & Van Oudenhoven, 2009).

Hazan and Shaver (1990) investigated the influence of attachment styles on several work related outcomes and attitudes. In comparison with insecurely attached employees, employees with a secure attachment style had a more confident approach to work, enjoyed working without fear of failure and did not use work to avoid social interactions. Similarly, a study by Hardy and Barkham (1994) found that a secure attachment style of employees could contribute to adjustment at the workplace through higher satisfaction with relationships at work. Geller and Bamberger (2009) showed that employees, who were securely attached, more often provided instrumental help to colleagues, and were perceived as helpful (highest frequency of instrumental helping as indicated by their colleagues). Finally, Simmons and colleagues (2009) found that securely attached employees were able to maintain a trusting relationship with their direct supervisor which resulted in better work performance. Therefore, we expect:

> *H3: The more securely attached employees are, the higher is their*
> *workplace trust.*

The Dutch workforce is culturally diverse. In diverse organizational settings, intercultural competences may be required for developing and maintaining workplace trust. The subtlety or specificity of intercultural competences that are needed in order to function effectively in a culturally diverse setting might not be captured by broad measures of personality, as the Big Five. Therefore, in order to increase precision, Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000, 2001) proposed their intercultural personality framework. Their analysis of literature with respect to traits or competences that characterize an intercultural effective person was complemented with the development of an instrument that assesses the identified traits: openmindedness, social initiative, flexibility, emotional stability and cultural empathy. Validity of this framework has been supported by studies showing its predictive abilities with respect to psychosocial adjustment of students (Leong, 2007) and expatriates (Van Oudenhoven, Mol, & Van der Zee, 2003), cognitive and emotional reactions to stressful intercultural situations (Van der Zee, Van Oudenhoven, & De Grijs, 2004), acculturation strategies of

immigrants at work (Luijters, Van der Zee, & Otten, 2006), international orientation, multicultural activity, and aspiration for an international career (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). In the following, we will describe these traits in more detail, and drawing on earlier findings to support our claims, we provide arguments why these traits should influence employees' workplace trust.

First, *social initiative* refers to the tendency to approach others actively. Leong (2007) found that high social initiative predicted reduced psychosocial adaptation difficulties among two groups of students, either residing abroad or in their home country. Van Oudenhoven and Van der Zee (2002) found that among foreign students, social initiative was positively related to receiving social support from peers. Furthermore, social initiative is highly related to extraversion (Leone et al. 2005; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000). Bergman and colleagues (2010) found that individuals with high scores on extraversion perceived others more trustworthy than individuals with low scores on extraversion. In sum, the inclination to approach others actively can be regarded as an essential trust building capacity.

Second, *flexibility* describes individuals' ease in deviating from habitual behavior. The relevance of this trait for the current study is exemplified by the study by Van Oudenhoven, Mol and Van der Zee (2003), which found that expatriates scoring highly on this trait were more satisfied with their job and perceived higher levels of social support from others than expatriates who had low scores on flexibility. Flexibility in a fast paced economical market might allow individuals to adjust with ease to rapid changes, for example by adjusting strategies according to situations or persons, or by forming alliances in and across teams, when it is necessary. From this stance, it is likely that flexibility positively influences workplace trust.

Third, *openmindedness* describes an open attitude towards others, including others' norms and values. The construct openmindedness is related to openness to experience (Leone et al., 2005; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000), but specifically entails openness towards other cultures. Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) found that students with high scores on openmindedness were more likely to be engaged in intercultural activities (such as speaking different languages or having friends with a different cultural background) than students who had low scores on this trait. When employees work with others who are different from them (e.g., in terms of

cultural background, expertise, position), a high level of openmindedness might be needed in order to remain receptive to others' ideas (even in times of disagreement) and build trust, whereas low openmindedness might lead to misunderstanding or conflict and hence reduce trust.

Fourth, *emotional stability* describes the ability to remain calm in stressful situations. It has been shown that this trait is highly negatively related to neuroticism (Leone et al., 2005; Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000) and that individuals with low emotional stability (high neuroticism) tend to have low trust in others (Bergman et al., 2010; Omodei & McLennan, 2000).

Fifth and finally, *cultural empathy* refers to the ability to empathize with culturally different others. This dimension is frequently named as a crucial component of intercultural effectiveness (Bennett, 1986; Chung & Bemak, 2002). Inferring from literature showing positive relations between empathy and prosocial behaviors (Archer, Diaz-Loving, Gollwitzer, Davis & Foushee, 1981; Batson, Ahmad & Lishner, 2002; Eisenberg et al., 1994), the tendency to empathize with different others can be considered crucial for establishing and maintaining trusting relationships. Therefore, we expect:

H4: Social initiative is positively related to workplace trust.

H5: Flexibility is positively related to workplace trust.

H6: Openmindedness is positively related to workplace trust.

H7: Emotional stability is positively related to workplace trust.

H8: Cultural empathy is positively related to workplace trust.

Method

Participants and procedure

A total of 439 employees were approached with the help of an organization specialized in providing respondents for questionnaire studies and filled out an online questionnaire. Because we wanted to test our hypotheses in the three groups, the

sample consisted of 206 majority employees, 123 first-generation minority employees, and 110 second-generation minority employees (see Table 3.1). Hence, minority employees were oversampled in order to be able compare between the groups. Requirements for inclusion were a minimum age of 18, full time employment at an organization and command of the Dutch language. We asked respondents to indicate their age and educational level (six categories ranging from *no formal education* to *university diploma*). Furthermore, we requested information about organizational characteristics, namely the estimated total number of employees in the respondents' organization and the percentage of minority employees. For the number of employees we provided eight answer categories ranging from *fewer than 4* to *more than 500 employees*. Six answer categories were provided for percentage of minority employees, ranging from *less than 2 percent* to *more than 20 percent*. For ease of presentation demographic information and organizational characteristics were recoded into broader categories (see Table 3.1). Among first generation employees 47 (38.2%) had a non-western[6] migration background. In the sample of second generation employees 21 (19.1%) had at least one parent with a non-western migration background. While the samples were representative with regards to gender and age, the minority samples were on average more highly educated than the majority sample in this study.

Materials

For all measures a 5-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). We used existing instruments to measure traits.

Self-esteem was measured with the 10 items of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (Rosenberg, 1965). An example item is "I am able to do things as well as most other people".

Secure attachment was measured with the secure attachment subscale of the Attachment Style Questionnaire (Van Oudenhoven, Hofstra, & Bakker, 2003). This subscale comprises 7 items; an example is "I find it easy to get engaged in close relationships with other people".

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[6] Non-western, in the definition applied by Statistics Netherlands includes people from all countries from Africa, Latin America, Asia (except Indonesia and Japan), and Turkey.

Intercultural traits were measured with a subset of items from the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (Van der Zee & Van Oudenhoven, 2000; Van Oudenhoven & Van der Zee, 2002), consisting of five subscales. Emotional stability (example item: "is nervous", reversed coded) and cultural empathy ("notices when someone is in trouble") were each measured with 7 items, openmindedness ("is interested in other cultures") with 6 items, social initiative ("takes initiative") and flexibility ("likes routine", reversed coded) with 4 items, each.

Table 3.1
Demographic characteristics of participants and their organizations

Variable	*Majority* ($n = 206$)	*Second generation* ($n = 110$)	*First generation* ($n = 123$)
Gender			
Male	126 (61.2%)	71 (64.5%)	73 (59.3%)
Female	80 (38.8%)	39 (35.5%)	50 (40.7%)
Age			
18–30	54 (26.2%)	26 (23.6%)	26 (21.1%)
31–40	55 (26.7%)	38 (34.5%)	37 (30.1%)
41–50	49 (23.8%)	28 (25.5%)	31 (25.2%)
51–65	48 (23.3%)	18 (16.4%)	29 (23.6%)
Educational level			
Low	77 (37.4%)	39 (35.5%)	40 (32.5%)
Medium	110 (53.4%)	53 (48.2%)	58 (47.2%)
High	19 (9.2%)	18 (16.4%)	25 (20.3%)
Cultural diversity in the organization			
Low (< 1%)	56 (27.2%)	18 (16.7%)	20 (16.9%)
Medium (1-8%)	69 (33.5%)	34 (31.5%)	32 (27.1%)
High (> 8%)	81 (39.3%)	56 (51.9%)	66 (55.9%)
Size of the organization			
Small (< 20)	42 (20.4%)	20 (18.5%)	26 (22%)
Medium (20- 99)	41 (19.9%)	28 (25.9%)	28 (23.7%)
Large (100-499)	58 (28.2%)	29 (26.9%)	24 (20.3%)
Very large (> 500)	65 (31.6%)	31 (28.7%)	40 (33.9%)

Sample sizes varied slightly due to missing data.

Measurement of workplace trust. At the time of this study, we were unaware of an existing instrument measuring trust in all three targets of trust, trust in

colleagues, trust in the supervisor and trust in the organization. Therefore, we developed an instrument ourselves. For the creation of items we drew on Mayer and colleagues' (1995) conceptual framework including items referring to ability, benevolence, and integrity with respect to the three targets. Nineteen items were developed to capture three dimensions of workplace trust. The scales were constructed to entail items referring to various aspects indicative of trust, e.g., ability ("I have capable colleagues", indicative for trust in colleagues), benevolence ("My supervisor helps me, when it is necessary", indicative for trust in supervisor) and integrity ("My supervisor keeps his/her promises", indicative for trust in supervisor; "This organization treats employees fairly", indicative for trust in the organization).

First, we applied parallel analysis to our data set, to investigate the correct number of factors to retain (Horn, 1965) using the program FACTOR by Lorenzo-Seva and Ferrando (2006). We compared our observed eigenvalues to the 95th percentile of eigenvalues created from completely random data (500 replications) in order to reject factors that were artificial ($p < .05$). The results were in line with our theoretical expectations, as three factors were retained.

Next, we conducted principal components analysis on the pooled sample in order to examine the factor structure and to identify problematic items (loadings below .5 and cross-loadings larger than .32, Costello & Osborne, 2005). Because we assumed that the workplace trust factors would be correlated, we applied the oblique direct oblimin rotation. We found that all items loaded on their intended factor, with loadings higher than .5 and cross-loadings not exceeding .27. We also applied the orthogonal varimax rotation, which aims at creating uncorrelated factors. Table 3.2 presents the results with varimax rotation of all items for the pooled sample. As can be seen in Table 3.2, a conservative strategy (retaining only items with loadings above .5 and cross-loadings below .33) would have led to the dismissal of 9 of 19 items. Even though the oblique rotation results indicated that there were no problematic items, we used the information obtained from the orthogonal rotation results in order to reduce overlap between the three factors. Using confirmatory factor analysis conducted with AMOS, we compared whether model fit improved when removing the most problematic item per scale. Indeed, our results supported that removing these problematic items (item 7, item 14 and item 19) increased model fit significantly ($\Delta \chi^2$

70

= 203.39, Δ df = 48, $p < .01$). We also tested whether this three factor solution had a better fit than a number of alternative factor solutions. This was indeed supported by our data[7].

Finally, in order to test whether our instrument reliably measured the three factors across the three groups of employees we conducted invariance tests with AMOS. First, we tested whether item loadings were non-invariant (did not differ significantly) across the three groups (supporting weak invariance) and second, we tested whether item intercepts were non-invariant across the three groups (supporting strong invariance). Model comparisons evaluated with χ2 difference tests indicated that we had to reject the weak invariance model. In order to obtain weak invariance we dropped item 5 from the scale trust in the supervisor (the loading was weaker for majority employees than minority employees), item 11 from the scale trust in the organization (the loading was weaker for second generation minority employees than for the other two groups) and item 16 from the scale trust in colleagues (the loading was weaker for first generation minority employees than for the other two groups). Similarly, strong invariance was not supported.

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[7] None of the alternative factor solutions, namely the one factor solution and all possible combinations of latent variables (e.g. trust in the organization vs. trust in colleagues and trust in the supervisor, see also Lehmann-Willenbrock & Kauffeld, 2010) came close to the fit of the three factor solution. The CFI increase of the three factor solution compared to the alternative factor solutions ranged from .06 to .24.

Table 3.2

Results of factor analysis for the pooled sample (n = 439) and standardized loadings of a CFA with selected items for the three groups of employees

Items		Factor loadings (varimax)			Standardized loadings CFA		
		1	2	3	maj	sec	fir
Factor 1: Trust in the supervisor							
1	My supervisor is competent	.79	.23	.27	.86	.79	.82
2	I trust my supervisor	.79	.32	.21	.87	.80	.83
3	My supervisor gives good guidance to our department	.79	.30	.24	.89	.86	.87
4	I get along well with my supervisor	.78	.30	.20			
5	My supervisor helps me, when it is necessary	.77	.30	.21			
6	My supervisor keeps his/her promises	.74	.29	.29	.80	.79	.89
7	My supervisor's intentions towards me are always good	.75	.40	.24			
Factor 2: Trust in the organization							
8	This organization treats employees fairly	.26	.80	.16	.81	.85	.79
9	This organization cares about its employees	.36	.74	.15	.85	.83	.78
10	This organization's intentions towards me are good	.41	.70	.15	.76	.83	.79
11	In this organization, there is enough room for having an own opinion	.37	.69	.30			
12	The goals of this organization are clear	.13	.57	.37	.55	.56	.65
13	I can be myself in this organization	.38	.59	.35	.66	.66	.72
14	My abilities are useful to this organization	.43	.58	.28			
Factor 3: Trust in colleagues							
15	I have capable colleagues	.17	.18	.80	.82	.85	.78
16	I am glad about the colleagues I have	.28	.18	.76			
17	My colleagues sympathize with me	.21	.23	.76	.79	.77	.72
18	My colleagues take responsibility for their work	.22	.13	.70	.71	.71	.72
19	My performance is valued by my colleagues	.22	.34	.69			
Percentage of explained variance		28.1	21.0	19.3			

Maj = majority employees ($n = 206$); sec = second generation minority employees ($n = 110$); fir = first generation minority employees ($n = 126$).

To achieve strong invariance, we dropped item 4 of the scale trust in the supervisor (the item intercept was higher for the second generation minority employees than for the other two groups). Adequate fit is indicated by a Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of at least .90 (Bentler, 1990), and a Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) not exceeding .08 (Byrne, 2001). The final instrument showed acceptable to

good model fit in the three samples (majority employees: CFI = .95, RMSEA = .084; second-generation minority employees: CFI = .94, RMSEA = .092; first-generation minority employees: CFI = .99, RMSEA = .028), composite reliability (CR) exceeded the .70 threshold (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) and the average variance extracted (AVE) exceeded the .50 threshold (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) in all groups of employees (see Table 3.3). These findings suggest that the construct validity of our instrument is satisfactory[8].

Analytic procedures

To test whether first-generation minority employees had lower workplace trust than majority employees and second-generation employees (H1), we conducted multigroup latent mean analysis (LMA) in AMOS. We used LMA to test true mean differences in employees' trust in colleagues, trust in supervisor, and trust in the

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[8] We also investigated relationships of the three subscales with potentially related constructs (convergent validity; job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational climate, friendship avoidance/ breach of psychological contract) and unrelated constructs (divergent validity; social trust, political trust), which were measured on a 5- point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The workplace trust scales were strongly positively related to job satisfaction (correlations ranged from .46 to .64, $p < .001$ with the two items "I enjoy going to work" and "I can sufficiently develop myself") and strongly positively related to organizational commitment (correlations ranged from .52 with trust in colleagues to .77 with trust in the organization; organizational commitment was measured with scale consisting of the three items "I am proud to be working for this organization", "The organization I work for means a lot to me" and "I feel connected to this organization", Cronbach's α = .90). The three scales were also strongly related to perceiving a positive organizational climate (correlations ranged from .59 to .63, $p < .001$ with the item "There is a good atmosphere at work"). Trust in colleagues was most strongly negatively related to friendship avoidance (r = -.24, $p < .001$, with the item "It is better not to establish friendships at work") and we found negative weak to moderate relationships between the workplace trust scales with breach of psychological contract (correlations ranged from -.25 to -.39, $p < .001$, with the item "There are people in this organization who abuse you"). With respect to divergent validity, the workplace trust scales were weakly related to social trust ($r \leq .25$, $p < .001$, three item measure, Cronbach's α = .78, example item: "People in the Netherlands help one another") while relationships with the two items measuring political trust ("The government is capable to take good care of its citizens" and "The government acts with good intentions") were weak ($r = .10$, $p < .05$) or non- significant, showing that the workplace trust scales indeed tap into rather situation specific than workplace-unrelated trust constructs.

organization across groups (first-, and second-generation minority employees and majority employees). The advantage of LMA compared to traditional approaches (e.g., *t*-tests, MANOVA) is that it is not subject to measurement error due to composite scores. We already established strong invariance of our instrument across the three groups, which is a necessary precondition for conducting LMA (Byrne, 2004; Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). We then tested the LMA. Because we expected the lowest scores in the first-generation minority group, we used this group as reference group.

The analytic procedures, described from here on, were applied separately to each sample of employees, majority employees, first-, and second-generation minority employees. We expected personality traits to be positively related to trust in colleagues, trust in the supervisor and trust in the organization (H2-H8). To test our hypotheses we first investigated correlations between traits and the three trust outcomes. This was followed by structural equation modeling (SEM) using maximum likelihood method of estimation in order to identify which personality traits uniquely predict workplace trust outcomes. SEM offers the simultaneous test of the independent variables (traits) on the three dependent variables (the three workplace trust outcomes), while controlling for interrelations between independent, as well as, interrelations between dependent variables. Preliminary analyses showed that the variance inflation factor (VIF) did not exceed the value of 1.5 on any of the independent variables, indicating no problems of multicollinearity.

Before testing the structural models, we tested the fits of the measurement models. All potential control variables (demographic and organizational characteristic) were included in the measurement models. If they were related to an outcome variable, we would include them in the structural model. For reasons of parsimony, control variables were excluded from the structural models if they were unrelated to outcome variables.

Results

In the following we will first present outcomes pertaining to differences between the three groups of employees (H1), before turning to the results of the

investigation of the relations between personality traits and workplace trust dimensions, within each group of employees (H2-H8).

Differences in workplace trust between the three groups of employees

We expected that first-generation employees would have lower workplace trust outcomes than second-generation minority employees and majority employees (H1). The first-generation served as reference group. Therefore, in this group the means were fixed to zero while means in the other two groups were freely estimated. A critical ratios index (CR = parameter estimate divided by its standard error) $\geq \pm 1.96$ would reject the hypothesis that the estimate equals zero. Additionally, we provide Cohen's d. We found that second-generation employees had higher scores than first-generation employees in trust in the supervisor (CR = 2.33, $d = 0.31$) and trust in colleagues (CR = 2.01, $d = 0.27$). None of the other comparisons revealed significant differences. These outcomes did not change when we included all covariates in a MANCOVA conducted in SPSS with planned contrasts[9]. Hence, these mean differences were not influenced by subsample distributions of age, gender, educational level and non-western migration background, percentage of minority employees and size of the employing organization.

Relationships between traits and workplace trust dimensions

We expected that the seven traits would be positively related to the three trust outcomes (H2-H8). Table 3.3 shows the means, standard deviations, reliabilities and latent variable correlations of all variables in this study for the three samples. Of the 63 expected correlations, 41 (65 %) were found to be significant, and in the expected direction (14 with small effect size, $r < .30$; 23 with medium effect size, $r < .50$; and four with large effect size, $r > .50$, Cohen, 1992). We found that self-esteem (H2) and secure attachment (H3) were consistently positively related to all three workplace trust measures across all groups of employees. Also emotional stability (H7) and cultural

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[9] Of all covariates, we only found a significant multivariate effect for size of the employing organization ($F(3,422) = 3.21$, $p = .023$). However, none of its underlying univariate effects were significant.

empathy (H8) were, with few exceptions, significantly related to the workplace trust dimensions. We found significant correlations of social initiative with our outcomes (H4) only among the two minority groups. Openmindedness was significantly related to all three outcomes (H6) only among first-generation employees. Unexpectedly, we did not find support for the relationships between flexibility and workplace trust outcomes (H5). We found that being flexible was even negatively related to facets of workplace trust among majority employees and first-generation minority employees.

Table 3.3

Means, standard deviations and latent variable correlations of study variables

Variable	Sample	CR	AVE	M	SD	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Self-esteem	maj	0.86	0.67	3.93	0.71	.53***	.37***	.01	.06	.75***	.35***	.38***	.28***	.38***
	sec	0.86	0.67	4.03	0.70	.67***	.39**	-.01	.16	.77***	.19	.34**	.46***	.45***
	fir	0.88	0.71	3.93	0.71	.40***	.56***	-.05	.26*	.81***	.53***	.40***	.26*	.36**
2 Secure attachment	maj	0.83	0.62	3.65	0.61	-	.35***	-.13	.31***	.38***	.61***	.58***	.37***	.51***
	sec	0.86	0.68	3.78	0.58	-	.46***	.05	.33**	.37**	.50***	.52***	.43***	.40**
	fir	0.85	0.66	3.73	0.62	-	.54***	-.10	.57***	.39***	.60***	.31**	.24*	.44***
3 Social initiative	maj	0.81	0.59	3.34	0.79		-	-.08	.24**	.39***	.28***	.11	.04	.14
	sec	0.83	0.62	3.26	0.84		-	.08	.09	.31*	.39***	.17	.24*	.25*
	fir	0.75	0.50	3.35	0.73		-	-.18	.52***	.46***	.63***	.25*	.37**	.57***
4 Flexibility	maj	0.81	0.52	2.73	0.73			-	.10	.09	-.18*	-.01	-.14	-.23**
	sec	0.83	0.55	2.79	0.80			-	-.05	.12	.19	-.02	-.19	-.01
	fir	0.80	0.51	2.67	0.70			-	-.06	.04	-.18	-.17	-.30**	-.25*
5 Openmindedness	maj	0.82	0.61	3.23	0.77				-	.06	.45***	.20*	.02	.07
	sec	0.85	0.66	3.35	0.80				-	.14	.36**	.18	.06	.14
	fir	0.80	0.59	3.55	0.69				-	.13	.67***	.26*	.27*	.36**
6 Emotional stability	maj	0.87	0.69	3.60	0.79					-	.19*	.30***	.19*	.30***
	sec	0.82	0.61	3.71	0.74					-	.01	.14	.21	.43***
	fir	0.87	0.69	3.57	0.82					-	.33**	.24*	.25*	.31**
7 Cultural empathy	maj	0.85	0.66	3.68	0.64						-	.30***	.19*	.30***
	sec	0.85	0.65	3.73	0.61						-	.37**	.17	.29*
	fir	0.81	0.59	3.76	0.56						-	.21	.26*	.40***

(table continues)

Variable	Sample	CR	AVE	M	SD	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8 Trust in colleagues	maj	0.82	0.60	3.76	0.75							-	.66***	.62***
	sec	0.82	0.61	3.88	0.72							-	.71***	.66***
	fir	0.78	0.55	3.67	0.75							-	.45***	.55***
9 Trust in supervisor	maj	0.92	0.74	3.60	0.93								-	.80***
	sec	0.88	0.66	3.80	0.81								-	.79***
	fir	0.91	0.72	3.55	0.88								-	.81***
10 Trust in organization	maj	0.85	0.54	3.62	0.77									-
	sec	0.87	0.57	3.69	0.83									-
	fir	0.86	0.56	3.56	0.78									-

Note. maj = majority group employees; sec = second-generation minority employees; fir = first-generation minority employees.

Measurement model. The measurement models included ten latent variables and 33 indicators. We screened the personality traits for items that did not load highly (< .50) on the expected factor or that showed high cross-loadings, and removed these three from subsequent analyses[10]. For social initiative and trust in colleagues (each 3 items), flexibility and trust in the supervisor (each 4 items), and trust in the organization (5 items), items were used as indicators of the respective latent variable. Parcels (groups of items) were used when latent factors consisted of more than five items. This was because of higher reliability of parcels compared to items, decreased risk of spurious correlations, and more efficient estimates of latent variables (Little, Cunningham, Shahar & Widamon, 2002; Rushton, Brainerd & Pressley, 1983). We randomly assigned items to parcels, so that each latent variable with more than 5 items had three parcels as indicators. As can be seen in Table 3.4, these models had superior fit compared to those using only items as indicators of latent variables (see also Van der Zee, Van Oudenhoven, Ponterotto, & Fietzer, 2013).

A number of potential control variables were included in the measurement model. Relations of age, gender, educational level with organizational trust outcomes have been found in previous studies but findings are inconclusive (Cook & Wall, 1980; Thau, Crossley, Bennett, & Sczesny, 2007; Zhang, Tsui, Song, Li, & Jia, 2008). Previous research showed that non-western immigrant status did have a negative impact on general social trust outcomes (Statistics Netherlands, 2010b), but it is not evident if this translates to lower trust outcomes at the workplace. We also included organizational characteristics, such as size and cultural diversity of the organization's workforce to test if these factors qualified for inclusion as control variables. With respect to control variables we found in the sample of majority employees that age was positively related to trust in colleagues ($r = .17$, $p < .05$) and organizational size was negatively related to trust in the organization ($r = -.19$, $p = < .01$). However, these paths were not significant in the structural model, thus we proceeded our analyses without control variables. In the other two samples none of the control variables were significantly related to the outcome variables and were consequently dropped in the

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[10] Self- esteem: "I feel I do not have much to be proud of", "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others"; social initiative: "likes to stay in the background" (reversed).

structural model. Model fits of the measurement models were adequate and can be found in Table 3.4. Further evidence for the reliability of our models was provided by significant loadings of all items and parcels on their latent factors, in all three samples (see also CR and AVE in Table 3.3).

Table 3.4
Model fit of measurement models

Group	χ^2	df	CFI	RMSEA [90% CI]
Majority (items)	2388.88***	1229	.81	.068 [.064; .072]
Majority (parcels)	898.41***	482	.90	.065 [.058; .072]
First generation (items)	1970.44***	1229	.79	.071 [.065; .076]
First generation (parcels)	703.57***	482	.90	.062 [.052; .071]
Second generation (items)	2023.22***	1229	.75	.078 [.072; .084]
Second generation (parcels)	734.25***	482	.88	.070 [.060; .080]

CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation.
*** p < .001

Structural model. We expected that the personality traits under investigation would be positively related to the three trust dimensions (H2-H8). In the structural model the seven personality traits were allowed to correlate, as were the three outcome variables (the model fits were identical to the measurement models). The outcomes of the structural models for the three samples are summarized in Table 3.5. In the following we will present the results separately for each group of employees.

In the sample of majority employees, in line with hypothesis 3, secure attachment was positively related to trust in colleagues (β = .59, p < .001), trust in the supervisor (β = .36, p < .01) and trust in the organization (β = .43, p < .001). The unexpected negative relationship between flexibility and trust in organization was also evident in the structural model results (β = -.20, p < .05). None of the remaining traits were uniquely related to dimensions of workplace trust.

Similar to the findings for majority employees, in the sample of second-generation employees the secure attachment style was, as expected, positively related to trust in colleagues (H3, β = .46, p < .05). None of the remaining personality traits were uniquely related to dimensions of workplace trust.

In line with our expectations, in the sample of first-generation employees self-esteem was positively related to trust in colleagues (H2, β = .69, p < .001) and social

initiative was positively related to trust in the organization (H4, β = .42, p < .05). Already earlier, we had found an unexpected negative correlation between flexibility and trust in the supervisor among first-generation employees. This finding was also revealed in the structural model: flexibility was negatively related to trust in the supervisor (β = -.28, p < .01). None of the remaining personality traits were uniquely related to dimensions of workplace trust.

We repeated the analyses with the models including only items as indicators of latent variables (see Table 3.4), in order to test whether the use of parcels led to different results. We replicated the results for each group. Only among second-generation minority employees the estimate of secure attachment style predicting trust in colleagues was no longer statistically significant (β = .51, p = .07).

Table 3.5

Path Coefficients from the Structural Models

Trait	Group	Trust in Colleagues			Trust in Supervisor			Trust in Organization		
		B	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	*B*	*SE B*	*β*
Self-esteem	maj	0.13	0.19	.10	0.26	0.24	.16	0.17	0.21	.12
	sec	0.07	0.35	.07	0.66	0.40	.52	0.07	0.49	.04
	fir	0.89	0.34	.69***	0.01	0.31	.01	0.05	0.29	.04
Secure attachment	maj	0.73	0.15	.59***	0.56	0.18	.36**	0.58	0.16	.43***
	sec	0.54	0.26	.46*	0.22	0.29	.16	0.25	0.36	.07
	fir	0.30	0.20	.24	-0.02	0.19	-.02	0.23	0.18	.18
Social initiative	maj	-0.12	0.07	-.14	-0.13	0.09	-.13	-0.09	0.07	-.10
	sec	-0.09	0.08	-.13	0.03	0.09	.03	-0.03	0.11	-.03
	fir	-0.08	0.19	-.07	0.24	0.19	.21	0.46	0.18	.42*
Flexibility	maj	0.03	0.08	.03	-0.14	0.11	-.11	-0.23	0.09	-.20*
	sec	-0.07	0.11	-.07	-0.20	0.13	-.18	-0.13	0.16	-.09
	fir	-0.18	0.12	-.17	-0.32	0.12	-.28**	-0.19	0.11	-.17
Openmindedness	maj	0.15	0.17	.08	-0.09	0.21	-.04	-0.05	0.18	-.03
	sec	-0.06	0.16	-.05	-0.11	0.18	-.07	-0.14	0.22	-.07
	fir	0.51	0.38	.24	0.47	0.37	.21	0.15	0.33	.07
Emotional Stability	maj	0.06	0.13	.06	0.01	0.16	.01	0.11	0.14	.10
	sec	-0.02	0.24	-.02	-0.26	0.28	-.23	0.53	0.35	.37
	fir	-0.27	0.22	-.29	0.18	0.21	.17	0.04	0.19	.04
Cultural Empathy	maj	-0.13	0.15	-.10	-0.09	0.19	-.05	-0.02	0.17	-.01
	sec	0.24	0.16	.22	0.05	0.18	.04	0.42	0.23	.26
	fir	-0.49	0.31	-.35	-0.17	0.30	-.11	-0.12	0.27	-.09
Explained variance (%)	maj		37.0			17.9			31.8	
	sec		30.8			30.6			29.2	
	fir		28.0			23.0			38.0	

maj = majority employees; sec = second-generation minority employees; fir = first-generation minority employees.

B = unstandardized coefficient; *SE B* = Standard error unstandardized coefficient; *β*= standardized coefficient.

* *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001

Discussion

So far, there has been relatively little investigation of possible differences in workplace trust between majority and minority employees that also includes a systematic comparison between first-, and second-generation minority employees. This is surprising, because the workforce, not only in the Netherlands, is becoming increasingly culturally diverse, and research suggests that minority employees may score lower on trust-related variables compared to majority employees (e.g., Hofhuis et al., 2008). Similarly, little attention has been paid to the influence of personality traits on workplace trust (Kramer, 1999). Studies that do exist on the possible role of broad traits, such as the Big Five, have provided mixed results (Bergman et al., 2010; Mooradian et al., 2006). The current study aimed to fill these gaps in the literature.

Due to increased challenges arising from cultural differences, we expected that first-generation minority employees would experience lower workplace trust than majority employees (H1). Our findings show that this was not the case. First-generation minority employees in the Netherlands do not experience less trust in their colleagues, their supervisor, or their employing organization than Dutch majority employees. While cultural minorities often experience more difficulties than the Dutch majority *prior* to employment (e.g., higher unemployment; discriminatory applicant selection, The Netherlands Institute of Social Research, 2010a, b; quicker unemployment increases among cultural minorities in times of economic decline, Statistics Netherlands, 2013b), our findings encourage the idea that once employed, coming from another country does not hinder development and maintenance of trusting interpersonal relationships at work as well as the perception that the employing organization can be relied upon.

We also expected, and indeed found, that first-generation minority employees have lower workplace trust than second-generation minority employees (H1). More specifically, these differences were evident for the two interpersonal facets of workplace trust, trust in colleagues and trust in the supervisor. This shows that second-generation minority employees seem especially adept, in comparison with first-generation minority employees in establishing interpersonal trust at the workplace. This could be explained by the fact that they have been socialized in the Dutch culture, and are consequently more accustomed to Dutch work culture. It is then surprising, that we

did not find that majority employees had higher levels of interpersonal trust than first-generation minority employees. One possible explanation might be that second-generation minority employees, due to socialization in multiple cultures, have developed personalities that indicate greater adaptability to various settings than majority employees. A post hoc test of this idea based on all personality traits measured in the present study using MANOVA did not reveal differences between the two groups. However, inspecting univariate test statistics, we found that the secure attachment style was marginally higher among second-generation minority employees ($F(1,311) = 3.54$, $p = .061$, $\eta^2 = .01$), indicating some preliminary support for this argument.

The second goal of the current study was the investigation of the relationships between personality traits and dimensions of workplace trust. Because we wanted to take into account the possibility that different personality traits might be related to workplace trust within each group of employees, we conducted our analyses separately for the three groups of employees. As expected, the correlational findings supported our hypotheses (H2-H4; H6-H8), that self-esteem, secure attachment, social initiative, openmindedness, emotional stability and cultural empathy were related to workplace trust dimensions. Unexpected, however, was our finding that flexibility was *negatively* related to workplace trust dimensions. This finding is inconsistent with previous research by Van Oudenhoven and colleagues (2003), who showed that flexibility was positively related to perceived social support and job satisfaction.

In order to identify those aspects of personality with the strongest influence on workplace trust, we conducted structural equation models for each group (majority, first-, and second-generation minority employees) with personality traits as simultaneous predictors of the three dimensions of workplace trust. We found that the influence of traits on dimensions of workplace trust differed across the groups of employees. The previously reported influence of trait trust (in the current study conceptualized as secure attachment) on workplace trust dimensions (Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Simmons et al., 2009) was most evident for majority employees. Among this group, the secure attachment style significantly and positively predicted all three workplace trust outcomes. In the group of second-generation minority employees, the secure attachment style explained unique variance only in trust

in colleagues (no other trait was uniquely related to any of the three workplace trust dimensions), and among first-generation minority employees the secure attachment style was not uniquely related to the workplace trust dimensions. However, among first generation minority employees we found that other traits than secure attachment explained unique variance in workplace trust. Interestingly, in this group the single significant predictor of trust in colleagues was not secure attachment, as in the other two groups, but self-esteem. Possibly, for first-generation minority employees, relationships with colleagues, which may oftentimes be perceived as "outgroup members", may be stressful. For them, self-esteem may act as a protective mechanism, as a buffer against stress and negative emotions arising from feelings of rejection (Anthony et al., 2007; Leary et al., 1995).

We also found that social initiative positively impacted trust in the organization among first-generation minority employees. This finding is rather surprising given social initiative did not explain unique variance in interpersonal trust. Possibly, this finding could be interpreted as an artifact originating in the pre-employment phase of first-generation minority employees. For this group, accessing the employment market is especially difficult. Social networks are an important asset for finding employment (Granovetter, 1995), and the social networks of immigrants are less functional to achieve this in the Netherlands (Klaver, Mevissen, & Odé, 2005). Hence, social initiative, the ability to actively seek contact with others and to activate social resources, might be especially crucial for this group: it implies better chances to become and stay employed, which also allows for higher levels of trust (De Vroome, Coenders, Van Tubergen, & Verkuyten, 2011).

As expressed earlier, negative correlations were found between flexibility and workplace trust dimensions. We found that flexibility negatively influenced trust in the supervisor among first-generation minority employees, and among majority employees it negatively influenced trust in the organization. For second-generation minority employees we did not find that flexibility was related to workplace trust dimensions. Interestingly, post-hoc analyses showed that the effect of flexibility on trust in the supervisor in this group of employees (the correlation was marginally significant, $r = -.19$; $p = .099$) was conditional on scores on other traits. We found that the effect of flexibility was moderated by all other traits except openmindedness with a clear picture

emerging: flexibility negatively influenced trust in the supervisor only among those second-generation minority employees who lacked cultural empathy (interaction term: $p = .015$), social initiative ($p = .032$), self-esteem ($p = .045$), emotional stability ($p = .072$) and secure attachment ($p = .092$).

It is possible that highly flexible employees easily adapt to their working environment at first but become frustrated over time if their efforts are not sufficiently recognized or valued. In other words, initial attempts to establish trusting relationships, for example by repeatedly accommodating the supervisor's requests, could result in an imbalance between expectations and justice perceptions, and in interpersonal dynamics, that in the long term deteriorate trust (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Another explanation of the negative effects of flexibility on workplace trust dimensions might be that highly flexible employees are perceived as unreliable. For example, Leone et al. (2005) found that flexibility was negatively related to conscientiousness and to performance orientation.

Obviously, these explanations are post hoc and speculative, and they are furthermore complicated by the fact that the effects of flexibility were found for trust in the supervisor among minority employees and trust in the organization among majority employees. It could be argued that highly flexible majority employees are more likely to leave the organization (low trust in the organization), while highly flexible minority employees (and in case of second-generation minority employees only those with low scores on other traits) react with decreased trust in the supervisor, because they have fewer alternative employment opportunities (for example less effective social networks and a higher chance of discrimination during application procedures). Clearly, follow up research is needed. For example, it would be interesting to investigate whether individual's reported ease in deviating from routine behavior (flexibility as measured in the current study) relates to justice perceptions, functional flexibility (job changes due to organizational restructuring; Cordery, Sevastos, Mueller, & Parker, 1993) and to turnover intentions.

Research about the role of (narrow) personality traits for workplace trust is scarce. The findings of this study show that the positive relations between secure attachment (trait trust) and different trust states in the organizational setting do not hold across all cultural groups of employees. Among first-generation minority employees,

the links between trait trust and states of trust, which are clearly evident among majority employees, and to a lesser extent also among second-generation minority employees, are not strongly supported by our data. Rather, for first-generation minority employees, levels of workplace trust depend on other traits.

Implications and limitations

Our findings may inform professionals who are aiming to increase workplace trust through personnel selection, training and interventions. In line with its eminent role for workplace trust (at least for majority employees), professionals could align procedures in order to build on the availability of a secure attachment style in their workforce (Davidovitz et al., 2007; Kahn, 1995), for example by assigning key roles to individuals with highly secure attachment styles. Davidovitz and colleagues (2007) showed that securely attached leaders served as security providers for their subordinates, enhancing their socioemotional and instrumental functioning and mental health. The findings of the current study, as well as knowledge about what is "inside the minds of securely and insecurely attached people" (Mikulincer et al., 2009, p. 615) could motivate professionals to adjust existing organizational procedures and policy. The procedural knowledge underlying secure attachment: if I encounter obstacles or become distressed, I know that approaching another person who is supportive brings relief (Mikulincer et al., 2009) could be used to guide training programs and interventions. The script could for example also be formalized in structural guidelines for whom to approach when under distress (e.g., securely attached mentors), or manifested in organizations' visions and strategic goals. This could increase the availability of an organizational attachment security script of employees and provide a secure setting for maintaining or increasing trust.

Moreover, a practical implication of the present findings is that HR managers and supervisors might be well-advised to differentiate their trainings directed at enhancing interpersonal trust at the workplace for first-generation minority employees: A high level of self-esteem could serve as a protective mechanism, especially when working with culturally insensitive colleagues or supervisors. Future studies could, for example, investigate whether the effect of self-esteem and secure attachment on trust is moderated by the diversity climate of an organization. Finally, our findings suggest that encouraging more flexibility may be risky.

There are also limitations to this study. Most importantly, it is cross-sectional and relied on self-reports. Also, we did not include tenure and time spent in the Netherlands as control variables. Even though tenure has mostly been found to be unrelated to dimensions of workplace trust (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Korsgaard & Roberson, 1995; Robinson, 1996), it is possible that time spent in the Netherlands could explain some variance in workplace trust for immigrant employees. For example, it is possible that the longer immigrants stay in a host country, the more familiar they become with the host's working culture and hence assimilate accordingly.

Moreover, the current study only included participants with good command of the Dutch language and, especially among first-, and second-generation minority employees, relatively high educational levels. Inclusion of low-educated blue collar workers with little command of the Dutch language in the study may have caused different outcomes in terms of differences in workplace trust compared to the Dutch majority employees. Further validation of our findings among immigrants with little command of the Dutch language and low educational levels, possibly with translated versions of instruments is therefore recommended.

Finally, the current study only included participants with a full time employment. Our findings might not be generalizable to employees who work part time. The centrality of workplace trust might be lower in the lives of employees working part time in comparison with full time employees, as they spend less time at the workplace. Also, part time employees might differ with respect to traits from full time employees. For example, Krausz, Bizman and Braslavsky (2001) showed that employees with an anxious/ambivalent attachment style preferred working as external employees (e.g. home office), in contrast to individuals with a secure attachment style who preferred working at the organization.

Yet, even though further differentiation and specification is needed, the present study clearly reveals that distinguishing employees in terms of their cultural background and taking into account individual differences provides greater insight into the determinants of workplace trust.

Chapter

4

Attachment Security as Protector of Social Trust in the Face of Stress and the Role of Minority Status

Social trust is a core element of what constitutes social capital and can be regarded as "one of the most important synthetic forces within society" (Simmel, 1950, p. 318; see also Putnam, 2000; Luhmann, 1979). Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt and Camerer (1998) have defined trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (p. 395). Social trust varies depending on whether a "person perceives the world generally in terms of threat and competition or in terms of safety and cooperation" (p. 15; Berning & Ziller, 2016). In the past decade, social trust has been particularly at stake, due to societal developments such as the economic crisis that evoked feelings of insecurity and loss of control among many citizens affected by its consequences (Lindström & Giordano, 2016). Moreover, worldwide, cultural and religious diversity results in tensions between members of different groups, ranging from widespread anti-immigration attitudes (European Commission, 2016) to the killings at Charlie Hebdo in Paris and the terrorist attacks by IS in Paris and Brussels. Finally, citizens seem to lose their confidence in complex political systems such as the European Union, recently even resulting in support for BREXIT in the UK. Such developments pose a threat to social trust and hence to the social stability of countries. It is therefore important to gain insight in factors that influence social trust.

In the present study we were interested in financial distress, unfair treatment and political distrust as three stressors that may threaten social trust. Moreover, assuming that not all individuals are equally affected by stressors, we were interested in the role of intrapersonal resources in the relation between these stressors and social trust. More specifically, we focused on the potentially buffering role of individual differences in attachment security in the stressors-trust relationship. Lastly, we were interested in differences between members of the cultural minority and majority. It is usually assumed that stress levels are higher and levels of trust are lower among members of the cultural minority (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Smith, 2010). We therefore investigated the stress-buffering hypothesis of attachment security both for minority and majority members.

Stressors and social trust

Stressors can limit individuals' capacity for social trust, because they reduce the cognitive and affective capacity to view others in positive ways (de Vroome, Hooghe, & Marien, 2013; Delhey & Newton, 2003; Lindström & Rosvall, 2016). More specifically, it has been shown that individuals experiencing *financial distress* (de Vroome et al., 2013; Lindström & Rosvall, 2016), *unfair treatment* (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; de Vroome et al., 2013; Smith, 2010), and *distrust in political institutions* (Freitag & Bühlmann, 2005; Kaase, 1999; Sønderskov & Dinesen, 2015; Tao, Yang, Li, & Lu, 2014; Zmerli & Newton, 2008; Zmerli, Newton, & Montero, 2007) tend to have low levels of social trust.

First, *financial distress* is characterized by worries about the inability to get by financially in the present or in the future, which has shown to adversely affect levels of social trust (Brandt, Wetherell, & Henry, 2015; Laurence, 2015; Lindström & Rosvall, 2016). So far, the mechanisms linking financial distress to social trust are not clearly understood. In a psychological sense, it can be argued that financial distress impedes social trust, as it evokes feelings of insecurity and lack of control (Bandura, 1994; Banfield, 1958). Second, financial distress could hamper social trust via reduced possibilities of social involvement due to the costs associated with social activities.

In a longitudinal study conducted in the United States and the United Kingdom, Brandt et al. (2015) showed that a decrease in income was related to a decrease in social trust. Another longitudinal study conducted in the United Kingdom showed that losing one's job causes lower levels of social trust, even when controlling for indicators of physical health, mental well-being, and personal efficacy (Laurence, 2015). Lastly, in a cross-sectional survey study, Lindström and Rosvall (2016) showed that reported childhood and adult experiences of financial distress were negatively related to social trust, controlling for indicators of subjective health.

A second factor that seems relevant for social trust concerns *unfair treatment*. Perceptions of unfair treatment result from instances or structural circumstances in which individuals experience unfair behaviors from others (Allport, 1979). These unfair behaviors can refer to group memberships (e.g., experiencing disadvantage based on ethnicity, age, gender), in which case these experiences are referred to as

discrimination (Brown, 2011). Unfair treatment can also be unrelated to group membership and refer to instances in which an individual feels that procedures or the distribution of outcomes have not been fair (Adams, 1965; Leventhal, 1976).

Most of the work showing a relationship between unfairness and social trust focuses on institutional fairness (Freitag & Bühlmann, 2005; Kumlin & Rothstein, 2007; Rothstein & Stolle, 2008). For example, Lindström (2008) conducted a study in Sweden investigating the relation between anticipated unfair treatment by employers (based on race, color of skin, religion, and cultural background) and social trust. He found that the higher individuals estimated the likelihood that employers would treat people unfairly, the lower were their levels of social trust. Interestingly, this finding was equally applicable to those born in Sweden as to those born abroad. A similar finding was reported in a study by de Vroome and colleagues (2013), conducted among a population sample in the Netherlands. These authors showed that higher frequencies of actual instances of unfair treatment were related to lower levels of social trust among cultural minorities.

As a third factor that may influence social trust, the present study focuses on *distrust in political institutions*. Distrust in political institutions *"is an attitude of an individual who seriously questions or doubts the competence and morality of politicians and political institutions"* (Schyns & Koop, 2009, p. 150). How does distrust in political institutions affect social trust? Individuals with high levels of distrust in political institutions expect that political actors will not respond in fair and effective ways to obstacles that individuals perceive in their personal lives or in response to societal challenges. Accordingly, for these individuals, increased distrust in political institutions is likely to spill over to their trust in others in society, as it is likely that (at least some of) these others support the political status quo. Similarly, if individuals do not believe that political institutions act in their interests, or are even corrupt, this may culminate in feelings of helplessness, abandonment and frustration, which again are likely to lead to reduced levels of social trust. Indeed, research has shown that people with high distrust in their government and other relevant political institutions tend to have lower social trust than those with low political distrust (Sønderskov & Dinesen, 2015). In the same vein, a recent longitudinal study by Sønderskov and Dinesen (2015) showed that distrust in political institutions reduced social trust (and not the other way

around), and that this pattern was observable despite the inclusion of a large set of viable confounders (such as life satisfaction, organizational activity and socioeconomic variables).

In sum, the literature reviewed above leads us to the following prediction regarding the relationship between the three stressors and social trust:

H1: Financial distress, unfair treatment and distrust in political institutions are negatively related to social trust.

Attachment security and social trust

So far, we have focused on the negative impact of three relevant stressors on social trust. However, it is likely that not everybody is equally affected by these stressors. Coping theories show that intra- (e.g., personality and skills) and interpersonal (e.g., social support) resources may protect individuals against the detrimental effects of stressors (Hobfoll, 1989; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In the present study, we focused on a personal resource that we expected to be an important buffer against the negative effects of stressors on social trust, namely attachment security.

According to attachment theory, early interactions between caregivers and infants shape infants' basic expectations about others and the self, which later manifest themselves in a working model of others and a working model of self (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1969). Individuals who experienced early parenting qualified by sensitivity, responsiveness and empathy are likely to develop into adults with high attachment security; they combine a positive model of others (others are there for me, when I need them) and a positive model of the self (I am worthy of other's love). In this vein, Mikulincer and Shaver (2013) define attachment security as a" felt sense, rooted in one's history of close relationships, that the world is generally safe, that other people are generally helpful when called upon, and that I, as a unique individual, am valuable and lovable, thanks to being valued and loved by others" (p.287).

Attachment research has been successfully applied to explain adolescent and adult intimate relationships, and individual-level processes, such as emotion regulation,

pro-social values and behavior (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2010), and trust in intimate relationships (Mikulincer, 1998). Attachment security is relatively stable, and evidence suggests that it is transmitted across generations (Sette, Coppola, & Cassibba, 2015). Surprisingly, despite its obvious relevance for social trust research, the possible link between attachment security and social trust has received hardly any attention, so far. To our knowledge, only one study investigated the relationship between attachment security and social trust (Skarżyńska & Radkiewicz, 2014). Skarżyńska and Radkiewicz (2014) investigated the relationships between attachment and negativistic beliefs (e.g., interpersonal distrust; social Darwinism, belief in life as a zero-sum game) in a heterogeneous sample of 853 adult Poles. They found that two dimensions of attachment insecurity (anxiety and avoidance; they did not measure attachment security directly) were negatively related to interpersonal distrust. The items measuring interpersonal distrust were highly similar to those used in instruments measuring social trust (for example: "When dealing with strangers one should be cautious").

In the present study, we expected to find a positive link between attachment security and social trust, but were primarily interested in a buffering role of attachment security in the stressor-trust relationship. More specifically, individuals with high levels of attachment security are more likely to cope effectively with stressful situations than those with low attachment security (Maunder, Lancee, Nolan, Hunter, & Tannenbaum, 2006). For example, Vanheule and Declercq (2009) showed that high levels of attachment security buffered against the negative effects of stressful events on burnout. Segel-Karpas, Bamberger, and Bacharach (2013) found that negative psychological consequences following a decline of income were buffered by high levels of attachment security. Sochos and Diniz (2012) investigated whether attachment security buffered against detrimental effects of sociocultural difficulties on psychological distress among Brazilian immigrants living in the UK. They found that high levels of attachment security reduced the distress brought about by sociocultural difficulties. As far as we know, no studies have yet examined the role of attachment security as a buffer against stressors on social trust. In sum, with respect to the role of attachment security, our predictions are that:

H2a: Attachment security is positively related to social trust.

H2b: Attachment security moderates the negative relations of financial distress, unfair treatment and distrust in political institutions with social trust. More specifically, we expect that among those with high levels of attachment security, the negative relations between financial distress, unfair treatment and distrust in political institutions and social trust are weaker than among those with low levels of attachment security.

See Figure 4.1 for a graphical depiction of these hypotheses.
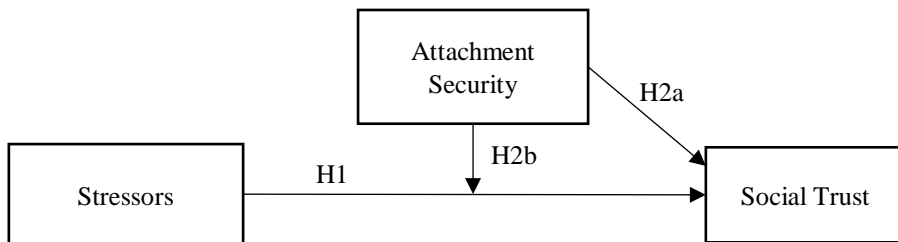
Figure 4.1. The assumed buffering role of attachment security on the relationship between stressors and social trust.

Minority status and social trust

Social trust research has repeatedly shown that cultural minorities have lower levels of social trust compared to the cultural majority (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Smith, 2010). Research also suggests that levels of stressors are higher among cultural minorities (Smith, 2010). In the present study, we assume that lower levels of social trust among minority members are explained at least partially by higher levels of the three stressors under investigation (see Figure 4.2 for a graphical depiction of these hypotheses).

H3a: Minority status is negatively related to social trust. Levels of social trust are lower for minority members compared to majority members.

H3b: Minority status is positively related to stress levels. Levels of

stress (financial distress, unfair treatment, distrust in political
institutions) are higher for minority members compared to majority
members.

H3c: The negative relation between minority status and social trust is
at least partially mediated by stress levels (financial distress, unfair
treatment, distrust in political institutions).
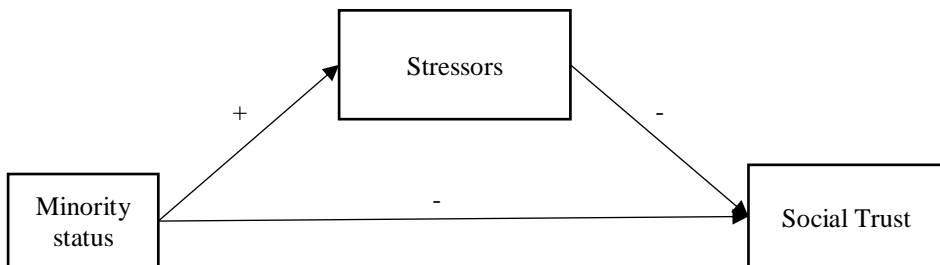
Figure 4.2. The relation between minority status and social trust is mediated by
stressors.

   Although previous studies have compared *levels of trust* and stressor levels
between cultural minority and majority members (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Smith,
2010), there is hardly any research that examines whether the *determinants* of social
trust are different for cultural minority and majority members. An exception is the
study by de Vroome, Hooghe and Marien (2013), which examined whether
determinants of social trust differed for cultural minority and majority members in the
Netherlands. Interestingly, they found that a number factors, such as educational level,
feeling integrated and feeling isolated were less important for levels of social trust
among members of the cultural minority than among members of the cultural majority.
In the present study we were particularly interested to examine whether the relations
between stressors and social trust differ between majority and minority members, that
is, whether the links as specified in hypothesis 1 are different depending on group
membership. Similarly, we will explore whether the stress-buffering role of attachment
security (Figure 4.1) applies equally to cultural minority and majority members.

Method

Procedure and sample

A total of 3687 people living in the Netherlands with a minimum age of 18 and sufficient Dutch language abilities completed our survey in November 2011. Participants were approached via a survey service provider who forwarded the link to the questionnaire and who paid respondents a small amount of money for participation in the study. The response rate was approximately 55%. Of the respondents, 1596 were male (43.3%), 1231 (33.4%) had a high level of education (i.e., university degree); the mean age was 42.19 years ($SD = 14.21$). Moreover, because of a higher heterogeneity in this group, we collected relatively higher numbers of respondents of the cultural minority. We used a classification based on individuals' country of birth and their parents place of birth which has been applied by official institutions in the Netherlands (CBS, SCP), considering individuals member of the cultural minority when either they themselves or at least one of their parents are born outside the Netherlands. The Dutch majority group consisted of 1599 individuals (43.4%), the minority group consisted of 2088 individuals (56.6%). Among the minority members, 28.2% had a western[11] background ($n = 1038$) and 28.5 % had a non-western background ($n = 1055$). Our goal was to achieve balanced distributions with regard to geographic position (urban and rural), working and non-working respondents as well as gender. Comparing our respective data with the general population revealed that in terms of age distribution and gender, this was largely achieved. However, low education and older age groups were underrepresented among the non-western minority group and there were relatively more female participants, compared to representative data (CBS StatLine, 2016).

It is usually assumed that particularly individuals with a non-western cultural background differ on psychological variables such as well-being and social trust when

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[11] Non-western: individuals with a Turkish, African, Asian and Latin-American background. Western individuals from Europe (excluding the Netherlands and Turkey), Oceania, North America, Japan and Indonesia (including the former Dutch East Indies; Alders, 2001).

compared to cultural majority members (CBS, 2015; Graaf, Have, Gool, & Dorsselaer, 2011). Preliminary analyses indeed revealed no meaningful differences in social trust between the western minority group and the majority. In the present study, we will therefore only focus on the outcomes for the comparison between migrants with a non-western background and the cultural majority. Descriptive statistics for these two groups can be found in Table 4.1.

Measures

Financial distress. We measured financial distress with four items using Likert scales. Two items inquired how frequently individuals worried about their financial situation/ struggled to pay their bills at the end of the month in the past year (from 1= never to 7 = every day). The other two items inquired whether individuals worried about their current financial situation/ their financial security in the future (from 1 = not at all to 7 = very much). Cronbach's alpha was very high with .91.

Unfair treatment. We measured unfair treatment with a three item short version of a scale by Williams, Yu, Jackson, and Anderson (1997), using Likert scores ranging from 1= never to 7 = regularly. Individuals were asked whether it ever happens that they are treated with less respect than others, being called names or insulted, people acting as if they are better than you. Cronbach's alpha was .81.

Distrust in political institutions. Four items used in the Eurobarometer were included (Melich, 2000), which asked individuals to rate their trust in the European Union, the Dutch government, regional or local authorities and the parliament on a Likert scale ranging from 1 = do not trust at all to 7 = trust completely. We reversed the scale to indicate distrust rather than trust (thus, 7 = highest distrust). Cronbach's alpha was .88.

Table 4.1

Descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables and covariates in the majority and non-western minority samples

Variables	Range	Total		majority		non-western	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Male (0 = female; 1 = male)	0/1	0.45		0.48		0.39	
Age	18-82	40.44	14.01	44.13	14.19	34.82	11.68
Relationship status (0 = in relationship; 1 = single)	0/1	0.29		0.23		0.44	
Non voter (0 = voter; 1 = non voter)	0/1	0.23		0.17		0.33	
Employment status (0 = not working; 1 = working more than 12h)	0/1	0.57		0.57		0.57	
Educational level (1 = no education; 7 = university diploma)	1-7	4.77	1.23	4.68	1.23	4.91	1.22
Member of organization (0 = not a member; 1 =member)	0/1	0.35		0.41		0.26	
Victim of crime (0 = not victim of crime; 1 = victim of crime)	0/1	0.09		0.08		0.10	
Owns house (0 = rental; 1 = house ownership)	0/1	0.49		0.58		0.35	
Neighborhood cultural diversity	.02-.84	0.40	0.20	0.32	0.17	0.51	0.20
Neighborhood mean income	1.9-5.98	3.30	0.58	3.39	0.54	3.16	0.61
Financial distress	1-7	4.11	1.64	3.93	1.64	4.37	1.61
Unfair treatment	1-7	3.35	1.32	3.18	1.27	3.61	1.34
Distrust in political institutions	1-7	4.77	1.17	4.78	1.14	4.75	1.22
Attachment security	1-7	4.54	1.01	4.58	1.00	4.48	1.01
Social trust	1-7	3.94	1.18	4.06	1.20	3.77	1.14
N		2649		1599		1050	

Attachment security. The Attachment Style Questionnaire (Van Oudenhoven, Hofstra, & Bakker, 2003) was administered to measure attachment security. Our short version consisted of eight items to measure the secure attachment style (e.g., "I feel at ease in emotional relationships"), the preoccupied attachment style (e.g., "I often wonder whether others like me") and the fearful attachment style (e.g., "I am afraid that I will be deceived when I get too close to others") on a seven point Likert scale ranging from 1 = not at all applicable to 7 = fully applicable. Rather than merely relying on the scores regarding the secure attachment style, we used the means on all three types of styles (reversely scored for the preoccupied attachment style and the fearful attachment style) to create a unidimensional attachment security score (see, for example, Elizur and Mintzer, 2003, for application of the same method), which had a Cronbach's alpha of .68.

Social trust. To measure social trust, we used a three item Likert scale response instrument adapted from Alesina and La Ferrara (2002). The first item ranged from 1 (people are just looking out for themselves) to 7 (most of the time people try to be helpful). The second item ranged from 1(people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance) to 7 (people would try to be fair), and the third item ranged from 1 (you can't be too careful in dealing with people) to 7 (most people can be trusted). Cronbach's alpha was .78.

Covariates. We included a number of covariates, which have been related to social trust in previous studies: gender, age, relationship status, being a member of an organization, being non-voter (would not vote on the next parliamentary election), working status, educational level (from 1 = no education to 7 =higher education), victim of crime in the past 12 months, and house ownership. We also included two neighborhood characteristics based on the four-digit postal code: neighborhood cultural diversity (Herfindahl index based on the presence of Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, Antilleans, other non-western groups, western groups and the majority group; Herfindahl, 1950) and mean neighborhood income (divided by 10.000 in €).

Results

Preliminary analysis

Preliminary analyses included testing whether items measured their intended latent constructs and whether the assumed measurement model had acceptable fit. This was done to ensure the validity of measured variables. Item loadings should be equal or larger than .5, good model fit was indicated by CFI > .95; Hu and Bentler, 1999, and RMSEA < .07; Steiger, 2007). We used the SEM command in R with robust method. We found a model fit of CFI = .97 and RMSEA = .047 [.045;.050] and all standardized estimates, except that of the secure attachment style (β = .48) were equal or larger .5. In order to rule out a common method bias (all variables were self-reported), we also estimated a single factor solution, which showed a much lower model fit (CFI = .42, RMSEA = .184 [.181;.186]). This indicates that common method variance did not impair the findings of this study (Harman, 1967; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Finally, to ensure that the measured variables were comparable across groups (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998), we examined whether this measurement model was invariant across the two cultural groups. Findings indicated that we could assume measurement invariance across the two cultural groups and that the variables were therefore comparable in analyses based on the mean scores.

Main results

In order to test our first hypothesis that stressors were negatively related to social trust (H1), correlational analyses were performed. As expected, we found significant negative correlations between the three stressors and social trust for the two samples combined (see Total, Table 4.2), as well as in each of the two groups, separately (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2
Correlations of all variables in the majority and the non-western minority group

	Variable	Sample	2	3	4	Social trust
1	Financial distress	Total	.28***	.20***	-.29***	-.21***
		Majority	.30***	.24***	-.32***	-.22***
		Non-western minority	.21***	.14***	-.24***	-.18***
2	Unfair treatment	Total		.09***	-.37***	-.28***
		Majority		.17***	-.39***	-.32***
		Non-western minority		.01	-.35***	-.18***
3	Distrust in political institutions	Total			-.06***	-.32**
		Majority			-.13***	-.32***
		Non-western minority			.05	-.28***
4	Attachment security	Total				.30***
		Majority				.34***
		Non-western minority				.24***

***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05

Next, we were interested in the role of attachment security in affecting social trust. Again, we used correlations to test this. In line with our expectations (H2a), we found that attachment security was positively related to social trust (Table 4.2). Moreover, a hierarchical regression analysis showed that it significantly improved the model explaining social trust above the three stressors ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .001$). Next, we expected that attachment security would buffer against the negative effects of stressors on social trust (H2b). Independent variables were centered prior to conducting a multiple regression analysis including all stressors and attachment security in the first and the interaction terms in the second step. We found, in line with expectations, that the negative effect of distrust in political institutions on social trust was mitigated among individuals with high levels of attachment security (simple slope = -.23, $p < .001$), compared to those with low levels of attachment security (simple slope = -.31, $p < .001$; see Table 4.3 and Figure 4.5). In these analyses, as well as all other analyses, we included all covariates[12].

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[12] Results can be obtained from the first author.

Table 4.3

Regression of social trust on stressors, attachment, group and their interactions

	Dependent variable: Social trust		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Group (1 = majority; 2 = non-western)	-0.12*	-0.13*	-0.13*
	(.05)	(.05)	(.05)
Attachment security	.20***	.23***	.25***
	(.02)	(.02)	(.03)
Financial distress	-.05*	-.04**	-.03
	(.01)	(.01)	(.02)
Unfair treatment	-.14***	-.12***	-.16***
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Distrust in political institutions	-.26***	-.27***	-.27***
	(.02)	(.02)	(.02)
Attachment security x Financial distress		.01	.01
		.01	(.01)
Attachment security x Unfair treatment		-.02	-.02
		(.01)	(.01)
Attachment security x Distrust in political institutions		.04**	.04*
		(.02)	(.02)
Group x Attachment security			-.04
			(.05)
Group x Financial distress			-.02
			(.03)
Group x Unfair treatment			.09**
			(.03)
Group x Distrust in political institutions			.02
			(.03)
Constant	4.93***	4.15***	4.15***
Observations	2649	2649	2649
R^2	.219	.222	0.225
Adjusted R^2	.214	.216	0.218
	38.88***	34.12***	29.36***
F Statistic	(df = 19,2629)	(df = 22,2626)	(df = 26, 2622)

Note: unstandardized coefficients are shown with standard errors in parentheses. Covariates are omitted in the table.

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
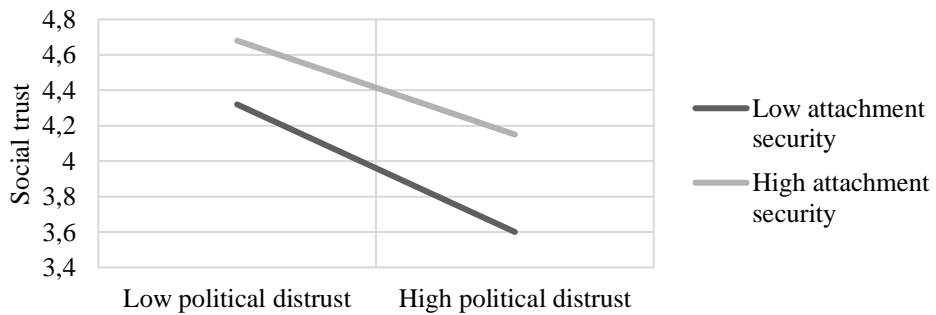
Figure 4.5. Social trust as a function of attachment security and distrust in political institutions.

Why did attachment security buffer against the negative effect of distrust in political institutions on social trust, but not against the detrimental effects of unfair treatment or financial distress? Investigating the correlations between stressors and trust, we could see that attachment security correlated only weakly with distrust in political institutions ($r = -.06$, $p < .001$), but showed medium sized correlations with financial distress ($r = .29$, $p < .001$) and unfair treatment ($r = .37$, $p < .001$). These findings suggest that our data might better fit a mediation model than a moderation model. More specifically, post-hoc analyses showed that 28% of the total effect of attachment security on social trust was indirect, namely through lower levels of financial distress and unfair treatment (representing 8% and 20% of the total effect, respectively[13]). These indirect effects were also significant when we analyzed both groups separately. Thus while attachment security buffered against the negative effects of distrust in political institutions on social trust, attachment security was linked to higher levels of social trust through its negative impact on levels of financial distress and unfair treatment.

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[13] By comparison, only 10% of the total effect of distrust in political institutions on social trust was mediated by financial distress (5%) and unfair treatment (5%). Results can be obtained from the first author.

Minority status

Next, we were interested in differences between the non-western minority and the cultural majority on social trust and the three stressors. We first conducted an ANCOVA with social trust as dependent variable, group as independent variables and all control variables. Social trust was significantly lower among the non-western minority group (H3a; $F(1,2633) = 4.89$, $p = .027$; $M = 3.87$, $SE = .04$) than among the majority group ($M = 3.99$, $SE = .03$). We then conducted a MANCOVA with the three stressors as dependent variables and group as independent variable, again controlling for all covariates. The multivariate result was significant for group, Pillai-Spur= .18, $F(3,2631) = 8.97$, $p < .001$, indicating differences between the majority and the non-western minority group. Univariate testing found the effect to be significant for financial distress ($F(1,2649) = 16.57$, $p < .001$), and unfair treatment ($F(1,2649) = 12.34$, $p < .001$). Marginal means showed that, as expected, the non-western minority group scored and higher on financial distress (H3b; $M = 4.28$, $SE = .05$) and unfair treatment (H3b; $M = 3.48$, $SE = .04$) than the majority ($M = 3.99$, $SE = .04$, $M = 3.27$, $SE = .03$, respectively). There were no significant differences in distrust in political institutions (non-western minority group: $M = 4.73$, $SE = .04$, majority: $M = 4.79$, $SE = .03$).[14]

Next, we tested whether stressors mediated the negative effect of belonging to the non-western minority group on social trust (H3c). We included distrust in political institutions as covariate rather than a mediator, as there were no differences on this variable between the majority and the non-western minority group. Using Hays' (2013) process macro in SPSS with 10.000 bootstrap samples, we found that the direct effect of non-western group on social trust was no longer significant when we included the two mediators financial distress and unfair treatment in the model (see Figure 4.6[15]). More specifically, 43% of the total effect of non-western minority group on social trust

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[14] A separately conducted ANCOVA showed that there were also no significant differences between the two groups on attachment security $F(1,2633) = 2.67$, p = .103; majority = M = 4.58, SE = .03; non-western minority = M = 4.51, SE = .03.

[15] Results can be obtained from the first author.

(-.06, [-.09; -.03]) could be attributed to the indirect effects via financial distress (-.02, [-.04; -.01]; 15% of total effect) and unfair treatment (-.04, [-.06; -.02]; 28% of total effect). There was no difference in the magnitude of indirect effects found for financial distress and unfair treatment, suggesting that they contribute equally to the explanation of lower social trust among the non-western group. In sum, the results show that, in line with our predictions, lower social trust among the non-western group can be attributed to increased levels of stressors compared to the majority.
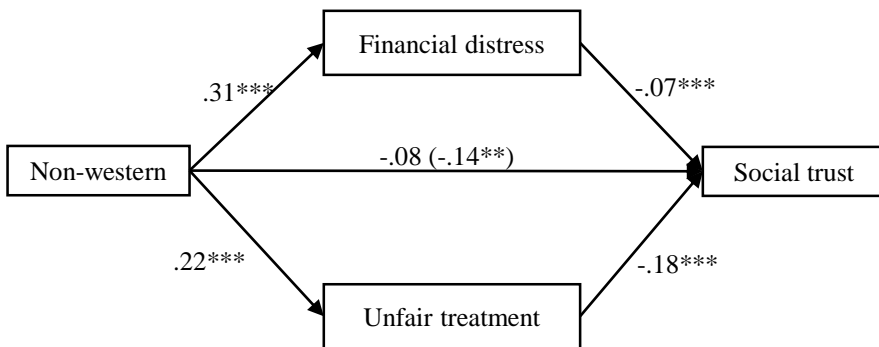
Figure 4.6. The indirect effects of non-western group on social trust via financial distress and unfair treatment.

In a next step, we explored whether the detrimental effects of stressors on social trust were comparably strong among the majority and the non-western minority group, and whether the moderating role of attachment security differed between the groups. To this end, we conducted regression analyses including all independent variables and control variables in the first step, all two-way interaction terms in the second step and the three three-way interaction terms that tested the interaction between each stressor, attachment security and group in the third step.

The data revealed a significant two-way interaction of group membership and unfair treatment on social trust. This finding suggests that the predictive power of unfair treatment with respect to social trust differed for the two groups (see Table 4.3, Model 3). Simple slope analysis showed that the negative effect of unfair treatment on

social trust was stronger for the majority (b = -.17, p < .001) than for the non-western minority group (b = -.08, p < .001). None of the other stressors' effects differed between the two groups[16]. Interestingly, the inclusion of the three-way interactions did not improve the model, implying that the moderating effect of attachment security with respect to the stressor-social trust links did not reliably differ between the majority and the non-western minority group.

Discussion

The present study investigated how stressors and attachment security are related to social trust among members of the non-western minority and the cultural majority. As predicted, we were able to replicate the detrimental effects of financial distress, unfair treatment and distrust in political institutions on social trust (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Lindström & Rosvall, 2016; Zmerli & Newton, 2008). In addition, exploratory analyses showed that high levels of unfair treatment were less detrimental for social trust among the non-western minority group than among the majority group. The results also supported our assumption that attachment security is positively related to social trust. There was partial support for our hypothesis that high levels of attachment security would buffer against negative effects of stressors on social trust. Finally, in line with our predictions, the lower levels of social trust among the non-western group compared to the majority group could be attributed to higher levels of financial distress and unfair treatment. Importantly, our findings were robust to a number of confounding variables at both, the individual level (e.g., employment status; voluntary membership in clubs; relationship status, house ownership) and the neighborhood level (cultural diversity, neighborhood income), thereby underlining the reliability of the results. Below, we will discuss the findings in more detail.

The role of attachment security

In line with our predictions, attachment security buffered against negative effects of distrust in political institutions on social trust. The present study is one of the

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[16] The interaction between attachment security and perceived discrimination was marginally significant, b = .04, p = .0508, when including all interaction terms, rather than only those of interest, as shown in Table 4.3, model 3.

first studies showing that attachment security is linked to social trust and showing buffering effect of attachment security on the relationship between distrust in political institutions and social trust. The latter insight is important since previous research has shown that distrust in political institutions is one of the most influential factors in predicting social trust (Sønderskov & Dinesen, 2015). In various societies there is an increasing proportion of individuals who have lost faith in their political institutions (Armingeon & Guthmann, 2014). Apparently, these individuals can still maintain high levels of social trust when they are securely attached. Moreover, our exploratory analyses revealed that the buffering role of attachment security on the detrimental effects of distrust in political institutions (or the other two stressors) on social trust did not differ between the non-western minority and the majority group. That is, attachment security buffers against the detrimental effect of distrust in political institutions on social trust to a similar extent among members of the two groups[17] and could be a viable route for future research and policy.

Unexpectedly, we did not find that attachment security buffered against the detrimental effects of financial distress and unfair treatment on social trust. We did, however, find an alternative model that better described the interrelations between these variables with social trust. More specifically, our data suggest that lack of attachment security is associated with higher levels of financial distress and unfair treatment, and in that way indirectly impacts on social trust. In other words, those with high levels of attachment security may be less likely to experience financial distress and unfair treatment, because they are able to activate others' support in times of need. Individuals with low levels of attachment security tend to have difficulties in drawing on social support when in need, especially during stressful times (Green, Furrer, & McAllister, 2011). Similarly, attachment security may lower the degree to which individuals appraise situations as stressful, and increase the ability of individuals to actively cope with stressors (Mikulincer & Florian, 1995). For example, while individuals with low attachment security may keep ruminating about why someone had cut them in line in the supermarket, those with a high level of attachment security

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[17] Further support for this is offered through secondary analyses including the majority and the western group, that replicated this effect (results can be retrieved from the first author).

might have instantly reacted to this unfair treatment, for example by telling the person that this was not according to the rules of supermarket waiting lines or by attributing the person's behavior to his or her current predicament (seemed to be in a hurry and did not see me).

Higher stressors among minorities account for lower social trust

The fact that members of the non-western minority scored lower on social trust could be explained by their higher levels on two of our three stressors: unfair treatment and financial distress. Non-western migrants come from cultures with value systems and religions that are often quite different from what they encounter in the host country, causing particularly these immigrants to be discriminated against and feel excluded (Huijnk, Dagevos, Gijsberts, & Andriessen, 2015). Moreover, these individuals may be particularly prone to experience discrimination in the employment market (Nievers & Andriessen, 2010) and are more likely to be at risk of poverty (CBS, 2015). Moreover, it has been shown that the recent economic recession has affected the unemployment rate more detrimentally for this group than for other groups (Huijnk, Gijsberts, & Dagevos, 2014; Wittebrood & Andriessen, 2014). It should be noted in this context that the questionnaire was only provided in Dutch; people who did not possess sufficient levels of Dutch language proficiency could not participate. One could speculate that individuals with very low or no Dutch language abilities would show even lower levels of social trust, because they are less integrated in Dutch society, but this needs further investigation.

Our findings are partly in line with those of a study conducted by de Vroome and colleagues (2013), who did not find that socioeconomic factors (such as financial distress) explained why non-western minority members had lower levels of social trust than the majority. Our studies differed in that we *also* measured unfair treatment in the majority group, while de Vroome and colleagues had measured discrimination *only* among the non-western groups. It is therefore likely that unfair treatment was the missing link explaining social trust differences between the non-western minority group and the majority. Indeed, post-hoc analyses of our data showed that a model with the single mediator financial distress could not fully account for lower levels of social trust among the non-western minority group. This suggests that unfair treatment is

crucial for understanding why non-western minority members have lower social trust than the majority.

At the same time, our data reveal that the impact of unfair treatment on social trust is stronger for the majority group. Apparently, if majority members experience unfair treatment, they tend to respond with a stronger decrease of social trust. A possible explanation for this is that the expectation of having to face unfair treatment may be higher among members of the non-western minority group, whose reactions are consequently less negative than that of majority members. Another possibility is that, even though we showed that from a measurement point of view all latent variables under investigation were functioning in the same way across the two groups (the variables were invariant across the two cultural groups), unfair treatment might carry a different meaning for the non-western minority group than for the majority group. More specifically, research has shown that when unfair treatment can be attributed to group characteristics (e.g., belonging to a non-western minority group), rather to one's personal attributes, this can alleviate otherwise detrimental effects (Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991). Thus, such difference in attribution might account for the lower impact of unfair treatment on minority participants 'social trust.

Practical implications and future research

The present attempt to model the relations between stressors, attachment security and social trust among the non-western minority group and the majority group elicits numerous practical implications. For example, lower levels of social trust among the non-western minority require interventions aimed at improving personal financial behaviors and coping with unfair treatment (Prawitz & Cohart, 2014). However, Dutch policies have moved away from targeting specific minority groups and instead rely on general policy instruments (Bijl & Verweij, 2012). We therefore propose that instead of targeting specific stressors among specific groups, general policy instruments aimed at increasing attachment security should come into focus.

Our findings suggest that the non-western minority group and the majority group do not differ in their levels of attachment security, and that attachment security is positively related to social trust, thus providing some foundation of such a general

policy approach. Various ways of boosting attachment security have been identified. For example, it has been shown that supporting young parents early on in caring for their children increases the likelihood that these children develop high levels of attachment security (Bakermans-Kranenburg, Van Ijzendoorn, & Juffer, 2003). Thus, the existing maternity care in the Netherlands, which reaches about 95% of all mothers, could be adjusted in order to increase parental sensitivity, an important predictor of attachment security. Moreover, researchers have successfully induced a sense of attachment security, both implicitly and explicitly, among adults in experimental settings, even among individuals with low attachment security, with positive and sometimes prolonged positive effects on various outcome variables, such as compassion and altruistic behavior, authenticity, intergroup relations and creative problem-solving (Gillath, Sesko, Shaver, & Chun, 2010; Mikulincer, Shaver, Gillath, & Nitzberg, 2005; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Mikulincer, Shaver, & Rom, 2011). Organizations could review existing policies in order to identify possibilities for boosting attachment security, such as providing a support network in case individuals face distress or create opportunities to assist others in need (Gillath, Shaver, & Mikulincer, 2005).

Future research should investigate the robustness of the link between attachment security and social trust. For example, apart from replicating the current findings in cross-sectional studies, researchers should conduct longitudinal studies about the effects of attachment and attachment interventions on social trust and other constructs related to social capital. Moreover, experimental studies, such as reviewed by Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) could help to examine whether boosting attachment security could have positive consequences for social trust, in the short and the long term. Considering all these implications, this study provides a promising starting point, even though more research, and especially long-term studies are needed in order to fully understand the role of attachment security for social trust, as "one of the most important synthetic forces within society" (Simmel, 1950, p. 318).

Chapter

5

General Discussion

More than ever before people are crossing borders to live abroad, either temporarily or as permanent members of the receiving society. While for some individuals intercultural adjustment is easily accomplished, for others intercultural transition and life in another country pose a serious threat to their well-being. In recent decades, psychological research has increasingly focused on identifying traits and competencies that are either conducive or detrimental to intercultural adjustment (Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, & Sam, 2011; Kosic, 2006; Wilson, Ward, & Fischer, 2013). In this context, the present doctoral thesis focused on the role of *attachment security* (Bowlby, 1969, 1980) for intercultural adjustment. Extensive evidence with regard to attachment security's beneficial role for psychosocial functioning has been provided among non-migrants (for an overview see Mikulincer & Shaver, 2010). More recently, it has been shown that high levels of attachment security may also be beneficial for adjustment to living in another culture (Polek, Wöhrle, & Van Oudenhoven, 2010; Sochos & Diniz, 2012; Van der Zee, Ali, & Haaksma, 2007). Notwithstanding this research, overall still relatively little is known about the impact of attachment security on intercultural adjustment.

More specifically, this dissertation includes three cross-sectional survey studies addressing the following issues: (1) the role of attachment in adolescent sojourners' intercultural adjustment in two phases of the sojourn, being abroad and upon reentry, (2) adult immigrants' adjustment in the work setting and in society, (3) the specific role of attachment security in comparison to other individual difference variables like self-esteem, intercultural traits, and mindfulness in predicting adjustment, and (4) the buffering role of attachment security against the detrimental consequences of stressors on adjustment. This final chapter starts with a summary of the main findings, followed by a discussion of these four issues, incorporating suggestions for future research, and lastly, a conclusion.

Summary of the main findings

Chapter 2 investigated the role of attachment security for adolescents' intercultural adjustment in two phases of a yearlong sojourn, while abroad and upon reentry. Results showed that attachment styles, with the exception of the dismissing attachment style, were significantly and in expected ways related to social adjustment

and psychological adjustment in both phases. Moreover, attachment styles explained psychological and social adjustment upon reentry and social adjustment abroad, above intercultural traits. When comparing the impact of all variables simultaneously, including intercultural traits and dispositional mindfulness, the preoccupied attachment style was the best predictor of reentry social adjustment, and the secure attachment style was an important predictor of social adjustment abroad. Attachment styles were less relevant for psychological adjustment. More potent predictors of psychological adjustment were individual difference factors that are typically aligned with the stress and coping framework of intercultural adjustment, such as the intercultural trait of emotional stability and dispositional mindfulness. Finally, while most research on attachment styles and intercultural adjustment had focused on adults, such as university students or expats, chapter 2 of this thesis showed that the theoretical underpinnings of attachment security are also applicable to understanding intercultural adjustment of adolescent sojourners.

Chapter 3 focused on the significance of attachment security for adjustment among immigrants and members of the cultural majority in a work context. Adjustment at the workplace was operationalized as workplace trust. Unexpectedly, we did not find lower levels of adjustment at the workplace among first-generation immigrant employees compared to cultural majority employees. However, on two dimensions of workplace trust, trust in colleagues and trust in the supervisor, first-generation employees scored lower than second-generation employees. While attachment security was the best predictor of adjustment at the workplace among cultural majority- and second-generation employees, self-esteem best predicted adjustment among first-generation employees.

The findings of *Chapter 4* revealed lower levels of adjustment in society among non-western immigrants as compared to the cultural majority. Adjustment in society was operationalized as social trust, which can be understood as generalized trust towards others in society. The differences in adjustment in society could mostly be attributed to the fact that non-western immigrants faced higher levels of unfair treatment. Attachment security was positively related to adjustment in society in both groups. As expected, attachment security buffered against the detrimental impact of distrust in political institutions on social trust in both groups. In other words,

individuals' social trust was less affected by distrust in political institutions when they had high scores on attachment security. Lastly, attachment security influenced adjustment in society indirectly, by reducing financial distress and unfair treatment, again in both studied groups.

Adjustment abroad and upon reentry

Some scholars describe reentry as the most significant phase of the sojourn, as it sets the stage for the integration of experiences of having lived abroad (La Brack & Bathurst, 2012; Szkudlarek, 2010). At the same time, some authors have suggested that reentry could be linked to psychological difficulties (Uehara, 1986; Wielkiewicz & Turkowski, 2010). In line with the latter argument, we found in chapter 2 that adolescents who had returned from a stay abroad showed lower levels of psychological adjustment than adolescents who were, at the time of the study, staying abroad.

A possible explanation for higher levels of psychological adjustment while being abroad than during reentry can be found in results derived from post-hoc analyses not previously reported[18]. More specifically, higher levels of dispositional mindfulness among adolescent sojourners abroad partially explained their higher levels of psychological adjustment compared with adolescents who had returned from a stay abroad. This finding is especially interesting, given that the individuals in the two phases of the sojourn did not differ on any of the four attachment styles and the five intercultural traits. To our knowledge, our study is the first investigating the role of attachment, intercultural traits, and mindfulness in adjustment abroad and upon reentry. Therefore, we can only speculate about the processes involved. A possible explanation for higher levels of mindfulness among abroadees is that daily routines originating in the social setting of the home culture are of limited value in the host culture, thus fostering mindful processing of information, which could foster psychological well-being.

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[18] A mediation model was tested with psychological adjustment as dependent variable (y), group as independent variable (x) and dispositional mindfulness as mediator, and gender as covariate. The total effect of x on y was $b = .26$, $se = .06$ $p < .001$, the direct effect of x on y was $b = .17$, $se = .05$, $p < .001$ and the indirect effect was $b = .08$ with 95% confidence interval ranging from .03 to .14. The number of bootstrap samples for bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals was 5000.

Based on these findings, it seems important for exchange organizations and adolescents involved in study abroad programs to be wary of psychological difficulties upon reentry. Possibly, further efforts need to be taken, such as reentry programs, interviews and counseling in order to overcome such reentry challenges (Young, 2014). Yet, seeking help might not be a prominent course of action, especially among those who are returning and are in need of help (Gaw, 2000). However, before drawing definite conclusions, these findings need to be replicated, ideally in a longitudinal design, and among students of different nationalities.

Immigrants' adjustment in the work setting

In line with expectations, findings of chapter 3 showed that first-generation immigrant employees had lower levels of workplace trust than second-generation immigrant employees. Surprisingly, first-generation immigrant employees did not show lower levels of adjustment at the workplace than cultural majority employees did. To our knowledge, this is the first study to investigate whether different generations of immigrant- and cultural majority employees differ in their levels of workplace adjustment. Compared with first-generation employees, second-generation immigrant employees have higher levels of workplace adjustment, possibly due to a better knowledge of the language as well as cultural scripts. The lack of differences in workplace adjustment compared with the cultural majority is surprising, because first-generation immigrants face discrimination even during job applications (Alba & Foner, 2015), and are more likely than the cultural majority to be exposed to bullying (Bergbom, Vartia-Vaananen, & Kinnunen, 2015). The lack of differences in adjustment at work between first-generation immigrant employees and cultural majority employees suggests that employment might indeed be a viable path for integration of immigrants.

Regarding the lack of differences in adjustment at work between first-generation immigrant employees and cultural majority employees it is important to note that most of the immigrant employees had a western background. Members of the western minority are culturally closer to the cultural majority than non-western minorities, and are less likely to face obstacles, such as language difficulties or discrimination that could hamper their adjustment (Huijnk, Dagevos, Gijsberts, & Andriessen, 2015; Nievers & Andriessen, 2010; Wittebrood & Andriessen, 2014). In

survey data from employees who had recently voluntarily quit their job at the Dutch government, Hofhuis, van der Zee and Otten (2014) found that non-western immigrant employees (first- and second generation combined) more often reported a lack of career opportunities and difficulties with colleagues and supervisors than majority employees. Possibly, significant differences between first-generation immigrant and majority employees can be found when focusing on minority employees with a non-western background. Unfortunately, due to the small number of employees with a non-western cultural background, this could not be tested. Future research involving a larger number of western and non-western immigrant employees is needed in order to test whether the distinction is meaningful for predicting adjustment in the work setting.

Immigrants' adjustment in society

In line with our expectations and with previous research, we did find lower levels of adjustment in society among non-western immigrants than among cultural majority members, as exemplified by lower levels of social trust (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Arends & Schmeets, 2015; de Vroome, Hooghe, & Marien, 2013). Social trust is key to a number of desirable societal processes, such as volunteering, donations to charities (Sønderskov, 2010; Uslaner, 2002), and paying taxes (Scholz & Lubell, 1998). Countries with higher levels of trust show higher levels of economic growth (Knack & Keefer, 1997) and effective government (Tavits, 2006) than countries with low social trust. Low levels of social trust among members of the cultural minority may result in lower participation in the new society as well as increased distancing behaviors and attitudes with respect to the cultural majority. This process of distancing may relate to the tensions between cultural minorities and the cultural majority, which are considered the most significant current societal problem (Vrooman, Gijsberts, & Boelhouwer, 2014).

Because of the benefits of high levels of social trust, and the lack of social trust among cultural minority groups, it is important for countries to foster social trust and to minimize processes that could deteriorate it. The findings of this thesis suggest that an important reason for lower levels of social trust among non-western immigrants is that they face relatively high levels of unfair treatment. Thus, in order to increase adjustment and enhance their level of social trust, efforts to reduce this stressor among

non-western immigrants seem necessary. Of course, due to the cross-sectional design of our study, this should first be investigated in longitudinal designs.

The specific role of attachment security in predicting adjustment in comparison to other individual difference variables

In the introduction chapter, we proposed that individuals with high levels of attachment security would be more likely to succeed in intercultural adjustment than individuals with low levels of attachment security. High levels of attachment security may help individuals to adjust in intercultural settings through being better able to manage distress (e.g., the stress and coping framework) and social encounters (e.g., culture learning / broaden and build cycle of attachment security). All studies presented in this thesis tested and found, in line with this proposition, that higher levels of attachment security were linked to higher levels of intercultural adjustment. To begin with, the findings of chapter 2 showed that attachment styles are relevant for adjustment of adolescent sojourners in two phases of the sojourn. Pursuing this further, chapter 3 and 4 also underlined the relevance of attachment security for adjustment of immigrants in the work context and in society.

In order to examine the usefulness of the attachment framework in predicting intercultural adjustment, this thesis tested the added value of attachment security with respect to individual difference variables that have previously been linked to adjustment outcomes: self-esteem, intercultural traits and dispositional mindfulness. On the whole, compared to these other individual difference dimensions, attachment was the most or among the most relevant individual difference variables for explaining adolescent sojourners' social adjustment (chapter 2), as well as adjustment at the workplace among second-generation immigrant employees and cultural majority employees (chapter 3).

In some cases, however, attachment was not a significant predictor of adjustment and alternative individual difference approaches appeared to be more relevant. For example, the intercultural trait of emotional stability and dispositional mindfulness were clearly better suited to explain psychological adjustment of sojourners compared to attachment security. This finding contradicts previous research linking attachment security closely to psychological indicators of well-being of non-

migrants (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2010; Van IJzendoorn & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 1996) and to indicators of psychological adjustment of immigrants (e.g., Bakker, Van Oudenhoven, & Van der Zee, 2004; Polek et al., 2010). It is however consistent with evidence revealing that factors related to the stress and coping framework (e.g., emotional stability) can outperform the explanatory power of attachment security (Bakker et al., 2004; Van der Zee et al., 2007).

Among first-generation immigrant employees, self-esteem rather than attachment security was the strongest predictor of workplace trust. Even though this finding was surprising, a study by Van Oudenhoven and Van der Zee (2002) among native and foreign university students had similarly found that self-efficacy, a concept closely related to self-esteem (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998), was more important for foreign students' adjustment than for native students' adjustment.

The role of attachment security in different groups

It has previously been shown that attachment security is positively related to indicators of adjustment among non-migrants and immigrants (Bakker, Van Oudenhoven, & Van der Zee, 2004; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2010; Polek et al., 2010). The question of whether attachment security is similarly important for both groups has rarely been addressed. Our analyses in chapter 3 and 4 included distinctions between multiple subgroups of immigrants, for example first- and second- generation immigrants and immigrants with western or non-western cultural backgrounds. The findings of chapters 3 and 4, as well as additional post-hoc analyses of the data of

chapter 4[19] showed that attachment security was *equally relevant* for explaining adjustment among members of the cultural majority as well as second-generation immigrants. Going in more depth, the post-hoc analyses of the data of chapter 4 also allowed us to investigate whether attachment security was especially important among second-generation non-western immigrants (who had lower levels of adjustment than members of the cultural majority), second-generation western immigrants (who had the same level of adjustment as members of the cultural majority) or members of the cultural majority. This was not the case. This finding is in line with a study by Alonso-Arbiol, Abubakar and van de Vijver (2014) who found that attachment security positively influenced well-being to the same degree among Dutch majority and Moroccan (mostly) second- generation immigrant adolescents (Moroccan immigrants belong to the group of non-western immigrants). It seems therefore likely that attachment security functions quite similar with respect to adjustment among individuals who have grown up in the Netherlands, and regardless of whether they have a western or non-western immigration background.

In sum, attachment security seems likely to similarly influence adjustment among members of the cultural majority and second-generation immigrants. What about comparisons with the first-generation immigrants? The answer to this question is not as straightforward. In chapter 3, attachment security was *less* important for explaining adjustment among first-generation immigrants than among second-generation immigrants and members of the cultural majority. Results of chapter 4 did

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[19] The post-hoc analyses investigated whether attachment security was similarly important for adjustment in society for the five groups: majority members, first-generation western, first-generation non-western, second-generation western and second-generation non-western immigrants. The analyses involved multiple regression analyses conducted in Hayes' (2012) PROCESS syntax, involving all covariates used in chapter 4, with attachment security as independent variable, social trust as dependent variable and with a categorical variable "origin" defining the five different cultural groups, as multicategorical moderator. The unstandardized regression coefficient for the cultural majority was $b = .37$ (.03), for the second-generation western immigrants $b = .30$ (.05), second-generation non-western immigrants $b = .29$ (.05), for the first-generation western immigrants $b = .44$ (.05), and for the first-generation non-western immigrants $b = .18$ (.05); standard errors in brackets, all p's $< .001$. The regression coefficient for the first-generation western immigrants was significantly larger than all other regression coefficient; the regression coefficient for first-generation non-western immigrants was significantly smaller than all other regression coefficients.

not find a difference in the role of attachment security for adjustment between non-western immigrants and members of the cultural majority. Results of post-hoc analyses of chapter 4's data revealed however, that the role of attachment security was the *weakest* among non-western first-generation immigrants, yet *strongest* for first-generation western immigrants. A possible explanation for this finding is that levels of social trust are usually lower in non-western countries than in western countries. The Netherlands is a high-trust country (Bjørnskov, 2007), which allows citizens to extent trust beyond close-knit family ties. The different levels of social trust of western and non-western countries might impact whether trust on the micro-level (attachment security) extents towards others (social trust). More research is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn.

The studies in this dissertation are, to the best of our knowledge, the first to test whether the importance of attachment security in explaining adjustment differs between immigrants from different generations and cultural backgrounds and members of the cultural majority. On the one hand, the results suggest that attachment security might be similarly important for adjustment of individuals who have grown up in the Netherlands, but on the other hand, they do not show a clear pattern when it comes to first-generation immigrants. It seems possible that differences in the role of attachment security for adjustment among different immigrant groups (e.g., western vs. non-western) are visible especially in first-generation immigrants, when the culture of their country of origin still influences individuals. For children of immigrants already born in the Netherlands, the cultural influences in the attachment-adjustment link might have disappeared. Together, these findings underline the benefits of studying alternative explanations and different populations in order to understand the role of attachment security for intercultural adjustment. These investigations have helped us better understand the added value of attachment security vis-a-vis other explanatory frameworks, while they have also helped to identify situations in which the influence of attachment security on intercultural adjustment is weak or even negligible.

The buffering hypothesis

One of the predictions of the research in this thesis was that high levels of attachment security may facilitate adjustment by reducing the negative impact of

stressors, such as financial distress, unfair treatment and distrust in political institutions. The data supported this prediction for distrust in political institutions, which is an important stressor linked to lower levels of social trust. That is, individuals with high distrust in political institutions tend to distrust other individuals in society. However, this distrust in political institutions most strongly translates into lower trust in others among individuals with low levels of attachment security, and less so among individuals with high levels of attachment security. This finding is in line with previous research showing that attachment security buffers against otherwise detrimental effects of stressors (Sochos & Diniz, 2012; Vanheule & Declercq, 2009). In line with a study by Sochos and Diniz' (2012) about the buffering role of attachment security in the relation between sociocultural difficulties and psychological distress among Brazilian immigrants living in the UK, our findings show that high levels of attachment security should be regarded as a helpful intrapersonal resource of immigrants in dealing with stressors.

Interestingly, the findings of chapter 4 also provide preliminary evidence for an indirect model, with attachment security promoting adjustment by reducing the levels of the two remaining stressors, financial distress and unfair treatment. This suggests that besides a direct link between attachment security and adjustment, and a buffering function of attachments security, there may also be an indirect pathway such that high levels of attachment lead to lower levels of stressors, which in turn lead to higher levels of adjustment.

It is important to note that the results showed that the buffering role as well as the indirect role of attachment security hold for both the cultural majority and immigrants. The findings thus support the idea that attachment security may protect both majority members and immigrants against the negative effects of stressors, by reducing their impact on adjustment (buffering effect) and by lowering levels of stressors (indirect effect). This is especially important for immigrants, as they show lower scores on social trust the members of the cultural majority.

Practical implications and future research

A number of practical implications can be derived from the findings presented in this doctoral thesis. Firstly, scores on attachment security can be used during

selection procedures. For example, exchange organizations could offer adolescents with low scores on attachment security additional support during and following their stay abroad. Similarly, potential employees' scores on attachment security could be useful for employers. Low scores on attachment security could entail providing special attention to an employee who might find it hard to trust coworkers, the supervisor or the employing organization itself. Moreover, employers could align policies to create environments in which attachment security can grow, for example, by providing employees with reliable, competent and ideally securely attached supervisors, and with an efficient support network (Gillath, Shaver, & Mikulincer, 2005). Employers of first-generation immigrants should pay attention to low scores on self-esteem, as this trait may be more informative with regard to low workplace trust than low scores on attachment security. Consequently, increased support should be offered to these employees with the goal of increasing self-esteem.

On the societal level, findings show positive links between attachment security and social trust for members of the cultural majority as well as for non-western immigrants. Therefore, it seems that that increasing individuals' attachment security should be viewed as beneficial for the greater good of society. One of the possibilities to achieve this is to extend existing care of young parents early on in caring for their children, which could increase children's attachment security (Bakermans-Kranenburg, Van Ijzendoorn, & Juffer, 2003). There is also evidence that attachment security can be increased in experimental designs, for example by priming attachment security. These induced boosts to attachment security can have positive and lasting consequences for individuals (Gillath, Sesko, Shaver, & Chun, 2010; Mikulincer, Shaver, & Rom, 2011).

The studies reported in this doctoral thesis investigated the role of attachment security for intercultural adjustment and pointed to a number of promising directions for future research. First, regarding sojourners, future research could investigate whether host family members' capacity of providing a secure base and safe haven (e.g., as indicated by their attachment styles) influences the host students' adjustment. For example, adolescents placed in families with overall higher levels of attachment security could be better able to adjust than adolescents placed in families with lower overall levels of attachment security. Moreover, for some children, transitions from

challenging circumstances to more nourishing circumstances could increase levels of attachment security (McLaughlin, Zeanah, Fox, & Nelson, 2012).

Second, researchers could investigate more closely the role of attachment security at the workplace. One important avenue of future research would be to further clarify whether attachment security may help employees in organizations to better deal with adverse contextual factors, such as unfairness or bullying and how attachment security could influence desired outcomes For example, Simmons and colleagues (2009) showed that high levels of employees' attachment security were positively related to supervisor-rated performance through increased levels of trust in the supervisor. Moreover, it would be interesting to investigate the processes linking attachment security to workplace trust and other indicators of adjustment at work. Do high levels of attachment security increase adjustment by reducing stress, by increasing the social support network, or by both?

Third, future studies may investigate how attributes of welfare states could influence attachment security of their inhabitants. Attachment theory posits that attachment security is likely to develop when attachment figures provide a safe haven to return to in times of distress and a secure base that allows for exploration. The benefits of attachment figures, other than humans, such as God (Granqvist, Mikulincer, Gewirtz, & Shaver, 2012) and pets (Zilcha-Mano, Mikulincer, & Shaver, 2011) have started to accumulate, and it could be interesting to examine whether such properties could also be attributed to modalities of welfare states. For example, it could be investigated whether objective and subjective country-level variables can function as indicators of a safe haven/ secure base. These variables could be unemployment benefits, maternity and paternity leave, citizens' sense of security, and trust in government and social trust. A hypothesis would be that nation states providing a high level of the safe haven/secure base function would bring about higher levels of attachment security in the next generation.

Finally, we suggest pursuing other lines of research investigating whether attachment security can be increased. Even though the working models underlying attachment security have found to be moderately stable (Baldwin & Fehr, 1995; Davila, Burge, & Hammen, 1997; Kirkpatrick & Hazan, 1994; Scharfe & Bartholomew, 1994; Sroufe, Egeland, Carlson, & Collins, 2005; Weinfield, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004),

there has always also been an emphasis on the malleability of these working models and attachment security, more generally (Bowlby, 1973, 1980; Collins & Read, 1990; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). For example, future research could investigate whether increasing attachment security through priming procedures (e.g., Gillath et al., 2008), does have positive short or long-term effects on intercultural adjustment outcomes. On the long run, such research can provide the necessary information to tailor successful interventions to enhance intercultural adjustment.

Conclusion

The findings presented in this thesis show that attachment theory offers a fruitful framework for understanding intercultural adjustment. Based on the attachment theoretical framework and on previous research, we predicted and found that securely attached individuals are better able to adjust than insecurely attached individuals. This was evident for adolescents, as well as adults in two different contexts. For adolescent sojourners, attachment security might be especially important for social adjustment during the stay abroad and upon reentry. Attachment security may explain employees' adjustment at work, but mostly among those who have grown up in the country (second-generation immigrants and cultural majority members), and less so for those who have grown up in other countries (first-generation immigrants), whose adjustment is better predicted by their levels of self-esteem. Finally, this thesis also shows how attachment security might increase adjustment in society, namely by reducing the negative impact of stressors (e.g., distrust in political institutions) or indirectly, by reducing the extent individuals experience stressors (e.g., financial distress and unfair treatment). Although still preliminary, our findings suggest that attachment is a relevant variable in intercultural adjustment, and should be considered in future interventions in the field.

Dutch summary | Nederlandse samenvatting

Zekere gehechtheid en interculturele aanpassing

Steeds meer mensen vertrekken tijdelijk of definitief naar een ander land, voor studie, werk, of bijvoorbeeld als vluchteling. De aanpassing aan de nieuwe culturele omgeving verloopt niet altijd soepel. De redenen hiervoor zijn divers. Belangrijke factoren die interculturele aanpassing kunnen beïnvloeden, zijn onder andere de geschiedenis van een land met betrekking tot immigratie, het immigratiebeleid, de wetgeving en de houding van burgers ten opzichte van immigranten en culturele minderheden. Daarnaast suggereert recent onderzoek dat naast de maatschappelijke en sociale context, persoonlijkheidsdimensies van invloed zijn op hoe effectief individuen zich aanpassen aan een nieuwe cultuur. In dit proefschrift staat de vraag centraal welke betekenis een zekere gehechtheid heeft als mogelijke voorspeller van interculturele aanpassing. Zekere gehechtheid is gedefinieerd als een oriëntatie op relaties die gekenmerkt is door een hoge mate van autonomie en exploratie.

De oorsprong van een zekere gehechtheid ligt in de vroege ervaringen van baby's met hun moeder en vader, of met andere zogenoemde hechtingsfiguren (Bowlby, 1969). De ontwikkeling van een zekere gehechtheid is vooral afhankelijk van hoe betrouwbaar en effectief hechtingsfiguren zijn ingegaan op de behoeften van de baby. Als kinderen ouder worden raken deze ervaringen geworteld in hun belevingswereld. Vervolgens blijft de mate van zekere gehechtheid relatief stabiel gedurende het latere leven. Er zijn twee aspecten die kenmerkend zijn voor een zekere gehechtheid. Ten eerste ervaren individuen die zeker gehecht zijn *zichzelf* als waardevol omdat zij positieve ervaringen hebben in de omgang met anderen. Ten tweede hebben ze een positieve oriëntatie op *anderen*. Dat wil zeggen dat ze erop vertrouwen dat anderen er voor hen zullen zijn als zij hulp nodig hebben. Onderzoek laat zien dat een zekere gehechtheid samenhangt met positieve uitkomsten. Individuen die zeker gehecht zijn, zijn in vergelijking met individuen die onzeker gehecht zijn vaker tevreden en gelukkig en kunnen beter met stress omgaan. Ze staan meer open voor nieuwe ervaringen en zijn meer geneigd compassie te tonen voor anderen en een goed functionerend sociaal netwerk te hebben. Er bestaat echter nog weinig onderzoek naar het belang van zekere gehechtheid voor interculturele aanpassing. Dit is verrassend, omdat de transitie naar een nieuwe culturele omgeving in sociaal opzicht

stressvol kan zijn. Zij betekent immers dat bestaande contacten worden onderbroken en nieuwe contacten moeten worden opgebouwd. De zekere gehechtheid van een individu lijkt juist in dit soort situaties van belang. Het doel van het huidige proefschrift is daarom om meer inzicht te krijgen in de rol van de zekere gehechtheid voor interculturele aanpassing. Hieronder worden de resultaten van de drie empirische studies van dit proefschrift gepresenteerd. Tenslotte worden de belangrijkste conclusies en een aantal theoretische en praktische implicaties besproken.

Aanpassing tijdens en na verblijf in het buitenland

Eerder onderzoek naar de ervaringen van jongeren (en volwassenen) die voor een bepaalde tijd naar het buitenland gaan, heeft zich vooral gericht op de fase van verblijf in het buitenland. Er is veel minder bekend over aanpassing na terugkeer. Dat is opmerkelijk. Wetenschappers schrijven aan deze fase juist een bijzondere rol toe, omdat in de tijd na terugkeer veel van de ervaringen in het buitenland worden verwerkt en geïntegreerd in het zelfbeeld. In deze studie worden twee belangrijke dimensies van aanpassing onderzocht: sociale en psychologische aanpassing. Sociale aanpassing geeft aan in hoeverre individuen steun door anderen ervaren. Psychologische aanpassing verwijst naar hoe gelukkig ze zijn.

Een belangrijke bevinding van deze studie is dat de groep van internationale scholieren die na een jaar in het buitenland naar hun thuisland terugkeert een hoge mate van sociale aanpassing laat zien in vergelijking met een groep van internationale scholieren die tijdens het onderzoek nog in het buitenland verbleef. Uit de resultaten bleek echter ook dat de terugkeerders minder gelukkig zijn. Eerder onderzoek toonde al aan dat individuen die terugkeren vaak klachten rapporteren als een hoge mate van verdriet, identiteitsconflicten, angst en depressie. Het lijkt erop dat het naar-huis-komen na een langdurig buitenlands verblijf inderdaad stressvol is. Dit is iets waar uitwisselingsorganisaties meer aandacht aan kunnen besteden. De resultaten van dit onderzoek laten zien dat de zekere gehechtheid vooral belangrijk is voor het verklaren van *sociale* aanpassing. Ze blijkt minder belangrijk voor de *psychologische* aanpassing dan andere persoonlijkheidsdimensies, zoals mindfulness en de interculturele eigenschap emotionele stabiliteit.

Aanpassing op de werkvloer

Onderzoekers en beleidsmakers benadrukken al lang het belang van werk voor de integratie van immigranten in de samenleving. In hoofdstuk 3 wordt ingegaan op de vraag of zekere gehechtheid van belang is voor aanpassing op de werkvloer. Immigranten van de eerste generatie werden daarbij vergeleken met de immigranten van de tweede generatie en de culturele meerderheid. In dit onderzoek gaan we ervan uit dat werknemers in verschillende organisaties succesvol zijn aangepast als ze een hoge mate van *vertrouwen op de werkvloer* (vertrouwen in collega's, vertrouwen in de leidinggevende, vertrouwen in de organisatie) hebben. Vertrouwen op de werkvloer levert enerzijds een positieve bijdrage aan de productiviteit en betrokkenheid van werknemers; anderzijds draagt zij bij aan het sociaal klimaat en de economische groei van de organisatie.

Tegen onze verwachting in laten de resultaten van dit onderzoek zien dat eerstegeneratie immigranten niet minder vertrouwen op de werkvloer ervaren dan de culturele meerderheid, maar wel minder dan tweedegeneratie immigranten. De resultaten laten verder zien dat zekere gehechtheid de belangrijkste voorspeller is van vertrouwen op de werkvloer voor zowel leden van de meerderheid als voor tweedegeneratie immigranten. Daarentegen vinden we voor de eerstegeneratie immigranten dat zelfwaardering de belangrijkste voorspeller is van hun vertrouwen op de werkvloer.

Aanpassing in de samenleving

De derde en laatste studie richt zich op de rol van zekere gehechtheid voor aanpassing in de samenleving. Vergelijkbaar met het onderzoek uit hoofdstuk 3, maar nu gericht op de bredere bevolking, gaan we er in deze studie van uit dat aanpassing in de samenleving gelukt is wanneer mensen een hoge mate aan sociaal vertrouwen ervaren. Sociaal vertrouwen betekent vertrouwen in de medemens, wat een belangrijke rol speelt in maatschappelijke processen, zoals economische groei en de ontwikkeling van sociale samenhang tussen mensen en groepen mensen in de maatschappij.

Net als eerder onderzoek laten de resultaten van de huidige studie een lager sociaal vertrouwen zien onder de groep niet-westerse immigranten in vergelijking met de culturele meerderheid. Bovendien laten de resultaten zien dat deze verschillen in

sociaal vertrouwen in elk geval deels te verklaren zijn door de versterkte aanwezigheid van stressvolle ervaringen, zoals financiële problemen en vooral oneerlijke behandeling door anderen. Het onderzoek suggereert dat zeker gehechte mensen minder stress ervaren en (mede daardoor) een hoger sociaal vertrouwen hebben. Mensen met een hoge mate van zekere gehechtheid ervaren minder financiële problemen en oneerlijke behandeling door anderen dan mensen met een lage mate van zekere gehechtheid, hetgeen vervolgens weer samenhangt met een hogere mate van sociaal vertrouwen. De laatste bevinding van deze studie is dat zekere gehechtheid, zoals verwacht, de negatieve invloed van stress – dit keer in de vorm van wantrouwen in politieke instellingen - op sociaal vertrouwen kan verzachten. Dat wil zeggen dat een hoge mate van wantrouwen in politieke instellingen zich over het algemeen manifesteert in een lager sociaal vertrouwen, maar dat dat niet of veel minder geldt voor individuen met een zekere gehechtheid.

Conclusie

Samengevat laten de empirische resultaten in dit proefschrift zien dat zekere gehechtheid een belangrijke variabele is voor het voorspellen van interculturele aanpassing. De bevindingen sluiten goed aan bij de verwachtingen die voortkomen uit de de hechtingstheorie. In overeenstemming met theorie en eerder onderzoek, tonen de resultaten van dit proefschrift aan dat een hoge mate van zekere gehechtheid voordelig is voor psychologische en vooral ook sociale aanpassing. Alhoewel de toepassing van de hechtingstheorie in onderzoek naar interculturele aanpassing nog in haar beginfase is, duiden de huidige bevindingen erop dat immigranten en internationale scholieren beter om kunnen gaan met stressvolle ervaringen, succesvoller zijn in het mobiliseren en in stand houden van sociale steun en meer sociaal vertrouwen hebben naarmate zij zekerder gehecht zijn. Verder geven de resultaten van dit proefschrift een belangrijke aanvulling op de bestaande literatuur over de rol van zekere gehechtheid voor interculturele aanpassing. Zo blijkt dat zekere hechting in bepaalde contexten een betere voorspeller van aanpassing is dan andere persoonlijkheidseigenschappen, en dat zij kan helpen om stressoren te voorkomen of de invloed ervan te verzachten. Deze bevindingen helpen enerzijds om situaties te identificeren waarin een zekere gehechtheid van belang is. Anderzijds geven zij inzicht in het onderlinge proces dat

verantwoordelijk is voor de positieve invloed van zekere gehechtheid op interculturele aanpassing.

De bevindingen van dit proefschrift hebben een aantal praktische implicaties. Ten eerste kan diagnostiek op zekere gehechtheid onderdeel vormen van selectieprocedures en voorbereidingsprogramma's voor internationale scholieren. Voor die scholieren die onzeker gehecht zijn, maar wel deelnemen aan een uitwisselingsprogramma, zouden uitwisselingsprogramma extra steun kunnen aanbieden tijdens en na hun verblijf. Ook voor werkgevers zijn scores op zekere gehechtheid van potentiële werknemers interessant. Bij de selectie voor sleutelposities waarin het omgaan met nieuwe en onbekende (interculturele) situaties belangrijk is, zouden werkgevers rekening kunnen houden met de mate van zekere gehechtheid van potentiële kandidaten. Op samenlevingsniveau laten de bevindingen zowel voor leden van de culturele meerderheid als voor niet-westerse immigranten verbanden zien tussen zekere gehechtheid en het algemene vertrouwen in de samenleving. Het lijkt er dus op dat het bevorderen van zekere gehechtheid ook van breder maatschappelijk belang kan zijn. Om zekere gehechtheid van individuen te bevorderen kan wellicht gebruik gemaakt worden van methoden die succesvol zijn toegepast in experimenteel onderzoek om zekere gehechtheid van volwassenen tijdelijk of zelfs langdurig te verhogen. Alhoewel het voorlopige bevindingen zijn, suggereren de resultaten van het onderzoek dat zekere gehechtheid een interessante variabele is voor interculturele aanpassing. In de toekomst verdienen praktijkinterventies gericht op het versterken van een zekere gehechtheid dan ook meer aandacht.

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