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Immigration-Related Identity Markers and Well-Being in Academia: Perceptions of Conflict at Work and Life Satisfaction Among Foreign-Born Professors in the United States

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Immigration-Related Identity Markers and Well-Being in Academia:
Perceptions of Conflict at Work and Life Satisfaction Among Foreign-Born Professors in
the United States

by

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To Cristina S. Stephens, whose constant mentorship throughout the years was decisive for my academic advancement,

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Preamble

“I am here for job opportunities, but I miss my home. I like their work ethics and the chances I had to advance my career but I miss my friends and family. Here people have acquaintances, but not friends.”

This is how a history professor who emigrated from Hungary twelve years ago was talking about his life in America. In 2012 I conducted a study to examine how foreign-born professors perceive their work environment and organizational culture. As I was asking questions about opportunities for advancement, collegiality, and cooperation, I discovered that while assessing their work some foreign-born professors were bringing memories from their home countries into the discussion, and they seemed rather disheartened with life in America. They were always counterbalancing appreciation for their work opportunities with nostalgia for tight-knit communities and relationships at home. Some told me that they missed their friends. Others complained about the lack of a café-trottoir culture that encourages people to meet and debate politics or society over a cup of coffee. Yet others wished for a more urban settlement that prompts long boulevard walks.

Before conducting these interviews, I always thought of foreign-born professors’ lives as ideal: they were doing independent and creative work, marked by high prestige and a significant degree of flexibility, and they were living the “American dream”. After all, the United States is still the most sought-after destination of immigrants, and the image of white-picket-fence houses, abundant stores, and the “breeze of freedom” still represents the United States for most of those who want to immigrate or have just started their immigrant journeys in the US. So, if they managed to secure respected jobs that provided enough resources to cover their needs, why did some foreign-born professors seem discouraged? What was it that some managed to “achieve” while others did not? As an immigrant myself, who has experienced both feelings of “being at
home” and sheer despair, I became intrigued by how foreign professors assessed life and work in the United States. After all, I was preparing to be one of them for a long time.

This is how I developed my interest in foreign-born professors, who seem to permanently even out the nostalgia for relationships experienced at home with the financial gains and career advancement acquired in the United States.
Introduction

There is no dearth of research on immigration in the United States. Either conducted by historians who sought to shed light on the roles immigrants played in American history (Daniels, 1990; Gjerde, 1998) or by economists who sought to understand the impact of immigrants on the American economy (Borjas, 1990; McCraw, 2012), immigration studies have been conducted for a long time and have a significant share in the social sciences research. As the number of immigrants in the United States steadily increases, scientists try to examine the myriad aspects of immigration. While some look at the economic aspect on immigration (Borjas, 1990), others seek to understand the reasons for immigration (Boneva & Frieze, 2001; Frieze, et al. 2004; Jokela, 2009), the cultural changes of both immigrants and the society of a host country (Jimenez, 2017; Alba & Nee, 2009), the life expectations of immigrants and life assessments after immigration (Haines, 2017), immigrants’ integration processes into the hose society (Berry, 1980), as well as immigrants’ journeys as they transition from the comfort zone of their original cultures to a permanent quest for functionality and adequacy (Haines, 2017; Stephens & Gheorghiu, 2016).

Initially, immigrants were perceived as individuals who fled the economic hardships of their home countries and who came in the United States for a better life (Burgan, 2013). They were differentiated only by original nationality – “the Italians”, “the Irish” or “the Polish”. Once identified as representatives of a country they were rarely assessed differently. Only relatively recently social scientists have developed an interest in differences among immigrants that do not originate from differences in demographics but rather from differences in adaptation to the host country (Berry, 1980). Researchers have also recently shifted their interests from the immigrant
prototype who is poor and lives in ethnic enclaves to a highly educated professional immigrant who has a lucrative career and considers himself a “global citizen” rather than a representative of his country of origin. In the past, immigrant professionals represented an extremely small segment of the immigrant population, as most American immigration was caused by reunification of family members (Chiswick, 2010). Today, however, professional immigrants represent approximately 3% of the American workforce (Meeker & Wu, 2013) and 16% of the high-skill workforce, contributing significantly to the American economy (The Statistics Portal, 2016). As high-skilled immigrants become more visible in fields such as medicine, information technology or academia, social researchers have been increasingly drawn by their journeys, experiences, and social integration.

The current study focuses on life satisfaction and perceptions of conflict at work of foreign-born professors. I have decided to focus on this segment of the immigrant professionals because it represents approximately 10% of the faculty in the United States (Institute of International Education, 2016). Moreover, because of their prestigious occupation and relatively high incomes, their levels of work and private life satisfaction have rarely been examined.

Foreign-born professors, however, experience stressful processes of adaptation to the host country, as their immigration journeys are rarely buffered by family members or ethnic enclaves. Because their immigration processes often begin in American universities, they quickly have to become culturally proficient if they want to maintain their newly acquired roles as foreign students. Cultural proficiency, prompted by the acculturation process, can take various forms depending on the degree to which the immigrant adopts local values as well as rejects his original ones. Those immigrants adopting the host country values can either assimilate, if they reject their original ones, or integrate if they maintain their original values. Likewise, immigrants
who reject the host country’s values can either separate, if they maintain their original values, or can marginalize, if they reject their original ones (Berry, 1980). Thus, the diversity in immigrant population is complicated one more time by the outcome of the acculturation process that is, by the acculturation strategy eventually adopted. Next to age, gender, race or sexual orientation acculturation strategy becomes an identity marker that contributes to diversity in immigrant populations.

Immigrants’ identities are also influenced by the reasons for immigration: for career advancement and better life opportunities, or because they wanted to be together with family members who emigrated previously. Socio-psychologists identify the former group as having a migrant personality which is characterized by the need for achievement, self-orientation and the thought that other places can offer better rewards (Boneva & Frieze, 2001). There is little knowledge about how these two immigration-related identity markers that is, the acculturation strategy adopted and the migrant personality, influence foreign-born professors’ well-being or theirs perceptions of conflict at work, and the current study seeks to fill this gap.

Throughout the entire text I used the term “foreign-born professors” rather than “immigrant professors”, to avoid associations of the term “immigrant” with individuals who have already completed their immigration process and are residents or citizens of the United States. In this text the term “foreign-born professors” describes those who were born and lived their first 18 years of life outside the United States, completed a terminal degree, and who are on the US territory as residents, citizens, or who possess a temporary work visa.

The study comprises of the following sections. Chapter 1 presents the context of immigration in the United States for high-skilled immigrants. It addresses the number and occupational orientation of both high-skilled and low-skilled immigrants; it differentiates
between professional and high-skilled immigrants, and it presents some of the professional obstacles for foreign-born professors. Chapter 2 describes the theoretical foundations of the study and presents theories of acculturation and migrant personality, theories of identity formation and preservation, and theories of well-being and organizational conflict. Chapter 3 address the methodology for data collection and analysis. Here are presented the research questions and hypothesis that supported the study. Chapter 4 presents the results of the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses. Chapter 5 discusses the results, integrating them in the current academic climate in the United States and the global context. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the conclusions and limitations of the study and proposes new lines of research.
Chapter 1
The Context of Immigration in the United States

1.1. Immigration in numbers

Arguably, the most visible effect of globalization is the increased worldwide migration. The International Organization of Migration estimates an increase of 42% in the total number of immigrants in the past 15 years. Whereas in 2000 the total number of international migrants worldwide was estimated at approximately 150 million persons, today immigrants account for over 232 million (World Migration Report, 2015). Of these 41.3 million live in the USA which translates into 18% of the world migrants (Camarota & Zeigler, 2014). A 2009 Galup international survey found that 168 million adults would move to the United States, if offered the opportunity, which makes the US the most sought-after destination country for those willing to migrate (Espinosa & Ray, 2009). This trend is reflected in the substantial increase in the immigrant population in the USA, from 28.4 million in 2000 to 41.3 million in 2014. Today, foreign-born persons (lawful and undocumented) represent approximately 13% of the U.S. population (Numbers USA, 2014).

The countries of origin of today’s immigrants are more diverse than 50 years ago. In 1960 75% of the foreign-born US population came from Europe while in 2012 only 11% had European origins. In 2012 the leading sending countries were Mexico (28%) followed by Asian and Latin American countries. 5.7% of immigrants came from China, 4.9% came from India, 4.6% came from Philippines, 3.1% came from Vietnam and El Salvador, and 2.7% from Cuba and Korea (Census, 2012).

Although the percentage of immigrants remains below its highest in 1890, when 15% of the US population had emigrated from another country (Center for American Progress, 2014),
the increasing number of immigrants, legal and undocumented, raises a series of issues to social analysts and policy makers. As prior to the financial crisis of 2007-2008 the US economy was apparently generating unlimited demand for low-skilled workers, many social analysis started to perceive illegal immigrants as a necessary factor of the economic growth, therefore as an inevitable feature of the labor market (Ghadar, 2014). Illegal immigration, although not officially encouraged, was valued among business owners and the middle and upper social strata who benefited from cheap labor force and low cost services. The crisis, however, abruptly changed this perception.

Today, of the total number of foreign-born individuals in the USA (41.3 million) approximately 29 % (12 million) are undocumented (Center for American Progress, 2014). The undocumented immigrants, usually low-skilled, are perceived as negatively impacting the native population; the general arguments are largely related to the burden that they put on the public assistance such as public schools, health care, and the welfare systems. Moreover, undocumented immigrants usually fail to pay the entire set of taxes legal residents pay, which is viewed as increasing the gap between the contributions to, and benefits from the socio-economic system (Dustmann & Preston, 2006; Dancygier & Donnelly, 2014).

Others argue that undocumented immigrants decline the employment and wages of low-skilled native workers because they are willing to work longer hours for less money (Facchini, & Mayda, 2009). At the same time, this assumption is criticized. Although certain jobs are undeniably occupied by illegal immigrants, such as constructions, hotel and restaurant business, baby-sitting, house-cleaning or landscaping, some scholars question whether natives would occupy these positions in the first place (Card, 2005; Constant, 2014). Proponents of the economic advantages brought by undocumented immigrants argue that the access to welfare
programs or prospects for better employment prevent natives from occupying these positions, thus supporting the role of undocumented immigrants’ work in the American economy. Critics of the market-oriented perspective, however, deny such benefits, claiming that had it not been for illegal immigrants accepting low wages, such positions would have been better paid and filled by natives. Not only are those at working age affected. Older workers who lost their retirement savings, did not trust the old-age safety net, or realized that their skills may still bring benefits are also affected by the shortage of jobs created by illegal immigration (Hanson, 2005).

A variety of solutions to illegal immigration have been proposed. Among these immigration amnesty, that is granting illegal immigrants a pardon, has captured policy makers’ attention the most. Proponents of awarding undocumented immigrants the resident status argue that by doing so, it would benefit the US economy and American citizens in the long run. From an economic perspective, the government would benefit from more taxes. Many illegal immigrants are paid under the table and by granting undocumented workers amnesty they could be paid legally and pay taxes, contributing to Social Security, Madicare and Medicaid. Such revenues would benefit both Americans and newly-become legal immigrants (Chau, 2001).

Legal immigrants would equally generate labor supply and demand, therefore increasing the supply and demand for products and services. Moreover, because immigration brings people with a variety of cultural backgrounds, behaviors and customs, legitimizing their presence could give voice to hidden populations, therefore promoting a variety of ideas, and strengthening the social debate. As cultural diversity has always been a hallmark of the American society, immigrants could only enhance this feature. Ultimately, as there are numerous stereotypes about undocumented immigrants and many natives mistakenly view them as criminals and isolate them, numerous illegal immigrants do not feel responsible to the members of the greater society.
By giving the immigrants permission to stay, they can join the community and become accountable to one another and to the greater good of society. Integrating illegal immigrants into the greater society by offering them amnesty could result in an overall stronger America (Chau, 2001).

At the same time, amnesty for illegal immigrants poses a series of problems too. Some argue that by doing so, policy makers would endorse law breaking and send the wrong signals to other people. Moreover, millions of illegal immigrants who are currently not entitled to certain benefits would burden the economy even more. Their access to emergency Medicaid, free education, school breakfast and lunch programs, shelters and soup kitchens, and disability and substance abuse services already puts pressure on the limited funds. The legal resident status would entitle them to all social services, which are burdened sufficiently by the current residents (Skerry, 2001; Holzer, 2013).

Ultimately, by becoming residents they would legally compete with American citizens on the job market, which is already overcrowded especially for the less-skilled workers (Camarota, 2004; Camarota, 2009). The issue of undocumented, less-skilled immigrants is severe and there are no simple solutions to it. Volumes of writings and long hours of debates were addressed to the immigration problem but a satisfactory answer is yet to be found. By contrast, skilled immigrants are usually welcome and they are considered an asset for receiving countries.

1.2. High-Skilled Immigration

As previously mentioned, the immigration discourse in the United States is primarily focused on less-skilled or undocumented immigrants and on the economic aspect of immigration, namely on the financial benefits or threats that immigrants bring to the US economy as a whole
and/or to the US population (Card, 2005; Fix, Papademetriou & Sumption, 2013; Holzer, 2013). A related strand of research investigates experiences of low skilled immigrants, respectively how they integrate into the mainstream society, how they negotiate their cultural heritage, or in what types of communities they live (Verkuyten, 2008; Cepeda et al, 2012; Zlolniski, 2006). Only recently high-skilled immigrants have captured researcher’s interest, and the focus was mostly on their occupational choices. Regarding their immigration journeys the general assumption is that they assimilate relatively easy into American society because they have access to high paying jobs, they speak the language, and, many have been educated in the United States (Bhagwati, 2009; Lowell & Khadka, 2011). However, their experiences and private lives, have been largely ignored by both social scientists and policy makers.

Educated immigrants represent a rather new segment of the immigrant population in the US. Unlike other countries that have selected immigrants on point-bases – accounting for educational achievements and work experience – the US immigration system has given priority to family reunification (Daniel, 2006). The Immigration Act of 1965, which represents the structure of the actual immigration system, gave priority to family members of immigrant residents, created the practice of assessing the labor market to protect domestic workers, established conditions for temporary workers, and allowed a small portion of employment-based immigrants (Daniel, 2006). Only relative recently the employment-based immigration has developed.

The Immigration Act of 1990 determined the next significant change in the immigration practices. The act increased the total number of permanent immigrants, and permitted three times more employment-based admissions (Armstrong, 2006). Today skilled-workers who want to work in the United States can enter the country under one of several types of visas. The majority
of high-skilled immigrants arrive in the US on H-1B visa bases, which usually requires the baccalaureate or a higher degree. The important characteristics of this type of visa are a 6 year-minimum duration of stay and a numerical limit of 65,000 temporary migrants admitted yearly (Department of Homeland Security, 2012). This visa is granted only if the solicitor has a job offer before entering the country, and it generates approximately 10.5% of the total number of immigrants who obtained US residency (Department of Homeland Security, 2012). Other temporary visas for skilled workers include the O visa for individuals with unique abilities in the sciences, art, education, business or athletic fields, the P visa for internationally recognized entertainers, athletes or artists, the Q visa for participants in international exchange programs, and EB types of visas for outstanding professors and researchers, religious ministers and workers, and self-employed entrepreneurs. A special working visa (F1) is granted to foreign students who came to the States to attend universities, and it allows limited working hours on campus only (Batalova & Lowell, 2007).

Since education and employment have opened cross-borders to meet the challenges of international competitive markets and global economy, the ratio of immigrants with high degrees has changed. For the first time in the United States history, the number of immigrants having at least a bachelor’s degree (29%) outnumbered those with high-school diploma (26%) (Camarota, 2012), which raises important questions about the ways in which this new segment of the population integrates into, and impacts American communities and work places. Two questions need to be addressed: how are highly-skilled immigrants defined, and are who they.
1.3. Defining “highly-skilled”

Although many scholars use the term “the best and the brightest” when referring to immigrants who enter the country on employment bases, there is no consensus upon what this means. Because skilled immigrants represents a relatively new segment of the US immigrant population body, and because only recently they captured scholars and policy makers’ attention, there are no agreed-upon characteristics to define them. This is due, in part, to the absence of appropriate data at the country level, and in part, to the lack of consistency upon definitions across nations. The most readily available data about skilled immigrants are collected by large censuses and surveys, but they lack detailed information about immigrants such as their legal status, migration history, or place of education, and the information about their occupations is crude (Batalova & Lowell, 2007). These data-bases are difficult to compare and aggregate because the very definitions of highly-skilled – upon which the subjects were selected – vary.

Lee and Westwood (1996), for instance, identifies professional-workers all “individuals who have a technical certificate, trade designations or university degrees” (pg.29). Beck (1995) argues that contemporary economy switched from being supported predominantly by manufacturing workers to being supported predominantly by “knowledge workers” and that this change should be accounted for in occupational codes and censuses. He defines knowledge workers as those who have knowledge, education, and skills in particular vocational areas. Beck (1995) uses employment status to divide knowledge workers in three categories: (a) professionals such as doctors, engineers, lawyers, accountants, and actuaries; (b) engineering, scientific and technical workers; and (c) individuals in the very senior ranks of management. Although this classification refines to a certain degree a basic divide between those with a high-school diploma and those with college or graduate school degrees, it still does not help to
distinguish between those who have the education, expertise and experience of highly-skilled and those who do not. For instance, in 1994 Bouvier and Simcox found that 31% of native engineers and 39% of those occupying positions of mathematicians and computer scientists did not have a university degree in 1990 (Batalova, 2006, pp 41).

In sum, there are two major ways of qualifying workers as “highly-skilled”. First is the “education-based”, also known as supply-based approach that takes into account individual’s level of education (Beck, 1995; Lee, 1996; Lowell, 2001). Based upon this definition someone having a university degree or a technical school diploma is considered automatically highly skilled. The second approach is “occupation-based”, also known as demand-based and takes into account individual’s occupation, organizational position and income rather than years of schooling (Martin, 2006; Xie & Shauman, 2003). Based upon this definition a middle-level manager with a high-school diploma, an electrical engineer, or someone earning over $70,000 is identified as highly skilled.

Although it is convenient to use the educational or occupational definitions to determine immigrants’ work status, there are issues with both approaches. In the case of education-based definition, immigrants who do not perform work at their level of education – which is actually the case of many immigrants due to the non-transferability of their credentials or limited English proficiency – are lumped together with those who engaged in advanced-knowledge activities under the status of high-skilled. Moreover, because of a lack of consistency of training descriptions across countries, the same term may capture two different levels of education. For instance, in Romania one can acquire a nursing certificate after obtaining a high-school diploma in nursing, whereas in the United States a nursing certificate is obtain after graduating educational institutions that requires a high-school diploma for admission. Insufficient
information about the types of training required in various vocations makes such overlaps unreliable. Similar issues appear in the case of occupation-based classification. Immigrants who occupy positions that traditionally require advanced degrees, but do not have the necessary years of education are automatically considered high-skilled, even though they do not meet the criteria. Such was the case of STEM workers in 1990. Bouvier and Simcox found in 1994 that 15% of foreign-born engineers and 23% of foreign-born mathematicians did not possess a university degree (Batalova, 2006).

Although there is no consensus over the definition of highly-skilled, and various researchers utilized individualized descriptions to qualify workers in the USA, there have been efforts in aggregating these information and providing statistics as accurate as possible. Many analysts combine the education and occupation quantifiers when aggregating the data. Usually highly-skilled are considered those who hold a bachelor’s degree or a foreign equivalent degree that is normally required for the profession (such as engineering, computer science etc.), and who occupy a professional position (Immihelp, 2017)

1.4. Occupational profile of high-skilled immigrants in the USA

In the last decade, the number of employees in professional and high-skilled occupations have grown significantly. Today, more than one in five American full-time workers is in a professional or technical occupation, and predictions indicate this trend will continue in the future (Professionals in the Contingent Workforce, 2016). Of the approximately 127 million full-time workers in the USA (Monthly Number of Full-Time Employees in the United States, 2017), 28 million occupy high-skilled positions, which represents about 22% of the civilian labor force between the ages of 24 and 64.
According to the Department for Professional Employees education, training, and library are still the leading occupations (8.3 million), followed by health care practitioners and technicians (7.6 million), computer and mathematical groups (3.5 million); architecture and engineering (2.4 million); life, physical, and social science (1.2 million); community and social service (1.9 million); arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media (1.7 million), and legal (1.1 million) (The Professional and Technical Workforce, 2015). While employment in some occupational groups increased over the past 15 years, others stagnated or decreased as a consequence of the 2008 economic crisis. The two largest occupational groups, (1) education, training, and library workers and health care practitioners and (2) technical workers experienced an overall increase in the number of workers from 2003 to 2012. However, while health care employment increased gradually, adding nearly 1.5 million jobs in that period, education occupations peaked in 2008 and then have declined, with an overall growth just over 500,000. Similar changes occurred in other professional and technical occupations. For example, computer and mathematical occupations grew steadily, with only a modest decline after 2008, while the architecture and engineering occupational group has yet to recover from losses during the recession (Professional and Technical Employees in Labor Force, 2013).

Of all high-skilled workers about 16% are foreign born, and this represents approximately 3% of America’s workforce, and 15% of all legal immigrants (Meeker & Wu, 2013). Thus far Migration Policy Institute (2017) (MPI) provided the most comprehensive report of high-skilled immigrants’ occupational composition. According to the MPI high-skilled workers are persons with at least a Bachelor’s degree.

In 2000, 17% of the work force with a BA degree in science and engineering occupations were foreign born, as well as 29% of those with a master’s degree, and 39% percent
of those with a doctoral degree. In comparison, the foreign born made up 11% of the US population and 15% of the overall workforce. Among high-skilled professionals, the foreign born are more likely to have an advanced degree than the US-born (Figure 1). For instance, a little over 10 percent of the foreign born with at least a BA degree also have a professional degree and 7 percent hold PhDs. The corresponding proportions for the US-born are 7% and 3.2%, respectively (Fix & Kaushal, 2006).

**Figure 1.** Percentage of Persons age 25 or older with at least a BA Degree.
Adapted from “The Contribution of High-Skilled Immigrants” (pp. 3) by Fix & Kaushal, Migration Policy Institute, 2006.

High-skilled immigrants are significantly more likely than high-skilled natives to hold a doctorate degree (Batalova & Lowell, 2007). Although underrepresented among all educators, immigrant educators are almost three times more likely than American educators to hold a doctorate degree. Among math scientists and engineers, as well as computer scientists, programmers and engineers the foreign-born are about three times more likely than natives to
possess a doctorate degree. Among life and physical science technicians and assistants the likelihood for immigrants to have advanced degrees is even greater; they are seven times more likely than natives to hold a doctorate degree (Figure 2) (Fix & Kaushal, 2006).

![Percentage of US Born and Foreign Born holding a PhD in Science and Engineering Occupations](image)

**Figure 2.** Percentage of US Born and Foreign Born holding a PhD in Science and Engineering Occupations. Adapted from “The Contribution of High-Skilled Immigrants” (pp. 3) by Fix & Kaushal, Migration Policy Institute, 2006.

Few recognize the important presence of foreign employees in certain occupations. For example, one in every five doctors in the country, one in five computer specialists, and one in six persons in engineering or science occupations is an immigrant. Foreign-born are also significantly represented in occupations that are viewed sensitive for security purposes. 17% of aerospace engineers, 12% of nuclear engineers, and 14% of petroleum, mining, geological, and industrial engineers are foreign born. These latter groups include people working in occupations relating to environment, health, and safety. Foreign-born persons hold key positions in physical,
social, and life science occupations as well, constituting 19% of all workers holding such jobs (Fix & Kaushal, 2006).

The efforts to quantify the presence and impact of highly-skilled immigrants on labor markets are steady and they are predicted to grow in the foreseeable future. The knowledge economy and open borders that have marked societies worldwide in the past two decades, will foster even greater population movements and diversified organizations. In this context, scientific communities, policy makers, and employers across borders should unite their efforts to define and operationalize the concepts of highly-skilled and professional, to aggregate and interpret the already existing data, and to generate new ones. An important issue that has not received sufficient consideration is the distinction between “high-skilled” and “professional”. Using these terms interchangeably complicates the analysis of labor markets and immigrant workers even more. In the next section I present the difference between these two concepts and the importance of maintaining this difference in analyses of work.

1.5. Differentiating between “high-skilled” and “professionals”

Although there is a distinction between “highly-skilled” and “professionals” most scholars alternate between these terms. Similar to the high-skilled status, many associate the professional status with education, occupation, or institutional ranking. Organizational sociologists, however, differentiate between the two and identify very specific characteristics of professions, which separate them from high-skilled occupations. A profession is “a high-status, knowledge-based occupation characterized by (1) abstract knowledge, (2) autonomy, (3) authority over clients and subordinate occupational groups, and (4) a certain degree of altruism” (Hodson & Sullivan, 2012, pp.260). Fein (2010) goes beyond income or number of years of
schooling and considers professionals those who “master a unique expertise and internalize a desire to execute it” (p.134).

These characteristics do not describe many occupational specialties. Some experts contend that only law, medicine, and ministry possess the characteristics of a profession (Hodson & Sullivan, 2012). Others include professors, scientist, and military offices too (Freidson, 2001). Beyond these occupations that already acquired the status of profession, there is not much agreement upon which ones meet the criteria and which do not. While members of numerous occupations such as engineering, computer sciences, or accounting concert their efforts to show that their fields of work possess the four hallmarks of a profession, the professional associations and scientific communities still oppose the professionalization of such fields.

Even though every occupation has its own set of knowledge, and their members have to master the knowledge very well, professions’ bodies of knowledge are distinct in that they are very complex, developed on various interrelated strands, and highly esoteric. They are endogenously built and sanctioned, very detailed, transmitted to few individuals and within few educational institutions. Professional membership requires extensive periods of trainings and trials, and it is granted only by seniors of the field. Professions operate with abstract knowledge that equally combine theoretical foundations, practical information and techniques, and professionals have to reach high levels of expertise in all of them. A professional has to be able to comprehend and discriminate between the various theoretical fundaments of his profession, know the empirical findings and practical applications in his domain of work, and master himself the techniques necessary to operate within his field.

Professions allow high degrees of autonomy. Professionals have to rely on their own judgment when selecting the relevant knowledge or the appropriate techniques in dealing with
the problem at hand. Within the canons of their profession, professionals have the discretion to
decline upon one practice or another and this is justified by their mastery of the knowledge base,
on the one hand, and by the power laypeople invest them with, on the other. It is assumed that
the training professionals went through, the high standards they are tested against, and the
accountability to other members of the profession secure high levels of expertise that cannot be
questioned by outsiders. At least in theory, this grants professionals unquestioned authority over
clients and other occupations.

Authority is usually understood to be part of the relationship between a professional and a
client. For instance, in the doctor-patient relationship, the doctor is usually assumed to have the
authority to advise the patient on the proper treatment and the patient is expected to follow the
treatment. The authority of professions, however, is not limited at the individual level. Some
have also authority over other occupational groups. The dental hygienist, for example, cannot
work independently and has always to consult with a dentist before suggesting any treatment. In
other cases the subordinate nature of the occupation is established by the larger organization in
which they operate. In a hospital, for example, physicians have some authority over registered
nurses, therapists, dieticians, pharmacists, and other health occupations. Professional
associations, which are organizations consisting of members of a specific profession, help
maintain the authority of the profession by seeking laws that establish licensing and prohibit
practicing the profession without a license. Professions’ authority is reinforced by laws and legal
sanctions. Such laws prevent other occupations from activating in professionals’ area of
expertise (Hodson & Sullivan, 2012).

But probably what distinguishes profession from other occupations the most is their
altruistic nature. Professionals operate under the premises that their main concern is the other, the
betterment of the individual. Certainly professionals seek remuneration for their services, like any other participant in the economic process does. But the hallmark of altruism indicates that they have other objectives as well. Most professions have codes of ethics that emphasize the obligations professionals have towards the profession, the individual, and the public. Every medical doctor, for example, has to take the Hippocratic Oath before beginning to practice. The Hippocratic Oath states, among others, that the practitioner has the obligation to treat the sick to the best of his ability, treat the sick with warmth, sympathy, and understanding, preserve patient’s privacy, respect patient and patient’s family, prevent the disease whenever possible, and teach the secrets of medicine to the next generation (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2017). Military officers have to take the Oath of Commissioned Officers through which they declare their allegiance to country and their support and defend of the Constitution of the United States against all enemies (Army.Mil, 2017). These hallmarks make professions the most esteemed and sought after of all occupations. Moreover, the authority and autonomy characteristics promise high levels of work and life satisfaction.

1.6. Challenges of foreign-born professionals

Most of the studies on foreign-born professional focus on their occupational choices (Chiswick & Taengnoi, 2007; Reitz, 2001), earnings (Lofstrom, 2000), professional mobility (Chiswick & Miller, 2009; Pearson, Hammond, Heffernan &Turner, 2012), impact on the US economy (Hunt & Gauthier-Loiselle, 2010) or on policies and practices for their retention in the country (Martin, Lowell & Bump, 2009). Few studies, however, examined professional immigrants’ well-being. As well-being has consistently been associated with access to resources
(Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2002), few scholars investigated how professional immigrants perceived their lives and how they integrate into the host country.

Yet, they face several challenges upon arrival. Among them are English-language proficiency, education and qualification recognition, lack of experiences in host country, lack of social support, and discrimination (Ali, 2016). Some professional immigrants complete their education in the United States therefore the language is not a challenge. Others, however, who come to the US through marriage or family reunifications, go through long periods of unemployment or underemployment due to their incapacity to profess in their occupations. Downward mobility is recognized for 50 % of legal immigrants to the USA (Akresh, 2008). The problems associated with unemployment or underemployment are furthermore accentuated by the loss of status; professional immigrants feel a loss of power, life style, and status because their accomplishments are unknown or not recognized (Mak, 1991).

Social support is very important for an easier integration into the host country. When family or friends are in the country the transition process is smoother and the feelings of alienation or inadequacy are experienced to a lesser extent. When immigrants perceives no social support, however, they undergo feelings of helplessness, anxiety, and fear. Such feelings are even more accentuated among immigrants from collectivistic countries, where self-reliance and individualism are seldom promoted in family of the larger society (Yeh & Inose, 2003, Olivas & Li, 2006).

Moreover, the attitudes of natives affect immigrants’ cultural adjustment. Professional immigrants may encounter manifestations of competition, territoriality, or interaction fatigue (Lee & Westood, 1996). People in the host country may perceive professional immigrants as potential competitors for jobs, therefore a threat on the labor market. Because security and
access to resources for survival are basic human needs, threatening them may determine anger, prejudice, and hostility (Lee & Westood, 1996). Competition is linked to territoriality in that people mark and protect their territories against outsiders. The same attitudes are encountered in the workplace when foreign or even new employees are hired. The old employees have already built an inside culture and developed a sense of unity and stability, and foreign employees may cause resentment and feelings of threat. Immigrants’ races, if different than that of natives, can also increase resentments and hostile behaviors. Employers, as well as employees, may think that immigrants should not lead or be placed in a position of power. Communication, for instance, is essential for a management position and, if the immigrant lacks the language skills or cultural competencies, employees may feel that they are led by incompetent managers. Lack of communication skills may also determine interaction fatigue when natives avoid contact with immigrant colleagues (Gaines, 2012).

1.7. Challenges of foreign-born professors

In the past decades the academic environment has undergone significant changes, which can contribute to the occurrence and escalation of conflict as well as decreased levels of work satisfaction. With the increased student enrolments, universities no longer enjoy the privileges of their former elite status and neither do academics (Gerber, 2014). Academics are asked to work longer hours for less money relative to the salary scale of a couple of decades ago and to the salary earned by other groups with equivalent education (Shelton & Agger, 2011). In many countries, the academic profession is becoming more, more accountable, and less likely to be organized along discipline lines (Bentley, Coates, Dobson, Goedegebuure & Meek, 2012). In most OECD countries the most intellectually talented of the younger generation do not view
academia as attractive as they once did (Harman, 2003). Academics are asked to supplement their traditional functions of teaching and research with those of community relevance and entrepreneurial pursuits, clearly demonstrating to their institutional masters that they earn their salaries (Fredman & Doughney, 2012; Bentley et al., 2012; Wilson, Marks, Noone & Hamilton-Mackenzie, 2010; Lorenz, 2012).

While the traditional organizational model was characterized by academic freedom, self-accountability and shared governance (Gerber, 2014; Bentley, Coates, Dobson, Goedegebuure & Meek 2012), adequate time for reflection (O’Neill, 2014; Berg & Seeber, 2015), and rigorous research conducted for the public good (Bloom, 1987; Deresiewicz, 2014) the current academic climate is marked primarily by market oriented practices (Bentley et al., 2012; Wilson, Marks, Noone & Hamilton-Mackenzie, 2010).

Decades driven by funding cuts imposed a reorientation toward efficiency, market-relevant knowledge produced for its exchange value (Shelton & Agger 2011), and pressures to accelerate productivity and bureaucratic accountability (McGettigan 2013). Moreover, the rise of corporate managerial style determined an expanded administrative structure (Fein, 2014) and a decline in faculty governance leading to de-professionalization (Gerber, 2014). Because academic performance currently requires increased research, securing external funding, and large teaching loads, many academics resort to publishing more articles in lower-ranking journals, assembly-line like teaching practices, and strenuous competitions for grant money (Bentley et al., 2012; Brule, 2004; Wilson, et al., 2010).

At the same time, the recent trend to internationalize campuses added new challenges for faculty members. Although more productive on average than native-born faculty (Kim, Wolf-Wendel & Twombly, 2011; Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2010; Stephan & Levin, 2007),
international professors have to overcome a series of obstacles. Not only they have on average language-related disadvantages, fewer mentors, and less effective professional network, but they also lack the emotional and financial support from extended family (Webber, 2013; Harris, 2008). Moreover, their residential status compels them to rapidly secure tenure-track jobs under high pressure or discriminatory conditions, thus hindering the formation of positive professional identities (Li & Beckett, 2006).

Gender and race add to the difficulties foreign professors face in advancing their careers in the USA. For instance, for Modern Language female faculty it takes on average 1 to 3.5 years longer than men to attain the rank of professor, regardless of whether they are single, married or divorced or have children. Although women are no longer concentrated in lower-status institutions, compared to 30 years ago, salary inequities remain between men and women (Robbins, 2011). Along with gender, race contributes to the difficulties faculty members face in their careers. Bernal and Villalpando (2002) talk about an “apartheid” of knowledge in academia when assess the processes people of color experience when create and advance knowledge.

Such context engenders an increasingly conflict-ridden academic culture. Competition over limited resources together with identity differences and often affirmed stances of incivility and bullying (Clark, Olender, Kenski & Cardoni, 2013; Denny, 2014; Twale & De Luca, 2008) combine to create an environment increasingly prone to friction and antagonistic dynamics. Moreover, the autonomous and self-directed nature of the academic work can also contribute to conflict (Kim, Wolf-Wendel & Towmbly, 2011). The next section represents the theoretical framework of the study and comprises of theories of organizational conflict, identify formation, and acculturation.
Chapter 2
Theoretical Foundations

2.1. Sources of Organizational Conflict

Some scholars consider organizations inherently competitive and conflict-ridden (Pondy, 1992; Jehn, 1994; Jehn, Northcraft & Neale, 1999). Because workplace conflict is not always overt and rarely becomes violent this area of investigation has been traditionally under-examined (Fitness, 2000; Umbreit, 2006). Originally, organizational conflict was approached from a management perspective, with the aim of controlling the labor force for profit maximization purposes (Bendix, 1963; Harvey, 1982). However, as human relations became recognized as an equally important factor for organizational success (Mayo, 2004; Pfeffer, 2010), scholars shifted focus towards the effects of interpersonal conflict on employees’ well-being and organizational outcomes, proposing various interventions for conflict resolution and settlement (Ayoko, Callan & Härtel, 2003; De Dreu, Van Dierendonck & Dijkstra, 2004; Raines, 2012; Roche, Teague & Colvin, 2014).

Interpersonal conflict has been identified as an onerous work stressor (Frone, 2000; De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008), along with job role ambiguity (Tubre & Collins, 2000), job insecurity (Ferrie, Shipley, Stansfeld & Marmot, 2002), differences in leadership style (Meyer, 2004) and lack of work autonomy (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Dolan, Peasgood & White, 2008). Although definitions of interpersonal conflict vary, consensus points to phenomena that occur between two or more interdependent parties who perceive differences in values, beliefs, interests, allocation of resources and impingement on freedoms (De Dreu, Harinck, Hanrick & Van Vianen, 1999; De Dreu & Gelfand 2008; Barki & Harwick, 2004). Such phenomena can give rise to a variety of
negative outcomes, including declining job performance, increasing levels of anxiety and depression, decline in general state of health, and high turnover rates (Dijkstra, De Dreu, Evers & van Dierendonck, 2009; De Dreu, Van Dierendonck & Dijkstra, 2004).

In a comprehensive review of the literature on conflict in organizations, De Dreu and Gelfand (2008) classified work stressors leading to interpersonal conflict in three major categories: scarce resources, socio-cognitive inconsistencies, and identity. The first is common in most organizations as allocation of resources is usually competitively granted (Pfeffer, 1977). The second, also known as “information” or “task-related” conflict, emerges when two individuals or groups interpret identical situations in different ways (Brehmer, 1976). The third type, the identity-based conflict, however, is the most common type in diverse work groups (Jehn, Chadwick & Thatcher, 1997; Jehn, Bezrukova, & Thatcher, 2008), and it is rooted in individual’s fundamental need to maintain a positive sense of self through loyalty to specific ideologies or values (Steele, 1988). At the individual level, the need to convey a sense of worth, attractiveness, and morality is manifested through self-promotion, enhancement or protection of the self (Sedikides & Strube, 1997). At the group level, a positive sense of self is created and maintained based upon identification with in-groups and comparison with out-groups (e.g. females, Asians, football players, Christians, foreigners, etc) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). When efforts to enhance the self are not rewarded, individuals may intentionally or inadvertently hurt another’s positive self-view and conflicts are likely to emerge (De Dreu & van Knippenberg, 2005).

Empirical findings point to a variety of socio-demographic variables as sources of organizational conflict. Gender, for instance, was identified as a discriminant factor in conflict management styles and resolution, with men generally favoring a more contending approach.
Women, on the other hand, adopt the contending style only in female-predominant groups but gravitate towards a compromising or problem-solving approach in gender mixed groups. By comparison, androgynous individuals tend to integrate contending and compromising styles (Brewer, Mitchell & Weber, 2002; Papa & Natale, 1989). Differences in conflict management styles were also identified across generations, especially in more traditional countries. While the young prefer a more problem solving approach, the older tend to compromise more in conflictual situations due to “face-saving” considerations (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Zhang, Harwood & Hummert, 2005).

Racially mixed groups are more likely to give rise to stereotypes, prejudice and out-group discrimination (Jehn et al., 1999; Jehn et al., 2008; Pelled, Eisenhardt & Xin, 1999) and dissimilarity across demographic characteristics may negatively affect supervisor-subordinate relationships (Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989). Personality types, including agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion and openness (McCrae & John, 1992) were also identified as predictors of interpersonal conflict. Extroverts report more conflict and address it in more contentious ways. Conscientious, open, or agreeable personality types prefer problem solving approaches, whereas neurotic and agreeable personalities favour the avoiding style (Antonioni, 1998; Bono, Boles, Judge & Lauver, 2002; Kilmann & Thomas, 1975).

Finally, acculturation approaches as reflected in attitudes towards home and host culture, can supersede mere ethnic or cultural self-identification and have been documented as important identity markers that can generate conflictual relations (Liebkind, 2006). For example, in immigrant families, acculturation can become a significant source of intergenerational conflict and family strain when first generation immigrant parents are at odds with the socialization processes their children are exposed to in the host society (Chung, 2001; Kim, 2011). In the light
of parallels drawn between work groups and family units (Hochschild, 2001), it is reasonable to expect that differentials in acculturation patterns will shape perceptions of conflict in the workplace.

2.2. Acculturation Strategy as an Identity-Driven Source of Conflict

In 2011 the number of immigrants with a college degree has surpassed the number of immigrants with a high-school education for the first time (Camarota, 2012). Despite the growing internationalization of professional work environments, of which academia is one of the most notable, organizational research has remained largely influenced by the classical canons of migration and acculturation models. Traditionally, immigration has been defined as a rational choice that individuals make in search of a better life. Their adaptation to host culture was conceptualized as a straightforward process of change that resulted in complete assimilation to the national culture they chose to join and any embedded organizational structures. Berry’s (1980) challenged this view by advancing a bi-dimensional model of acculturation that simultaneously considered immigrant’s orientation towards home culture and receiving culture.

As immigrants formulate accept/reject responses towards the two respective cultures, four distinct acculturation strategies emerge: assimilation (embrace host culture, renounce home culture), integration (balance home and host culture), separation (maintain home culture, reject host culture) and marginalization (reject both home and host culture). The doubly-negative attitudes of the latter increase the immigrant’s risk of psychological maladjustment; however, marginalization is relatively infrequent as individuals cannot maintain a sense of self outside a group (Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008). Domain specificity theory recognizes that these strategies tend to vary across distinct life domains, as immigrants may be selective in rejecting,
retaining, and adopting specific aspects from both cultures, such as seeking assimilation in organizational culture while opting for separation in family and gender-related matters (Keefe & Padilla, 1987; Arends-Toth & Vijver, 2006).

Acculturation strategies are processes, not outcomes, but over the long term immigrants settle into a stable pattern of adaptation that encompasses both psychological well-being and socio-cultural competence, and may range from “well-adapted” to “poorly adapted” (Berry, 2006). Moreover, Stephens (2016) proposed further theoretical distinctions within types of acculturation strategies, differentiating between mechanical vs. opportunistic assimilation / integration. Whereas a mechanical approach captures an authentic adoption of host country values, with little risk of acculturative stress, opportunistic approaches may involve psychologically inauthentic attempts to enact a socially-desirable self that falsely signals identification with the host population, thus leading to long-term negative psycho-social outcomes.

 Despite developments in migration and acculturation theory, traditional models have remained influential in research on organizational conflict. As a result, foreign-born employees are often treated as a monolithic population to be contrasted with the native born. Moreover, due to the traditional emphasis on gender and race-ethnicity as fundamental dimensions of diversity, employees’ immigration status and acculturation strategy tend to take a back-seat in the evaluation of workplace diversity. For example, a workplace with a certain percentage of African-Americans may appear similarly diverse with a workplace where a mixture of African-American backgrounds and first generation African ancestry exists; yet the intersection of race-ethnicity with original national culture can create more complex dynamics and implicit conflict-generating mechanisms. Finally, because immigration is routinely defined as a rational choice,
studies may fail to pay attention to the differential adaptations of foreign-born employees to work environments, risking to miss much about the immigration experience, persisting cultural contrasts, and attempts at cultural survival. Thus, differences related to salience or resilience of original culture identity can be easily overlooked or attributed to variations in personality type (Van Oudenhoven & Benet-Martínez, 2015). Such omissions may also prevail in the light of recent propositions that cultural differences are becoming less relevant due to cultural hybridization phenomena driven by globalization (Pieterse, 2015).

International academics count among the highly-skilled foreign-born employees. This group may be particularly prone to this homogenizing effect as public and policy discourses portray them as the “best and brightest” immigrants (Batalova & Lowell, 2007), equipped with the abilities, intellect, skills and even politico-ideological views that should allow them a relatively unproblematic transition to western professional environments. Foreign-born professionals’ acculturation strategy, however, is an important dimension of their identity as it reflects intense efforts to maintain a positive sense of self in the process of cultural adaptation. According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), individuals build a sense of self by placing themselves in myriad cultural, racial, national, ideological and other types of categories with various degrees of salience. As immigrants come in contact with the receiving culture, they can experience a sense of threat to their original culture identity which may be intensified by perceptions of host culture’s superior ranking in the global hierarchy or by pressures of dominant free-market ideologies (Stephens, 2016). Perceptions of inter-group hierarchy can shape acculturation strategies through identity management (Petriglieri, 2011). While some immigrants may resort to identity deletion or concealment in order to assimilate, others may seek to balance significantly different cultural loyalties in an attempt to maintain biculturalism; yet others may
resist host culture values by separating into homo-ethnic enclaves; finally, a few will build a purely individuated or marginalized identity. Because differences in acculturation strategies reflect differences in values and identity, a high level of acculturation based diversity can make a work environment more prone to conflict.

2.3. Migrant Personality as Identity-Driven Source of Conflict in Organizations

The immigration phenomenon, although caused ultimately by personal decisions, has rarely and only recently been seen as a result of individual psychological predispositions, and not only as a consequence of macro social forces. Traditionally, immigration was attributed to “pull” and “push” factors, that is, to political or socio-economic conditions of sending and receiving countries (Lee, 1966; Gerber, 2011). Lately, however, social-psychologists sought to identify why under similar conditions some decide to leave the country whereas others prefer to stay (Boneva & Frieze, 2001; Frieze, et al. 2004; Jokela, 2009; Polek, Van Oudenhoven & Berge 2011).

Boneva and Frieze (2001) proposed a type of personality – a syndrome – that could account for the migration desire and decision. They argued that the migrant personality is one of the primary causes of migration, especially for those who leave their home countries at will and not as refugees or asylum seekers. The idea that some are more inclined to relocate than others, however, is not new. Morrison and Wheeler (1976) attributed the constant desire to experience novelty and move geographically to the “pioneering personality”, and Jennings (1970) called those who are continuously on the move “mobicentric men”.

Recent developments of endogenous causes of migration, however, went beyond the quest for new experiences and pointed toward a series of individual characteristics. First, and
probably the most salient characteristic of those seeking to emigrate is the desire to achieve (Boneza & Frieze 2001; Frieze, Hansem & Boneva 2006). Defined as the preoccupation with permanently exceeding one’s own standards of excellence or doing something challenging and unique (McClelland, 2010), achievement disposition is characteristic to those who are always on the lookout for opportunities to improve their work performances and living conditions. High-achieving migrants, also identified as “aspirers” (Tylor, 1969), believe that their efforts are not sufficiently rewarded within their communities, and leave in the hope that more developed places will compensate them and their families better (Taylor, 1969; Richardson, 1974).

Another characteristic of people possessing a migrant personality is the low affiliation need. The affiliation need describes the concern for social acceptance, the desire to establish and maintain interpersonal relations, and the need to feel a sense of involvement and belonging within a social group (Koestner & McClelland, 1992). Individuals displaying high affiliation needs seek to maintain strong connections within their communities, whereas those who display low affiliation needs are less interested in tight relationships within their groups and more concerned with personal matters (McClelland, 1988; Boneva & Frieze, 2001).

The third characteristic associated with a migrant personality is the need for power (Frieze et al., 2004). Individuals with power needs look to exert control over others. They enjoy impacting people and impressing their personal circles (McClelland, 1975; Winter, 1973). Boneva and Frieze (2001) found as well significant positive associations between achievement and power needs, and the desire to emigrate. Migrant personality was also associated with certain personality types. Among the five personality types including agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion and openness (McCrae & John, 1992), the last two predicted
residential mobility while agreeableness was associated with stability and strong bonds with community (Jokela, 2009; Lounsbury, Loveland & Gibson, 2003).

Nonetheless, migrant personality is not the only concept to capture the individual characteristics mentioned above. Many of them describe the higher end of the allocentric-idiocentric personality spectrum. The consensus among psychologists is that allocentrics are other-oriented, that is, very collectivistic, whereas idiocentrics are inner-oriented, specifically, very individualistic (Triandis, 1994; Caldwell-Harris & Ayçiçegi, 2006; Triandis, 2001; Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Although people do not manifest exclusively allocentric or idiocentric predispositions, socio-psychologists identified predominant patterns of behavior associated with each of these personality types. While, allocentrics value tradition and conformity, strong relationships with family and friends, and cooperation, usually putting forward the ways of the group to their own, idiocentrics are mostly concerned with the satisfaction of self. Their relationships are contingent upon proximity and common interests, and once they lose interest, they gravitate toward new groups; they tend to focus on differences rather than similarities between people, and are preoccupied with comfort and discovering the self. Idiocentrics favor competitive environments as they believe that such contexts would reward them better in case of positive differentiation (Matsumoto & Kupperbusch, 2001; Triandis, Leung, Villareal & Clack, 1985; Sato, 2007; Triandis, Chan, Bhawuk, Iwao, & Sinha, 1995; Triandis & Suh, 2002).

Albeit idiocentric and migrant personalities share numerous characteristics, I contend that using them interchangeably would fail to emphasize an important aspect that differentiate the two, which is the desire to relocate for better opportunities. While both describe competitive, inner-oriented individuals, with loose bonds within community and affiliation groups, the
migrant personality specifically captures individuals’ perception that other places could reward them better.

2.4. Cultural Contexts of Acculturation Strategies and Migrant Personality

Personality types, however, do not operate independently but in conjunction with various macro social factors, including political regimes, types of economies, or country’s cultural prescripts. Although all social factors influence individual actions, I focus on culture, as the fundamental canon for interaction with others. Defining culture as the sum of words, shared beliefs, attitudes, norms, roles and values, Triandis (1995) argued that “culture is to society what memory is to individuals (pp 4).”

Seeking to understand patterns of relationships in the workplace across countries, Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) identified six national cultural dimensions, comprising of power-distance, uncertainty avoidance, long-term-short-term orientation, masculinity-femininity, indulgence-restraint, and individualism-collectivism. Of these, the latter prompted the highest number of behavioral studies. The individualism-collectivism dimension is determined by the strength of ties between individuals. While individualistic societies praise self-reliance and cultivate loose ties between members, collectivistic ones foster strong in-group relationships and cohesive groups, “which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010, pp 92). The consensus points to the fact that collectivism is characteristics to developing countries, and individualism to developed ones (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010; Minkov & Hofstede, 2013) together with universalism (Minkov, 2011) autonomy, (Schwartz, 1994), egalitarianism (Schwartz, 1994; Smith, Dugan & Trompenaars, 1996) and self-expression (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Today
many social scientists agree that the traits of individualistic societies are a direct or indirect result of economic development rather than such traits prompting the economic growth (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010; Minkov & Hofstede, 2013).

The cultural differences between individualistic or rich countries and collectivistic or developing ones was reflected in numerous behavioral and attitudinal studies. For example it was found that people from individualistic societies report less corruption and greater transparency (Minkov, 2011), greater subjective well-being (Diener & Oishi, 2000) and perceive more personal freedom and control over life (Smith, Trompenaars & Dugan, 1995; Minkov, 2011). At the same time, collectivistic societies score lower on tolerance (Yang, 1987), are more likely to view existing social arrangements as unfair (Bond et al., 2004) and, contrary to the general belief, collectivists tend to be more competitive outside of their inner circles (Yang, 1987; Van de Vliert & Janssen, 2002; Van de Vliert, Kluwer & Lynn, 2000). Such findings seem natural, given the availability of resources and the presence of the rule of law in individualistic / rich countries as compared to collectivistic / poor ones.

Although allocentrics and idiocentrics exist everywhere, the former are predominant in collectivistic societies while the latter in individualistic ones (Triandis, 1995). As the cultural prescripts of individualistic societies encourage self-introspection and the pursuit of individual interests, it would intuitively follow that individualistic societies foster more people with a migrant personality. Yet, I contend that such conclusion fails to take into account the socio-political and economic factors of countries. In the light of the major economic and cultural transformations that collectivistic / developing societies have undergone in the past decades – as reflected in the spread of market-driven economies, the Internet and social-media, and self-orientation values (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt & Perraton, 2000) – it is reasonable to assume that
migrant personality would be more common among collective-oriented societies. As most of the collectivistic countries still fall economically behind the individualistic ones (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010), more of the former’s members would want to emigrate in rich countries if they offer better opportunities and promise higher living standards.

Moreover, I argue that those scoring toward the higher end of the migrant personality line tend to perceive more conflict at work. Their competitive-driven personalities, together with the cultural imprints of collectivistic / developing countries - as reflected in lack of trust in social arrangements, lower tolerance for out-group differentials, and heightened sensitivity to disruptive situations (Sirkeci, 2009) - prompt them to see interpersonal interactions in a more contentious way. Ultimately, work-place characteristics, embedded in the larger socio-economic ethos can play a role in the ways in which individuals perceive interactions with co-workers and in attributing these interactions conflict-like meanings.

2.5. Well-being

Well-being has preoccupied philosophers’ minds for centuries, although they identified with various terms: happiness, hedonia, good life, eudaimonia or life-satisfaction. James (1902) proposed that happiness is the most desirable of all states, while Aristotle (1962, 1986) questioned whether a stoic or hedonistic approach of living is the source of good life. Up until 1960s, social-psychologists who studied well-being looked mostly at temporarily moods, that is, how people feel in various circumstances. Only later, they tried to describe what aspects of social life produce happiness.

Wilson (1967), for instance, described the happy person as a “young, healthy, well-educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, religious, married person with high self-
esteem, high job morale, modest aspirations, of either sex, and of a wide range of intelligence” (p. 294). Thus, scholars began to notice that happiness is not a monolithic element, attributed exclusively to personal predispositions, but it can be broken down in constituent elements related to social life.

Cummins (1996) reviewed the literature on well-being and lumped together 173 different domain names under seven categories: material well-being, health, productivity, intimacy, safety, community and emotional well-being. Ilies et al. (2009) divided similar life domains in work and private life satisfaction and looked at the impact they have on each other. Currently, the general agreement is that they are strongly correlated, and have a significant spill-over effect (Cho & Tay, 2016). Foreign-born professors, however, may experience differences between their levels of work satisfaction and private life satisfaction. While they succeed to advance their careers therefore experiencing increased levels of work satisfaction, foreign-born professors may perceive a decline in private life satisfaction.

Several reasons may contribute to this decline. First, the immigration process in itself is very stressful, which in some cases can last for extended periods of time. Securing the legal resident status may take many years and can subject the immigrant and its family to prolonged periods of uncertainty and stress. The acculturation process too is stressful and mentally demanding. Sometimes immigrants have to adapt to, and adopt social norms and values that are in stark contrast with their original ones. This process not only requires additional psychological efforts but in many cases prompts immigrants to question their identity, system of values, and patterns of thinking.

Second, immigrants can experience a decline in the quality of relationships with their children. While parents may preserve some, or in totality their original values, children,
especially those born and raised in the USA, are largely assimilated, which represents a persistent source of conflict in immigrant families (Farver, Narang & Bhadha, 2002).

Last, immigrants are less likely to integrate in their communities, especially if communities are culturally homogenous and if there is a significant cultural distance between immigrant’s country of origin and the host country. Such situations are very likely to lead to seclusion and even exclusion. At the same time, if immigrants reside in communities harboring similar cultural values with their own, they are likely to experience high levels of life satisfaction. This is because they have the opportunity to develop close connections with individuals from their countries of origin, therefore to experience fewer challenges of their values and beliefs. Moreover, the effort to create and maintain social relations is minimal which contribute positively to their private life satisfaction.

2.6. Work Satisfaction

Work satisfaction is defined as the emotional state resulting from the evaluation of one’s job and it can be negative, positive, or neutral (Chen et al., 2010). Various determinants of work satisfaction have been identified. Lane (2000), for instance, argued that only by performing meaningful tasks, one can perceive his work as satisfying. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) concluded that employees who see their jobs as a calling find more meaning in their work than those who regard their jobs as a means to cover the material needs only.

According to Gibson et al. (2003) there are strong correlation between job motivation, job performance, and job satisfaction. Gibson et al. (2003) discussed five crucial characteristics of job satisfaction: (1) pay: the amount received and the perceived equity; (2) job: the extent to which job tasks are considered interesting and provide opportunities for learning and accepting
responsibility; (3) promotion opportunities: the availability of opportunities for advancement; (4) supervisors: supervisor’s abilities to demonstrate an interest in, and concern about employees; (5) co-workers: the extent to which co-workers are friendly, competent and supportive. Except “co-workers” most of these characteristics refer to performance and results, and do not take into account the cultural aspect of work.

As social scientists redirected their interests from the quest for productivity and efficiency to human relationships at work, recent studies rely extensively on the notion of culture (Karyotakis & Moustakis, 2016). Be it the culture of the organization as a whole, or the culture of employees assessed individually, cultural components, such as values, systems of beliefs, and practices have become consistent variables in work studies. While some studies focused on the positive consequences of cultural homogeneity other pointed towards the inherent problems in heterogeneous groups. Usually homogenous groups are more cooperative and less fractionalized (Trax, Brunow & Suedekum, 2015) while culturally heterogeneous ones are more prone to conflict (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). At the same time it was found that groups of individuals with different cultural backgrounds generate better ideas and are better to thinking “outside the box” (Stahl, Maznevski, Voigt & Jonsen, 2010).

As immigrants’ acculturation strategies have the potential to alter individuals’ original culture, therefore shortening or accentuating the cultural difference between groups’ members, acculturation outcomes should become an integrated component of any study that focuses on immigration. Because skilled immigration has diversified work teams, acculturation strategies of foreign-born employees can impact the cooperation between group members, the harmony, as well as the conflict within nationally diverse departments.
Next to the acculturation strategy adopted, the economic power of original country can influence foreign-born professors’ work satisfaction as well. It is natural for immigrant employees to compare the work environment and remuneration from the host country with those from their countries of origin. If the remuneration is higher and the work environment more predictable the immigrant will experience higher levels of work satisfaction. This is the case of immigrants coming from developing / collectivistic countries. Because American companies benefit from more resources to create more comfortable work places (Minkov, 2011), and because companies from collectivistic countries are still less democratic, less meritocratic and with fewer advancement opportunities (Deci et al., 2001), immigrants from collectivist countries may experience increased levels of job satisfaction. Figure 3 connects the theories that supported this study in a visual conceptual framework. In the next chapter I present the research questions that prompted this study, the hypothesis, the variables and their operationalization, as well as the strategies for data collection and analyses.
Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

Original Cultural Background
Collectivism → Individualism

American Cultural Background
Individualism

Academic Work Climate
Competitive
Recently Market-Oriented

Acculturation Strategies
Assimilation
Integration
Separation
Marginalization

Migrant Personality

Perceptions of Conflict at Work
Private Life Satisfaction
Work Satisfaction
Chapter 3
Methodology

3.1. Research Questions

The main research question that informed this study sought to shed light on the connection between immigration related identity-markers, namely migrant personality and acculturation strategies, and perceived experiences of conflict at work. Previous studies identified correlations between traditionally researched identity markers in diverse work groups, such as gender (Brewer, Mitchell & Weber, 2002), race (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999), age (Parry & Urwin, 2011), or personality type (Zhang, Stafford, Dhaliwal, Gillenson & Moeller, 2014), and interpersonal conflict at work, but focused insufficiently on nationally heterogeneous departments. Because differences in foreign-born professors’ migratory tendency and adaptation strategies to host culture have rarely been examined as a source of identity-driven conflict in professional settings, this study sought to address this gap by examining (1) how migrant personality and tendencies towards distinct acculturation strategies – that is assimilation, integration, marginalization and separation – shape perceptions of conflict in the academic setting.

The second set of research questions was predicated on the belief that foreign-born professors have high levels of life satisfaction. This is because they successfully settled in one of the most democratic and economically developed countries in the world, factors that were associated with high levels of happiness (Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000; Diener & Biswas-Diener, 2002; Christoph, 2010). Moreover, foreign-born professors should also score high on work satisfaction given their profession’s characteristics and career advancement. Autonomy and
authority, as well as performing work in a professional occupations have been found among the strongest predictors of work satisfaction (O’Donnell, Chang & Miller, 2013; Xiang, Wu, Chao & Mo, 2016). Foreign-born scholars, however, experience high levels of stress that have the potential to significantly decrease their life satisfaction (Eggerth & Flynn, 2013; Stephens & Gheorghiu, 2016). Not only they have to secure the basic necessities for life in a foreign country where they have fewer or no social networks and sometimes struggle with language limitations, but they also have to adapt culturally to the new place. Acculturation itself is very strenuous (Berry, 2006; Cortes, 2003) and, depending on the acculturation strategy adopted, immigration process may cause varying degrees of stress therefore may affect life and work satisfaction.

Even though the correlation between private life satisfaction and work satisfaction, as well as their spill-over effects have long been identified (Andrews & Withey 1976; Rogers & May, 2003) investigating them separately is necessary in the case of foreign-born professors. Because of their professional advancement foreign-born professors may have high levels of work satisfaction, but their immigrant status together with the acculturation strategy adopted may cause lower levels of private life satisfaction. Therefore, the current study sought to separately identify (2) the association between foreign-born professors’ acculturation strategies and private life and work satisfaction.

Migrant personality, estimated at the higher end of the allocentric – idiocentric continuum, has also the potential to affect private life and work satisfaction, as well as the adopted acculturation strategy. As idiocentrics, or those scoring high on the migrant personality line, are inner-oriented, have loose personal connections, focus on personal goals, and are more competitive, therefore less likely to yield to the environment (Boneza & Frieze 2001; Frieze et al. 2004; Triandis & Suh 2002), they may experience lower levels of both private life and work
satisfaction. Feelings of loneliness and lack of group membership were found to negatively affect individual’s well-being (Dolan, Peasgood & White, 2008; Diener & Seligman, 2002). Moreover, those scoring high on the migrant personality line may also acculturate differently. As they perceive themselves as unique individuals, taking pride in the idiosyncratic characteristics that differentiate them from others (Matsumoto & Kupperbusch 2001; Triandis, Leung, Villareal & Clack, 1985) they are less likely to adopt the cultural values and behavioral prescripts of the mainstream population. Thus, the next research questions of the study were: (3) what is the association between migrant personality on the one hand and private life and work satisfaction on the other? And (4) is there an association between migrant personality and immigrants’ acculturation strategies?

Because high levels of private life and work satisfaction were previously identified as negative predictors of interpersonal conflict at work (Barsade, Ward, Turner & Sonnenfeld, 2000) the current study aimed to investigate the nature of this relationship in a foreign-born population. Since immigrants experience changes in values, world views and even perceptions of reality as a result of acculturation strategies adopted (Berry, 1980), it was reasonable to assume that acculturation strategy may temper with the effects of work and private life satisfaction on perceived experiences of conflict at work. Thus, an additional goal of this study was to assess (5) how work and private life satisfaction impact perceptions of conflict at work when considering immigrant’s acculturation strategy adopted.

Since immigrants’ acculturation process and development of a migrant personality cannot be understood apart from individuals’ national cultural heritage, I considered that including the cultural background in the assessment of perceptions of conflict at work as well as private-life and work satisfaction is essential for understanding work dynamics in nationally diverse
academic departments. Acculturation theorists contend that immigrants’ cultural background is a critical factor in the acculturation process and acculturation strategy adopted (Sam, 2006; Masgoret & Ward, 2006). They argue that the closer the cultural distance between the country of origin and the destination country the more likely is that the immigrant will adopt integration or assimilation strategy of acculturation. Because America is one of the most individualistic countries (Hofstede, 2010) it is reasonable to assume that immigrants from individualistic countries would display assimilation or integration strategies of acculturation and those from collectivistic countries would display separation or marginalization.

However, the migrant personality together with the cultural and economic power of both sending and receiving countries may temper with the cultural background of the immigrant, therefore causing different than expected strategies of acculturation. Stephens (2016) proposes that the cultural and the economic power of both the sending and receiving countries can play a role in individuals’ desire to emigrate and subsequently in their acculturation process. If the sending country is perceived as lagging culturally and economically behind the receiving one, the immigrant will want to adopt the receiving country’s cultural prescripts in the hopes of better integration within the mainstream society.

Therefore, the last set of research questions that informed this study was: (6) what is the association between foreign professors cultural background measured on the individualism-collectivism continuum and their identity markers; (7) what is the association between foreign professors cultural background measured on the individualism-collectivism continuum and private life and work satisfaction respectively; and (8) how does the cultural background impact perceptions of conflict at work among foreign professors?
3.2. Hypotheses

The hypotheses of this study are divided in three groups. The first group focuses on the relationship between foreign-born professors’ identity markers as reflected by the acculturation strategy adopted and migrant personality and perceptions of conflict at work; the second group focuses on the associations between work and private life satisfaction on the one hand and foreign-born professors’ identity markers and perceptions of conflict on the other, and the third on the associations between foreign-born professors’ cultural background measured on the individualism – collectivism continuum on the one hand and identify markers and perceptions of conflict on the other.

3.2.1. Foreign-born professors’ identity markers and perceptions of conflict hypotheses

As those adopting separation or marginalization strategies of acculturation preserve their home country values and separate in cultural enclaves, they are more likely to behave and perceive reality different from the mainstream population. Consequently they are also more likely to perceive certain interaction as conflict leaden, or even to engage in conflicts over values and ideas. Similarly, those adopting assimilation or integration strategies of acculturation are more likely to interpret facts and events in a similar fashion with the mainstream population, therefore minimizing the potential for conflict. Therefore, I hypothesized that there is a positive association between separation (1a₁) and marginalization (1a₂) strategies of acculturation and perceptions of conflict at work, and there is a negative association between assimilation (1b₁) or integration (1b₂) strategies of acculturation and perceptions of conflict at work.

Because those who score high on the migrant personality line are inner-oriented that is very individualistic, concerned with the satisfaction of self, and tend to focus on differences
rather than similarities between individuals, they are also more prone to perceive conflict in
every day interactions or to escalate argumentative conversations. Consequently, I hypothesized
that (2) there is a positive association between migrant personality and perceptions of conflict at
work. The relationship between migrant personality and acculturations strategies was
approximated based upon the likelihood of adopting host country’s values. As migrant
personality indicates a self-driven individual with low affiliation needs (Boneza & Frieze, 2001)
it is reasonable to assume that he would direct his efforts toward pursuing his own goals rather
than integrating in local communities and “blending in”. Therefore, I anticipated that migrant
personality is positively associated with separation (3a1) or marginalization (3a2) strategies of
acculturation and negatively associated with assimilation (3b1) or integration (3b2).

3.2.2. Private-life and work satisfaction hypotheses

Because assimilation or integration strategies of acculturation imply adoption of host
country’s values with several positive consequences (i.e. a better understanding of the
environment, a closer relationships with locals, and an overall easier navigation of day-to-day
life), it would be logical to assume that immigrants adopting these strategies would reach higher
levels of life satisfaction overall. However, acculturation studies have shown that preserving
original value systems – that is maintaining one’s original identity – and living in ethnic enclaves
have a positive impact on immigrants’ well-being (Diaz & Bui, 2017; Knies, Nandi & Platt,
2016). Research reveals that espousing new values and practices while making the original ones
obsolete is a very stressful process that usually elicits sustained efforts on the immigrant’s part.
Most of the time such efforts are not rewarded. To the contrary, immigrants pursuing such paths
of adaptation experience feelings of non-belonging and inauthenticity that eventually trigger dissatisfaction with life (Reiss et al., 2015; Oakkar et al., 2015; Behrens et al., 2014).

Work satisfaction, on the other hand, can increase by assimilating local values and practices. Because work satisfaction is generated by factors different than those of private life satisfaction, immigrants who manage to align their work-related values with those of their colleagues and the organization for which they work may experience positive feelings about their work. The general agreement is that work satisfaction derives from career advancement, remuneration and meaningful tasks, whereas life satisfaction emerges from relatively different factors, among which the most relevant ones are financial security, good health, strong family ties, meaningful relationships and marital satisfaction (Sirgy, 2012). Moreover, because work satisfaction is significantly correlated with work environment as defined by the organizational culture and relationship with colleagues (Ostrognay et al., 1997) an overlap between individual values and organizational ones is necessary for the employee to thrive.

Therefore, the fourth set of hypotheses of the study was that there is a negative association between assimilation (4a1) or integration (4a2) strategies of acculturation and private life satisfaction and positive association between the aforementioned strategies and work satisfaction (4b1 and 4b2); when local values are not adopted, I hypothesized that there is a positive association between separation (4c1) or marginalization (4c2) strategies of acculturation and private life and negative association between above-mentioned variables and work satisfaction (4d1 and 4d2). Because migrant personality’s main characteristics, such as high competitiveness and low-affiliation were previously identified as depressors of well-being (De Dreu, 2008; Diener & Seligman, 2002). I hypothesized that the variable is negatively association with private life satisfaction (5a) and work satisfaction (5b).
Previous studies revealed a significant negative impact of work satisfaction on conflict at work (Barsade, Ward, Turner & Sonnenfeld, 2000). I anticipate as well negative associations between (6a) private life and perceptions of conflict at work as well as (6b) work satisfaction and perceptions of conflict at work.

3.2.3. Cultural background hypothesis

Although the cultural distance between country of origin and host country could predict the acculturation strategy adopted, migrant personality together with the economic and cultural power of sending and receiving countries may alter the expected outcome. Because the United States is one of the most individualistic countries (Hofstede, 2010), it is reasonable to assume that foreign-born professors from individualistic countries would adopt assimilation or integration strategies of acculturation, and foreign-born professors from collectivistic ones would adopt separation or marginalization. This assumption, however, fails to take into account the individual characteristics associated with a migrant personality, as well as the perceived cultural allures of the host country.

Foreign-born professors from collectivistic – mostly developing – countries may perceive an added advantage in adopting the host country’s values since their main goal is personal advancement (Stephens, 2016). Such change in individual values may secure a quicker access to desired social networks and a faster integration in professional settings. Moreover, prolonged exposure to ideas of cultural superiority of economically advanced countries experienced by the majority of underdeveloped or developing societies (Acharya, 2014) may prompt immigrants from collectivistic countries to break with their cultural heritage and adopt values of perceived superiority. At the same time, individuals from developed countries – mostly individualistic
Hofstede, 2010) – experience to a much lesser degree ideas of cultural and economic superiority of other societies and consequently are less likely to want to change their values, attitudes and ways of life. Therefore, I hypothesized that (7a) foreign-born professors from collectivistic countries are more likely to adopt assimilation or integration strategies of acculturation and (7b) that there is no significant relationship between the individualist cultural background and any of the acculturation strategies. This is because attitudes towards host country’s values may randomly vary among foreign-born professors from individualist societies, just like they vary among Americans. Following the same logic, I hypothesized that (8) migrant personality is negatively associated with immigrants’ cultural background measured on the collectivistic – individualistic continuum.

Ultimately, I argued that (9) those scoring toward the lower end of the collectivistic-individualistic continuum tend to perceive more conflict at work. The cultural imprints of collectivistic - developing countries - as reflected in lack of trust in social arrangements, lower tolerance for out-group differentials, and heightened sensitivity to disruptive situations (Sirkeci 2009) prompt them to see interpersonal interactions in a more contentious way. Moreover the work-place characteristics, embedded in the larger socio-economic ethos can play a role in the ways in which individuals perceive interactions with coworkers and in attributing these interactions conflict-like meanings. The implications of the current academic environment are accounted for in detail in the Discussion Section.

Above mentioned hypotheses are stated as “associations” between variables rather than cause-effect type of relationships because it is impossible to establish a temporal order in the development of identity markers and perceptions of conflict at work. It cannot be stated with precision if the migrant personality was developed before or after adopting a particular
acculturation strategy, or before or after exposure to conflicts in the work place. Likewise, it cannot be established if exposure to conflicts triggered a particular acculturation strategy or if that acculturation strategy is responsible for interpreting certain actions as manifestations of conflict. Therefore, any hypothesis stated as a causal relationship could generate inaccurate outcomes.

3.3. Variables

The dependent variables of this study are: (1) perceptions of conflict at work, defined as any negative feelings experienced at work as a result of perceived hostile manifestations of other individuals or groups; (2) private-life satisfaction, defined as satisfaction with aspects of life that are not directly related to paid-work. Among such aspects are as marriage, children, health, neighborhood, leisure time and friends; and (3) work satisfaction, defined as satisfaction with aspects of paid-work including work load, collegiality, leadership, salary, competition or pressure to produce more.

The independent variables are: (1) acculturation strategies, defined as results of the acculturation process that can fall in one of the four categories: assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization; (2) migrant personality, characterized by individual propensities towards exploration, achievement, low affiliation and heightened competitiveness, and (3) individual cultural background, measured on the collectivism-individualism continuum.

Socio-demographic and other control variables. In addition to demographics such as (1) age, (2) gender, (3) race, (4) family income, (5) total number of years spent in the USA and (6) immigration status I controlled for a number of variables that have previously been linked with conflict in academia. Because professional training has the potential to promote cultural
awareness and accelerate integration into organizational structures (Schraeder, Tears, & Jordan, 2005), a variable measuring whether the respondents obtained their (7) terminal degree in the USA was included in the analysis. The survey also inquired about (8) any leadership position the respondent may hold, (9) the type of university they are working for (research or teaching oriented), (10) the type of institutional funding (public or private) and (11) the number of years spent at current institution.

3.3.1. Operationalization of Variables

Perceptions of Conflict

The main dependent variable of this study captures immigrant faculty members’ perceptions of conflict at work which was measured with a 10-item scale specifically constructed for this study (Appendix 2a). Literature on educational institutions reveals several factors most commonly leading to conflict, including perceived fairness of department chair, level of information sharing and cooperation among faculty members, collegiality, exclusion from informal gatherings, snubbing, gossip and verbal or physical altercations (Bentley et al., 2012; Bode, 1996; Damrosch, 1995; Newman, Couturier & Scurry, 2010; Twale & De Luca, 2008). I sought to capture these themes by asking respondents to rate on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) statements such as: “My colleagues cooperate with me” or “I have felt excluded by my colleagues from informal gatherings.” The scale’s Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was 0.863 which indicated a high measure of internal consistency. Chronbach’s alpha can take values between 0 and 1 and measures how closely related a set of question items are as a group. It is a good indicator of the scale’s reliability (DeVellis, 2016).
Private Life Satisfaction Scale

Life satisfaction was measured with a 12-item Likert scale (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.870) that captures various aspects of well-being identified by Sirgy (2012) including financial situation, marriage, health, neighborhood, self-perception, social life, friendships, and leisure time. I constructed items that reflected satisfaction with each of these life domains. Respondents rated on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) statements such as “I am satisfied with my financial situation” or “I am satisfied with the amount of free time I have” (Appendix 2b).

Work Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was similarly measured using an 18-item Likert scale (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.881) that includes statements related to opportunities for advancement, requirements for tenure and promotion, workloads, academic freedom, publishing, external funding pressures, and personal life accommodations. Items were constructed to reflect these specific dimensions, as revealed by literature on job satisfaction in academia (Bentley et al., 2012). Respondents rated on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) statements such as “I am satisfied with the requirements for tenure and promotion” or “I have the freedom to teach my classes the way I like” (Appendix 2c).

Acculturation Strategy Scale

Four acculturation strategies – assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization – were measured using Barry’s (2001) East Asian Acculturation Measure (EAAM). This scale captures the two fundamental dimensions of acculturation proposed by Berry (1980), namely
immigrant’s orientation toward home and host culture, respectively. Unlike other acculturation scales that focus predominately on language use (Anderson et al., 1993; Barona & Miller, 1994; Wallen, Feldman & Anliker, 2002), EAAM covers a multitude of life domains ranging from preferred foods, music, and television programs, to trust, dating, communication, and friendship. As language proficiency is usually not a discriminant factor among immigrant academics, any language-centered measures of acculturation would have rendered less valid results. Although EAAM was created for Asian populations, none of the items speak to any particularities of Asian cultures. The only identification of the targeted population was through the word “Asian” which was replaced with “my fellow countrymen” (e.g., “I get along better with Americans than with my fellow countrymen”).

Mean scores on four valid and reliable subscales of the EEAM were computed: the 6-items Assimilation subscale (e.g., “I feel that Americans understand me better than my fellow countrymen in the USA do”); the 5-items Integration scale (e.g., “I feel equally comfortable around Americans and my fellow countrymen in the USA”); the 6-items Separation scale (e.g., “I would prefer to go out on a date with someone from my country than with an American”) and the 7-items marginalization scale (e.g., “Sometimes I find it hard to trust both Americans and my fellow countrymen in the USA”). Respondents rate such statements on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.822 for Assimilation, 0.526 for Integration, 0.801 for Separation, and 0.841 for Marginalization (Appendix 2d).

**Migrant personality Scale**

Migrant personality was measured using the Horizontal and Vertical Individualism Measurement (Triandis & Gelfand 1998). This scale captures characteristics associated with the
idiocentric personality such as competitiveness, self-reliance, and independence. The 6-item scale contains statements such as “Competition is the law of nature”, “I rely on myself most of the time, I rarely rely on others” or “It is important that I do my job better than others” (Appendix 2e). I decided that questions related to the desire to emigrate would be redundant since all participants in the survey are foreign born academics who immigrated in the USA after 18 years of age. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of 0.768.

**Immigrants’ Cultural Background**

The Individualism Value Index—IVI (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010) was used to measure immigrant’s original culture score on the individualism–collectivism scale to control for potential conflict-inducing cultural mismatches. For example, collectivistic societies cultivate in-group relationships (Minkov & Hofstede, 2013), score lower on tolerance (Yang, 1987), are more likely to view existing social arrangements as unfair (Bond et al., 2004) and, contrary to popular perceptions, they tend to be more competitive outside of their inner circles (Van de Vliert & Janssen, 2002; Van de Vliert, Kluwer, & Lynn, 2000; Yang, 1987). Hofstede (1980) developed and validated the IVI to establish an individualism score for almost each country in the world, ranking them from the most individualistic (USA, 91 points) to the most collectivistic (Guatemala, 6 points) (Hofstede et al., 2010).

**3.4. Data Collection**

Data were collected with an online survey administered to international faculty employed at various universities in the United States. The survey comprised of 110 items and it could be completed in less than 20 minutes. At least one university from each state, and at least one
department from each main academic area (humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, formal sciences and professional and applied sciences) were selected. Because most universities do not maintain lists of international faculty, I resorted to the self-selection technique – a type of purposive sampling (Sterba & Foster, 2008) – by sending the survey to all faculty in the sampled departments. Prospective participants were informed that the study targets international faculty members who were invited to participate only if they met the selection criteria. International faculty members were defined as full-time or part-time academics who were born, and spent their first 18 years of life outside the United States, and who earned a doctorate degree. The Invitation Letter and Informed Consent are presented in Appendix 2. In addition, the survey was also distributed by representatives of four academic professional associations on their membership lists. Therefore the computation of the exact response rate is not possible. After exclusion of missing data, the sample size was 241. Demographic characteristic of respondents are shown in the Results Section (Table 1).

I decided upon quantitative data collection and analysis for several reasons. First, quantitative data has high potential for generalizability and renders more objective and accurate results. Quantitative data is also better suited for comparability with resulted from similar studies. Moreover, surveys, when administered online, reduce the social desirability bias – a considerable concern when data is collected face-to-face. Ultimately, quantitative data collection is cost and time effective and minimize the likelihood for history bias (Maxfield & Babbie, 2014).

To capture individual perceptions of conflict at work among foreign academics, I asked respondents to describe a conflict situation with a colleague, administrator, or student that they felt was generated by cultural differences. This question was asked for two reasons: (1) to
identify reasons of perceived conflict among international faculty and (2) to investigate whether the respondent associates conflict with his cultural background. The answers were analyzed to identify common themes and unique conflict situations. Quantitative data was analyzed using correlation and multivariate regression analysis, and qualitative data using narrative analysis (Neuman, 2011).

3.5. Ethics

Participants received the Invitation Letter (Appendix 1a) and Informed Consent (Appendix 1b) via email. The letter explained the purpose of the study, the population targeted, and provided information about the Institutional Review Board approval. Participants were informed that their email address and computer IPs are not collected, and that they can stop their participation at any time. Participants were not asked to name their universities, only the type of higher education institution and the state in which they currently work. None of the questions triggered negative feelings.
Chapter 4

Results and Data Analysis

The following chapter describes the sample of the study and the results of the multivariate regressions models as well as the answers of the final open-ended question “Please, describe a conflict situation with a colleague, administrator, or student that you felt it was generated by the differences in cultural backgrounds.”

4.1. Sample Characteristics.

Of the 241 foreign-born faculty, 54.4% were women (n = 131). Forty-nine percent (n = 117) were white, 52% (n = 125) were younger than 45 years of age, and 54% (n = 126) reported an annual household income of $ 90,000 or more (Table 1). Forty-five percent (n= 112) have been living in the USA for at least 18 years and 83% (n=200) were permanent residents of the USA. Eighty percent (n = 194) completed their terminal degrees in the USA, 32% (n = 77) hold a leadership position, and 49% (n= 119) work in a research oriented institution. Sixty-four percent (n= 139) have been working at their current institution for more than 5 years and 83.3% (n=202) work at a university funded with predominantly public money. I used a dichotomous race variable because sample size for the more detailed race classifications were very small.

Respondents come from 59 countries of which the most collectivistic were Panama (with an IVI index score of 11), Columbia (IVI index score 13) and Pakistan (IVI index score 14) and the most individualistic were Australia (IVI index score 90), UK (IVI index score 89) and Canada (IVI index score 80). Countries with the largest number of respondents were India (n=27), China (n=17), Germany (n=16), Romania (n=15), Italy (n= 9), England (n=8) and Canada (n=8). Fifty-two other countries were represented, each with fewer than 8 respondents.
The respondents in the sample tended more towards integration than any other acculturation strategy with an average score of 3.84. The average score on assimilation was 2.41, on separation was 2.74 and on marginalization was 2.19. Respondents also averaged a migrant personality score of 3.47. Sample mean scores for life satisfaction and job satisfaction were 3.36 and 3.74, respectively, and the mean score for perceptions of conflict was 2.04.

4.2. Bivariate analysis

Primary bivariate correlation analysis (Table 2) revealed that the only acculturation strategies associated with perceptions of conflict are integration, separation and marginalization. As expected, integration was negatively associated with perceptions of conflict (hypothesis 1b / H1b2), \( r = -0.23, p < 0.01 \) and separation and marginalization positively associated (H1a1, 2), \( r = 0.29, p < 0.01 \), respectively \( r = 0.48, p < 0.01 \). Contrary to the prediction \( (H1b1) \), assimilation was not associated with perceptions of conflict, fact explained in the Discussion section.

Migrant personality, work satisfaction and private life satisfaction were also significantly associated with perceptions of conflict in the expected directions. While perceptions of conflict tend to intensify with an increased propensity towards the migrant personality \( (H2) \) \( r = 0.22, p < 0.01 \) they decrease with higher levels of work and private life satisfaction \( (H6a; H6b) \) \( r = -0.41, p < 0.01; r = -0.61, p < 0.01 \). No significant associations were found between perceptions of conflict and any of the demographic variables (age, gender, race, family income, years spent in the USA, cultural background, immigration status) or the academia-related variables (country of terminal degree, leadership position, university classification – research of teaching oriented, type of university funding, and years spent at the current university). Contrary to expectation \( (H9) \) foreign-born professors from collectivist countries do not perceive more conflict at work.
Table 1. Sample characteristics (n=241)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St.D</th>
</tr>
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<td>Perceptions of Conflict</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
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<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>0.79</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Marginalization</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Personality</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Satisfaction</td>
<td>1 5</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural background</td>
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<td>45.33</td>
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<td>106 (44.0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>131 (54.4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-white</td>
<td>119 (49.4%)</td>
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<td>USA</td>
<td>194 (80.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Country</td>
<td>43 (17.8%)</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>77 (32%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
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<td>Temp. work visa</td>
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<td>Public</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>33 (13.7%)</td>
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<td>Research Oriented</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Oriented</td>
<td>114 (47.3%)</td>
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</table>
Among the noteworthy significant relationships is the association between respondent’s cultural background measured on the collectivism-individualism continuum and migrant personality (H8) \( (r = -0.19, p < 0.01) \): the closer the cultural background to the individualism end of the spectrum, the weaker the propensity towards a migrant personality. Unsurprisingly, integration strategy of acculturation was positively associated with work satisfaction (H4b2) \( (r = 0.31; p<0.01) \) but contrary to predication (H4a1) was also positively associated with life satisfaction \( (r = 0.33; p<0.01) \). Work and private life satisfaction were negatively associated with separation \( (r = -0.23; r = -0.25; p< 0.01) \) and marginalization strategy respectively \( (r = -0.48; r = -0.46; p < 0.01) \), which supports the hypothesis H4d1, 2, but contradicts H4c1, 2. As predicted (H3a1, 2), migrant personality was positively associated with separation \( (r = -0.29; p<0.01) \) and marginalization strategies of acculturation \( (r = -0.29; p<0.01) \), but was not found negatively associated with assimilation or integration, as expected (H3b1, 2). Migrant personality was also associated with years spent in the USA and years spent at the current institution. The longer the immigrant was in the USA or at his current institution, the less evident was his propensity towards a migrant personality.

4.3. Multivariate Analysis

All multivariate models were driven by theoretical considerations. Preliminary bivariate associations were conducted to test for statistically significant relationships. I included in the OLS models all variables significantly associated with perceptions of conflict, work satisfaction and life satisfaction at the bivariate level of analysis. I also retained all theoretically-relevant variables that were not significant at the bivariate level.
Multicollinearity was tested in all models of the study using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) test. All models displayed VIF scores between 1 and 3.5 which indicate that multicollinearity was not present.

4.3.1. Immigrants’ identity markers and perceptions of conflict models

To highlight the effects of each distinct acculturation tendency, four separate Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analyses (Tables 3a – 3d) were conducted to model perceptions of conflict. I addressed each acculturation strategy separately because the main independent variables do not reflect groups but rather inclinations towards a certain type of acculturation style. Because in reality immigrants do not manifest exclusive preferences for a specific acculturation strategy (Arends-Toth & Van de Vijver, 2006; Keefe & Padilla, 1987), I examined how scores on each subscale vary with perceptions of conflict. Each of the four models were conducted in three steps. In each series the first step is a baseline model that tests the effect of one acculturation strategy on perceptions of conflict while controlling for demographic variables. In the second step I include the life satisfaction variable and in the third I add work satisfaction.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
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<tr>
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<td>6. Migrant Personality</td>
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<td>.29**</td>
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<td>-.46**</td>
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<td>-.49**</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-.11</td>
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<td>-.19**</td>
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<td>.14*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.18**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.16*</td>
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<td>.17**</td>
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<td>.08</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.16*</td>
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<td>.10</td>
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<td>.21**</td>
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<td>.34**</td>
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<td>-.24**</td>
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<td>-.14*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.13*</td>
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<td>-.20**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td></td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>.07</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>-.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
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<td>.13*</td>
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<td>.03</td>
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<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.33**</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>.36**</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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<td>.17**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>.12*</td>
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<td>.04</td>
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<td>.40**</td>
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<td>-.00</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
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<td>20. Type of University</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.13*</td>
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<td>-.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.10</td>
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<td>.16*</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td></td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05;  **p<0.01;  ***p<0.001
Table 3a. Results of OLS multivariate regression analysis: effect of Assimilation on perceptions of conflict (n=217)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>1.862</td>
<td>0.268</td>
<td>3.417</td>
<td>0.338</td>
<td>4.415</td>
<td>0.330</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (a)</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.032</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(White = 1)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years in the USA</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country Index</td>
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<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.476</td>
<td>0.072</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-0.120</td>
<td>0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Satisfaction</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.626</td>
<td>0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R square</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.183</td>
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<td>0.357</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001; (a) Female = 1

As Table 3a indicates, higher scores on assimilation were not associated with perceptions of conflict in any of the three steps.
The cumulative effect of assimilation and demographic variables in Step 1 (gender, age, family income, years spent in the USA and cultural background) does not explain any of the variation in perceptions of conflict, as predicted \((H1b_1)\). When life satisfaction is added in Step 2, the model increases its explanatory power (Adj. R square = 0.18). With the addition of work satisfaction in Step 3, the model explains 35% of the variation in perceptions of conflict. The only significant negative predictors of perceptions of conflict in this model are life satisfaction \((H6a)\) \((p < 0.001)\) in Step 2 and work satisfaction in Step 3 \((H6b)\) \((p<0.001)\).

As expected \((H1b_2)\), results from Step 1 (Table 3b) revealed that higher scores on integration had a significant negative association with perceptions of conflict \((b = -0.22, p < 0.01)\) when controlling for demographic variables. The model in this step, however, explains only 3.6% of the variation in the dependent variable.

**Table 3b.** Results of OLS multivariate regression analysis: effect of Integration on perceptions of conflict \((n=217)\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>(b)</td>
<td>(SE)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(SE)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2.873</td>
<td>0.352</td>
<td>3.790</td>
<td>0.359</td>
<td>4.544</td>
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<td>0.079</td>
<td>-0.075</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>-0.014</td>
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<td>Gender ((a))</td>
<td>0.143</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.189*</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.058</td>
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<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.033</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.120</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in the USA</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Index</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.452***</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>-0.114</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>-0.629***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R square</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(p<0.05; \quad **p<0.01; \quad ***p<0.001; (a)\) Female = 1

Adding life satisfaction to the model in Step 2 renders integration non-significant but reveals a significant positive effect of gender \((p < 0.05)\) on perceptions of conflict. Being female
increases perceptions of conflict by 0.18 when controlling for demographic variables. As predicted (H6a) life satisfaction significantly reduces perceptions of conflict in Step 2 (b = -0.45, p < 0.001). The introduction of work satisfaction in step 3 rendered the negative effect of life satisfaction insignificant due to the high correlation between the two variables. The model increases the explanatory power from 18% in Step 2 to 35% in Step 3 where the only significant predictor of perceptions of conflict remains job satisfaction (H6b) (b = -0.62, p < 0.001). Results in Step 2 and 3 suggest that life satisfaction and job satisfaction account for the negative relationship between integration and perceptions of conflict. Namely, as correlations in Steps 1-3 suggest, higher levels of integration are significantly and positively associated with higher work and life satisfaction which may in turn mitigate perceptions of workplace conflict.

Results indicate that separation has a significant positive effect on perceptions of conflict, as predicted (H1a1) (Table 3c).

Table 3c. Results of OLS multivariate regression analysis: effect of Separation on perceptions of conflict (n=217)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.953</td>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>2.623</td>
<td>0.399</td>
<td>3.723</td>
<td>0.390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation</td>
<td>0.290***</td>
<td>0.062</td>
<td>0.208***</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.157**</td>
<td>0.053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (a)</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.193*</td>
<td>0.086</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (White = 1)</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td>0.097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in the USA</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Index</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>-0.415***</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>-0.091</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.596***</td>
<td>0.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R square</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.229</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05;  **p<0.01;  ***p<0.001; (a) Female = 1
When controlling for demographic variables only (Step 1), separation is highly significant ($b = 0.29; p < 0.001$) and the model explains 9% of the variation in the dependent variable. In step 2 the explanatory power of the model increases at 23% with the addition of life satisfaction ($b = -0.415, p < 0.001$). This also renders gender significant ($b = 0.19; p < 0.05$), with women reporting more conflict. The effect of gender, however, disappears when we control for job satisfaction which, unsurprisingly, reduces perceptions of conflict in Step 3 ($b = -0.596, p < 0.001$). As predicted life satisfaction and work satisfaction are negatively associated with perceptions of conflict ($H6a$ and $H6b$) when controlling for separation ($b = -0.59; p < 0.001$). Most notable is that the effect of separation on perceptions of conflict remains positive and robust across all three steps ($b = 0.157, p < 0.01$).

As expected ($H1a_2$), marginalization significantly increases perceptions of conflict (Table 3d) even when controlling for socio-demographics, life satisfaction and work satisfaction ($b_1 = 0.45, p < 0.001; b_2 = 0.35, p < 0.001; b_3 = 0.26, p < 0.001$).

| Table 3d. Results of OLS multivariate regression analysis: effect of Marginalization on perceptions of conflict (n=217) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                 | Step 1          | Step 2          | Step 3          |
|                                 | $b$             | SE              | $b$             | SE              | $b$             | SE              |
| Intercept                       | 0.807           | 0.228           | 1.986           | 0.390           | 3.309           | 0.432           |
| Marginalization                 | **0.459***      | 0.056           | **0.355***      | 0.062           | **0.266***      | 0.062           |
| Gender (a)                      | 0.141           | 0.085           | **0.166*        | 0.082           | 0.066           | 0.079           |
| Age                             | 0.051           | 0.034           | 0.044           | 0.033           | 0.040           | 0.031           |
| Family Income                   | 0.004           | 0.019           | 0.010           | 0.018           | 0.008           | 0.017           |
| Race (White = 1)                | 0.127           | 0.105           | 0.072           | 0.103           | 0.052           | 0.096           |
| Years in the USA                | -0.001          | 0.007           | 0.002           | 0.007           | 0.001           | 0.006           |
| Country Index                   | -0.004          | 0.002           | -0.003          | 0.002           | -0.003          | 0.002           |
| Life Satisfaction               |                 |                 | **-0.275***     | 0.075           | **-0.059**      | 0.080           |
| Work Satisfaction               |                 |                 |                 |                 | **-0.508***     | 0.090           |
| Adjusted R square               | **0.256**       | 0.301           |                 |                 | 0.399           |

*p<0.05;  **p<0.01;  ***p<0.001; (a) Female = 1
With the addition of life satisfaction in Step 2 gender becomes a significant predictor, with women perceiving more conflict than men (b = 0.16, p < 0.05). Gender becomes insignificant, however, with the addition of work satisfaction (b = −0.5, p < 0.001), suggesting that higher scores on this variable mitigate women’s perceptions of conflict. As in all previous models, life satisfaction significantly decreases perceptions of conflict (H6a) (b = −0.27; p < 0.001) but the effect disappears when controlling for work satisfaction due to the high correlation between these two variables. As predicted (H6b) work satisfaction is negatively associated with perceptions of conflict when controlling for marginalization (b = -0.50; p < 0.001). The over-all model explains 40%, of the variation in the dependent variable. Marginalization remains a strong predictor of conflict across all steps (b = 0.26, p < 0.001).

In sum, results on models assessing the association between acculturation strategies and perceptions of conflict indicate that tendencies toward integration decrease perceptions of conflict (H1b1) whereas separation and marginalization strategies accelerate such perceptions (H1a1, 2). These effects remain significant for separation and marginalization, even when controlling for life and work satisfaction. Women tend to perceive more conflict at work than men but this effect disappears when controlling for work satisfaction. Finally, higher scores on assimilation did not predict perceptions of conflict, as expected (H1a1).

Table 4 contains the multivariate regression model predicting the association between migrant personality and perceptions of conflict in three steps. In the first step, migrant personality, age, gender, race, family income, years spent in the USA and country index (the variable measuring the cultural background on the collectivistic individualistic continuum) were included.
In the second step, I controlled for life satisfaction and in the third step I included work satisfaction. As in previous models that captured the relationships between acculturation strategies and perceptions of conflict, I included the substantial control variables separately to isolate the explanatory power of each model.

As predicted ($H2$), results from Step 1 (Table 4) revealed that higher scores on migrant personality were positively associated with perceptions of conflict ($b = 0.20, p < 0.001$); with every unit increase in migrant personality perceptions of conflict variable is predicted to increase by 0.20 units, when controlling for the demographic variables. The model, however, explains only 5.1% of the variation in the dependent variable. Adding life satisfaction in Step 2 and job satisfaction in Step 3, decreases slightly the significance of the relations between perceptions of conflict and migrant personality ($b = 0.17, p < 0.01$, respectively $b= 0.10, p<0.05$) but the explanatory power of the modes substantially increases to 21% and 37% respectively.

Predictably ($H6a$ and $H6b$), life satisfaction and work satisfaction significantly reduce perceptions of conflict ($b_{life\ sat.} = -0.45, p < 0.001 – Step 2; b_{work\ sat.} = -0.59, p< 0.001 – Step 3$).
Because of the high correlation between life satisfaction and work satisfaction, the former loses its significance in Step 3. Step 2 reveals a significant positive effect of gender \( (p < 0.05) \) on perceptions of conflict. Being female increases perceptions of conflict by 0.21 when controlling for demographic variables. Surprisingly, cultural background did not influence perceptions of conflict in any of the three steps.

4.3.2. Determinants of Life Satisfaction Models

To identify the effects of each acculturation strategy and migrant personality on satisfaction with private life, five distinct multivariate regression analyses were conducted in two steps (Tables 5 and Table 6). The models in the first step include only demographic variables (age, gender, race, income, years in the USA, years at current institution, immigration status, and cultural background) to identify the explanatory power of the model without work satisfaction which is strongly correlated with life satisfaction. Work satisfaction was introduced in only the second step. Because acculturation strategies do not reflect groups but rather inclinations towards a certain type of acculturation style they were addressed separately.

Contrary to predication \((H4a1)\), assimilating mainstream population values does not influence life satisfaction (Table 5, Section a). Moreover, when analyzed together with the assimilation variable in the first step, variables significantly associated with life satisfaction at the bivariate level – such as age, family income, years spent in the USA, years spent at the current institution, and immigration status – lose their significance in the regression model. When work satisfaction variable is introduced in the second step, two of the control variables become significant. Spending more years in the United States and being female slightly increase the satisfaction with life \( \left(b_{\text{years USA}} = 0.01, p < 0.05; b_{\text{gender}} = 0.20, p < 0.01\right) \). As expected, work
satisfaction has a strong, positive effect on life satisfaction \((b = 0.64, p < 0.001)\) and the model, in the second step, explains 40\% of the variation in satisfaction with life.

Adopting integration strategy (Table 5, Section b) significantly increases life satisfaction \((b = 0.33; p < 0.001)\), which contradicts the hypothesis \((H4a2)\). The model in the first step explains 16.6\% of the variation in the dependent variable. A remarkable finding is that integration variable maintains its significance \((b = 0.18, p < 0.01)\) even when controlling for work satisfaction \((b = 0.58, p < 0.001)\) in second step. Gender (being female) and years spent in the USA maintain their positive effects on life satisfaction \((b_{gender} = 0.21, p < 0.01; b_{years USA} = 0.01, p < 0.05)\) and the explanatory power of the model in the second step increases to 42\%.

Contrary to prediction \((H4c1 and H4c2)\), separation and marginalization strategies of acculturation decrease the satisfaction with life (Table 5, Sections c and d) even when controlling for work satisfaction in step two; for every unit increase in separation, life satisfaction is predicted to decrease by 0.19 units \((p < 0.001)\) in step one and by 0.08 units in step two \((p < 0.1)\); and for every unit increase in marginalization, life satisfaction is predicted to decrease by 0.36 units \((p < 0.001)\) in step one and by 0.14 units \((p < 0.5)\) in step two. As in the previous two models, gender and years spent in the USA become significantly associated with life satisfaction when controlling for work satisfaction; being female increases life satisfaction with 0.19 units \((p < 0.01)\) and longer years spent in the USA are predicted to increase life satisfaction by 0.01 units \((p < 0.05)\) in both separation and marginalization models. The separation model explains 15.6\% of the variation in life satisfaction in the first step and 42\% in the second, and the marginalization model explains 28.5\% of the variation in life satisfaction in the first step and 42\% in the second.
### Table 5. Results of OLS multivariate regression analyses: separate effects of Acculturation Strategies on Life Satisfaction (n=195)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Assimilation (a)</th>
<th>Integration (b)</th>
<th>Separation (c)</th>
<th>Marginalization (d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acculturation Strategy</strong></td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (2)</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in the USA</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01*</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years at current univ. (3)</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Status</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Background</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.64***</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.58***</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adjusted R square* 0.063 0.406 0.166 0.432 0.117 0.413 0.253 0.424

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001; (1) Female = 1; (2) White = 1; (3) more than 5 years = 1
A noteworthy and unexpected result is the negative association between race and life satisfaction in step one of integration, separation and marginalization models; being white decreases life satisfaction by 0.19 units in the integration model (p < 0.05), 0.20 units in the separation model (p < 0.05) and by 0.19 units in the marginalization model (p < 0.05).

All results will be analyzed in detail in the Discussion section.

Table 6. Results of OLS multivariate regression analyses: the effect of Migrant Personality on Life Satisfaction (n=207)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Personality</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.20**</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (2)</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in the USA</td>
<td>0.01**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01*</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years at current univ. (3)</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Status</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Background</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.64***</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R square</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001; (1) Female = 1; (2) White = 1; (3) more than 5 years = 1

Contrary to expectations (H5a), migrant personality is not associated with life satisfaction. Due to the combined effect of demographic variables, the significance of the relationship between migrant personality and life satisfaction found at the bivariate level, is rendered insignificant at the multivariate level of analysis in both steps (Table 6). Although small, the effect of years spent in the USA on life satisfaction is statistically significant even when introducing work satisfaction in step 2 (b step 1=0.01, p < 0.01; b step 2=0.01, p<0.05); life satisfaction increases with the time spent in the country. The other variables positively associated with life satisfaction in the second step are gender (b = 0.20, p < 0.01) and work
satisfaction (b = 0.64, p < 0.001). Unsurprisingly, the addition of work satisfaction in the second step also increases the explanatory power of the model from 7.4% to 40%.

4.3.3 Determinants of Work Satisfaction Models

Similar to life satisfaction analysis, the effect of acculturation strategies and migrant personality of work satisfaction were assessed with five distinct multivariate regression analyses in two steps (Tables 7 and 8). Variables significant at the bivariate level, as well as those theoretically relevant were retained. In the first step the models predict the effects of acculturation strategies and migrant personality on work satisfaction while controlling for demographic variables only, and in the second step life satisfaction variable is introduced because it is the most relevant predictor of work satisfaction. The models are built in two steps to single out the relationship and correlation power between work satisfaction and life satisfaction.

Contrary to prediction (H4b1), assimilation strategy (Table 7, Section a) is not associated with work satisfaction when controlling for demographic variables and life satisfaction (step 1 and 2).
Table 7. Results of OLS multivariate regression analyses: separate effects of Acculturation Strategies on Work Satisfaction (n=195)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Assimilation (a)</th>
<th>Integration (b)</th>
<th>Separation (c)</th>
<th>Marginalization (d)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acculturation Strategy</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1)</td>
<td>-0.17*</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>-0.22**</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (2)</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in the USA</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years at current univ. (3)</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Status</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Background</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.57***</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.54***</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R square</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.366</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001; #p < 0.1; (1) Female = 1; (2) White = 1; (3) more than 5 years = 1
The explanatory power of the model, however, increases from less than 1% in step one to 36.6% in step two when life satisfaction variable is added. Integration strategy, on the other hand, (Table 7, Section b) is associated with the dependent variable in the expected direction ($H4b_2$), in step one: for every unit increase in integration, work satisfaction is expected to increase by 0.27 units ($p < 0.001$). When introducing life satisfaction in step 2 however, the significance of the relationship disappears but the explanatory power of the model increases from 8.3% to 37%.

Separation and marginalization strategies of acculturation (Table 7 sections c and d) are the only variables that maintain their negative effect on work satisfaction even when controlling for life satisfaction ($b_{\text{separation 1}} = -0.19, p < 0.001$; $b_{\text{separation 2}} = -0.08, p < 0.1$; $b_{\text{marginalization 1}} = -0.41, p < 0.001$; $b_{\text{marginalization 2}} = -0.25, p < 0.001$). Similar to previous two models, life satisfaction variable increases the explanatory power from 6.1% to 37% in the separation analysis and from 28% to 45% in the marginalization one. The models support the hypothesis ($H4d_1$ and $H4d_2$) in both steps.

Except life satisfaction, gender is the only variable consistently associated with work satisfaction throughout all four models in both steps; being female decreases work satisfaction ($b_{\text{assimilation 1}} = -0.17, p < 0.05$; $b_{\text{assimilation 2}} = -0.22, p < 0.01$; $b_{\text{integration 1}} = -0.14, p < 0.1$; $b_{\text{integration 2}} = -0.21, p < 0.05$; $b_{\text{separation 1}} = -0.16, p < 0.05$; $b_{\text{separation 2}} = -0.22, p < 0.01$; $b_{\text{marginalization 1}} = -0.15, p < 0.05$; $b_{\text{marginalization 2}} = -0.20, p < 0.01$). Unsurprisingly, life satisfaction has a strong positive effect on work satisfaction in all four models ($b_{\text{assimilation 2}} = 0.57, p < 0.001$; $b_{\text{integration 2}} = 0.54, p < 0.001$; $b_{\text{separation 2}} = 0.54, p < 0.001$; $b_{\text{marginalization 2}} = 0.43, p < 0.001$).

As predicted ($H5b$), migrant personality is negatively associated with work satisfaction even when controlling for life satisfaction in step 2 (Table 8); the higher a person scores on the
migrant personality continuum the lower the individual’s satisfaction with work is (b₁ = 0.17, p < 0.01; b₂ = 0.13, p < 0.01). Besides life satisfaction, gender is the only variable that impacts work satisfaction; females experience lower levels of work satisfactions (b₁ = -0.18, p< 0.05; b₂ = -0.23, p< 0.001). The model explains 5% of the variation in the dependent variable in the first step and 39% in the second one.

Table 8. Results of OLS multivariate regression analyses: the effect of Migrant Personality on Work Satisfaction (n=195)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Migrant Personality</strong></td>
<td><strong>-0.17</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (¹)</td>
<td><strong>-0.18</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race (²)</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years in the USA</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years at current univ. (³)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Status</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Background</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adjusted R square* | 0.051 | 0.390 |

* *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001; (1) Female = 1; (2) White = 1; (3) more than 5 years = 1

In sum, results of the models assessing foreign-born professors’ determinants of private life and work satisfaction revealed that tendencies toward integration strategy of acculturation increase both private life and work satisfaction and tendencies towards separation or marginalization, as well as high propensity towards a migrant personality decrease private life and work satisfaction. Two other remarkable findings are the associations between race and life satisfaction on the one hand and gender and work satisfaction on the other. White foreign-born professors have a lower private life satisfaction when acculturation strategies and other demographic variables are considered, and females experience lower levels of work satisfaction.
4.3.4. Open ended question results

The last question of the questionnaire asked respondents to describe a conflict situation with a colleague, administrator, or student they felt it was generated by the differences in cultural backgrounds. Below are answers from faculty members who chose to respond. The answers are grouped by the following themes: competition, exclusion, student-instructor interactions, and language/accent.

**Competition**

“When you have colleagues that are arrogant, dominant and competitive even with their other American colleagues makes the work environment really difficult. I have lived in Madison, WI and Oklahoma. South Dakota people is not “open” for other cultures as other states are. I am not sure if it is just because they are “insecure” or just because some feel “superior”.”

(Female, Brazil, 31-35 years old; white; 5 years in the USA)

“Most Americans have a very high sense of competition and this is something it does not direct my life. However, I am very hard working person who does a lot and some people have felt threaten by it.”

(Female, Spain, 46-50 years old, 84ispanic, 26 years in the USA)

**Exclusion**

“I went to a department party organized at a colleague’s house. As I entered, the colleague (host) did not great me, but kept talking only to ‘important’ people. I ended up leaving the party without talking to the host who considered that I was very impolite for not talking to her. She has held a grudge on me ever since. However, I considered her attitude impolite because in the country I grew up, the host greets you when you enter his/her house...”

(Female, Romania, 41-45 years old, white, 15 years in the USA)

People develop affinities based on personality, perceived similarities in socio-economic background and cultural/national background. When some people perceive you as “different” from them on some level, they can consciously or subconsciously start avoiding you, ignoring you or feeling somewhat uncomfortable around you. Immigrants are especially vulnerable to this type of situation. Although no overt conflict was ever expressed, I have felt ignored or “bypassed” in the past, in some situations, with some colleagues. One thing is for sure: due to constant pressures for competition, American workplaces are NOT environments where you want to develop any friendship, least of all when you are an immigrant. Being collegial – yes. But friendships? Hardly.

(Female, Spain, 41-45 years old, white, 16 years in the USA)
“They formed a private consulting business in my area of expertise without including or informing me.”

(Male, Malaysia, 61-65 years old, Asian, 35 years in the USA)

“I have always felt valued in my department/college because I have a different cultural background. I was never involved in a conflict because of my ethnic origin. In my department, there are 2 of us from the same country. We had recently had a search and another faculty from the same country interviewed. I have then heard rumors on the hallway that one of my colleagues said that “we have enough people in my department from my country”. Rumors claim that my former dean had also made a statement during a search that “we have enough Koreans in our college”. Regarding students, I almost never receive comments from students about my accent. This semester happened for the first time in 15 years that a student said that “the questions that I have included in the exam are phrased poorly and it affects their performance. And why should they suffer from having an international instructor?” It turns out this was an online class with no face-to-face contact and the exams came with the textbook and were generated by the American authors of the textbook. This example showed me clearly the prejudice of the student. But oh well, we are in the South:):)

(Female, Romania, 36-40, years of age, white, 14 years in the USA)

**Student-Instructor Interaction**

“I have had conflicts with students. I feel that some students do not respect me or my expertise. Then, they complaint about me directly to my department chair, without first addressing the issue with me.”

(Female, South America, 45-50 years of age, Hispanic, 25 Years in the USA)

“Students expect me to be overly polite and not demanding.”

(Female, Japan, 41-45 years old, Asian, 24 years in the USA)

“Sometimes I have felt students being rude to instructors of international origin. Personally, I have seen students would make faces in response to announcement of a new assignment.”

(Female, India, 25-30, Asian, years of age, 6 years in the USA)

“German culture focuses on taking self-responsibility for your academic work/accomplishments and that of your team. U.S. students expect others to take responsibility and accommodate their needs and like to blame others for their lack of output (In German culture, one is measured on personal output and not their words). If I point out that they have to take responsibility for their output and how their actions negatively affect the teams output/accomplishments, they do not adapt to the situation but retreat rather than change because they have learned that somebody else will step up for them.”

(Male, Germany, 46-50 years of age, white, 23 years in the USA)
“…different understandings concerning punctuality and reliability is a continuous problem with students/colleagues”
(Female, Germany, 61-65 years old, white, 26 years in the USA)

“During advising I asked a student to follow a certain path that he disagreed with and he just said that he would rather have another adviser and walked out. It was clearly something that he wouldn’t have done if he hadn’t been facing an immigrant woman”
(Female, India, 51-55 years old, Asian, 29 years in the USA)

“Students at this institution respect foreign teachers less”
(Male, Romania, 46-50 years old, white, 21 years in the USA)

Language / Accent

“Not sure I would describe it as a conflict, but I have had students note my mispronunciation of words on evaluations (e.g. pronouncing agriculture more like egggriculture) many times for very large sections. Just a note that it impacts evaluations and student assumptions”
(Female, Canada, 41-46 years old, white, 18 years in the USA)

“Make fun of how I pronounce certain words”
(Male, Canada, 46-50 years old, white, 15 years in the USA)

“Comments regarding accent.”
(Female, Brazil, 31-35 years old, Hispanic, 13 years in the USA)

“Language barrier (students often complain about my accent).”
(Female, China, 46-50 years old Asian, 18 years in the USA)

“Language. I guess I have a strong accent that at the beginning it was hard to follow”
(Female, Peru, 66-70 years old, Hispanic, 19 years in the USA)

“All of my students are racists, they do not like me just because I speak with accent”
(Male, Armenia, 41-45 years old, white, 13 years in the USA)

In sum, assimilation strategy was not associated with any of the dependent variables. Integration was positively associated with private life and work satisfaction and negatively associated with perceptions of conflict. By contrast, separation and marginalization and migrant personality were negatively associated with private life and work satisfaction and positively associate with perceptions of conflict at work. The open ended question revealed four reasons of disagreement
in the American academic environment: competition, exclusion, mastering of the enlist language and professor-student interaction. The results of the regression analysis models as well as the answers provided to the open ended question will be addressed in detail in the discussion section.
Chapter 5

Discussion

Despite the accelerating internationalization of institutional settings, organizational scholars rarely acknowledge differences among foreign-born employees that do not originate from demographic characteristics such as age, gender, race, or ethnicity, or from the cultural prescripts associated with their countries of origin. This approach, however, renders the body of foreign-born employees comparable to that of natives or, at most, projects them as mere representatives of their countries of origin. Moreover, such overgeneralizations lead to expectations of behavior in line with immigrants’ demographics, thereby ignoring aspects related to individuals’ personality and systems of values.

Foreign-born professionals’ identities are particularly subject to associations with mainstream population identities since they tend to be fluent English speakers and completed their terminal degrees in the USA. There are, however, stronger identifiers that differentiate foreign-born professionals from each other and from the natives, fact that affect theirs actions, interactions, and perceptions of reality. These identifiers are the result of the immigration process and reside at the intersection of innate predispositions, value systems developed during early socialization, and adaptation to host country values.

The present study, based on an original research design and dataset, is the first to highlight the role of immigration related identity markers, namely the migrant personality and acculturation strategies, in foreign-born professors’ perceptions of conflict at work as well as their private life and work satisfaction. The following section discusses the findings of the multivariate regression analyses that modeled the aforementioned relationships in the context of
foreign-born professors’ original cultural backgrounds measured on the collectivism-individualism continuum and American universities’ work environments. Initially the discussion will address separately the associations between immigration related identity markers and perceptions of conflict at work, private life satisfaction, and work satisfaction. These associations will then be analyzed into the current global socio-economic context.

5.1. The impact of foreign-born professors’ identity markers on perceptions of conflict at work

While numerous identity markers, such as age, gender, race or seniority have been identified as predictors of conflict at work, immigration related ones have rarely been employed in studies addressing work conflicts in academia. This omission can be attributed, in part, to the fact that conflict in university settings is rarely violent – most of the times being imperceptible by parties who are not directly involved – and, in part, to the fact that traditional demographics and nationality are often the only visible differences among foreign-born professors. Findings of the current study, however, show that immigration related identity markers rather than traditional demographic characteristics influence the ways in which foreign-born professors interpret work-related dynamics.

At the bivariate level of analysis (Table 2) the only variables significantly associated with perceptions of conflict were three of the four acculturation strategies, migrant personality and private life and work satisfaction. While propensities toward the higher end of the migrant personality continuum as well as separation and marginalization strategies of acculturation increase perceptions of conflict at work, integration strategy as well as private life and work satisfaction minimize such perceptions. Moreover, none of the previously identified predictors of
conflict, such as gender (Brewer, Mitchell & Weber, 2002; Papa & Natalie, 1989), race (Jehn et al., 1999; Jehn et al., 2008; Pelled, Eisenhardt & Xin, 1999), or age (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Zhang, Harwood & Hummert, 2005) had an impact of the dependent variable.

Assimilation strategy was not significantly associated with perceptions of conflict both at the bivariate and multivariate levels of analysis, as predicted \((H1_{b1})\). This is a surprising finding given that, intuitively, individuals who adopt host country’s values and reject their original ones should be fully integrated into mainstream population, therefore, should experience the least amount of identity or perceptional incongruences between them and the others. Yet, assimilation strategy was not significantly correlated with perceptions of conflict, work satisfaction or life satisfaction \((H4a_1; H4b_1)\). Moreover, correlations of assimilation variable with age, family income, years spent at the current institution and country of terminal degree had only statistical significance, but not a practical one, since none of the Pearson correlation coefficients were higher than 0.20.

An explanation for such an unexpected result could be that immigrants adopting host country’s values while shedding their own develop similar identities with the native-born. Consequently their perceptions of conflict are likely to vary randomly within this sub-population, just like they vary in the mainstream population, without manifesting a precise predisposition toward perceiving more or less conflict in the workplaces. A more comprehensive explanation of this finding, however, could draw on the cultural distance between original and receiving countries as well as the idiocentric predisposition (migrant personality) of foreign-born professors. Stephens (2016) argues that rather than interpreting assimilation strategy as a coincidental adoption of host country values, acculturation scholars should differentiate between mechanical and opportunistic assimilation. The mechanical approach may be employed by those
immigrants who originate from countries with similar cultural background with the country of destination. In this situation, immigrants’ adaptation to the host country and blending into the mainstream population are relatively effortless, without significant cognitive dissonances or high risk of acculturative stress. Even when the cultural distance is significant, immigrants scoring high on the migrant personality may integrate without effort into individualistic environments, such as the United States’. In such case, the reduce need for in-group affiliation (Boneva & Frieze, 2001) facilitates a straightforward connection with the native culture.

The opportunistic assimilation, on the other hand, draws on the social desirability idea and it is adopted when immigrant employees purposefully embrace host country’s values with the aim of accelerating integration into workplaces and for career advancement purposes (Stephens 2016; Samnani, Boekhorst & Harrison, 2013). Such type of deliberated assimilation would prompt immigrants to declare an American identity and recount minimal negative interactions at work. Because foreign-born professors arrived in the USA mainly for career opportunities, I hypothesized that those adopting assimilation strategy would perceive less conflict at work. However, this hypothesis was not supported, which indicates a rather mechanical approach among those who adopted assimilation strategy in the sample. At the same time, none of the existing acculturation scales, including the one used in the current study, differentiate between mechanical and opportunistic assimilation which invites for future, more sensitive developments of acculturation scales.

The associations found significant at the bivariate level of analysis remain significant at the multivariate level, when control and substantive variables are introduced (Tables 3a-3d and Table 4). In line with research that indicated integration as the most adaptive strategy (Behrens, del Pozo, Großhennig, Sieberer & Graef-Calliess, 2015; Ince et al., 2014), the findings of the
current study support the hypothesis \((H1b_2)\) that tendencies towards integration reduce perceptions of workplace conflict (Table 3b, Step 1). The association disappears, however, when the substantive variables life satisfaction and work satisfaction are introduced in the analysis (Table 3b, Step 2 and 3). A possible interpretation of this finding is that immigrants who embrace host culture values without the psychological stressors inherent in rejecting one’s culture of origin, will be more satisfied with life, and therefore less likely to report conflictual workplace dynamics. An equally possible explanation could be that individuals with high levels of life satisfaction may possess the necessary characteristics to balance their cultural loyalties. This, in turn may prevent immigrant employees from interpreting certain work dynamics as contentious or from experiencing work conflicts at high levels of stress.

As hypothesized \((H1a_1\) and \(H1a_2\)), predisposition towards separation and marginalization are significantly associated with immigrant academics’ perceptions of conflict at work: the stronger the predisposition towards any of these strategies, the stronger the perceptions workplace conflict. This is at no surprise as such tendencies have been already associated with high levels of stress (Ince et al, 2014; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Han, Berry, Gui & Zheng, 2015). The associations remained robust even after controlling for demographic variables, as well as job and life satisfaction (Table 3c and 3d). Because both of these strategies involve rejection of host country values, a variety of substantive cultural mismatches between the foreign-born professors and the native-born may be at play.

However, this should not automatically translate into identifying foreign-born professors who adopted separation or marginalization strategies as conflict initiators. Equally possible it is that American co-workers or foreign-born employees who adopt assimilation or integration strategies may be prone to perceive immigrants who reject host-country values as “different” or
non-American and, consequently, at odds with local beliefs. To exemplify, an immigrant with separating or marginalizing tendencies, may disagree with Western values of efficiency or quantitative measures of performance. This, in turn, may trigger disagreements or discomfort on the part of those who consider such practices good measures of performance. As de Dreu (2008) argued, such perceptions of cognitive and identity-based differences can lead to conflictual interactions.

Moreover, disapproving reactions from natives or foreign-born academics with assimilation or integration strategies may trigger identity threat feelings among those adopting marginalization or separation. In fact, research suggests that immigrants often disagree about desirability, morality or legitimacy of host culture values. There are not isolated cases when immigrants who do not fully adopt local practices and values are suggested to consider “going back home if they don’t like it here” (Flores, Tschann, VanOss Marin & Pantoja, 2004; Farver, Narang, & Bhadha, 2002).

Although separation or marginalization approaches of acculturation have been more often documented among low-skill immigrants living in enclaves of their own culture (Bauder, 2005), they may also occur in professional environments that require critical thinking and intellectual pursuit. Academia is a relevant example of such settings, based on autonomous work, skepticism and the development of unique intellectual identities. At the same time, such characteristics are not necessary rewarded, when the target of criticism is the host culture values or workplace practices.

Another significant finding of the models assessing the interaction between acculturation strategies and perceptions of workplace conflict (Tables 3a – 3d) is that female foreign professors perceive more conflict in the workplace than their male counterparts. Similar findings
were previously identified in work related studies; gender inequality was found as a causal factor that produces workplace tensions among women and difficulties in work-life balance (Jones Burke & Westman, 2013; Lunau et al., 2014). Women also reported more bullying from both men and women (Gilbert, Raffo & Sutarso, 2013) as well as unsupportive behavior especially from their female counterparts, as reflected in the “queen bee syndrome” (Sheppard & Aquino, 2013; Ely, 1994). Moreover, gender can interlock with the foreign-born status and other markers of disadvantage including race/ethnicity, sexual orientation or organizational rank to create heightened levels of vulnerability among women (Li, 2006).

Consistent with previous research that correlates well-being with interpersonal conflict (Bolger et al., 1989; Hahn, 2000; Lepore, 1992; Page & Wilhelm, 2007) satisfaction with private life and work were significantly associated with reduced perceptions of workplace conflict among foreign professors, across all models ($H6a$ and $H6b$). An explanation for this finding could draw on the spillover effect theory (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999) that proposes that positive experiences in one aspect of life influences positively experiences in another one. Thus, academics who enjoy their work and balance successfully organizational commitments with personal ones are less stressed, more cooperative, and more willing to involve in work groups.

Such actions, in turn, make them less prone to interpersonal conflicts at work (Barsade, Ward, Turner & Sonnenfeld, 2000; Sirgy, 2002; Judge & Klinger, 2008). However, because the temporal order of well-being and perceptions of conflict at work cannot be established, causality cannot be inferred; in other words, because the study was built on cross-sectional data, neither can be stated that high levels of work and private life satisfaction are responsible for reduced perceptions of conflict, nor that reduced perceived conflict determines high levels of well-being.
The only assertion that can be made is that heightened levels of private life and work satisfaction predict low levels of conflict at work.

As predicted \((H2)\), migrant personality is positively associated with perceptions of workplace conflict in the expected direction (Table 4); the stronger the propensity towards a migrant personality the higher the perceptions of workplace conflict. Traditional indicators of diversity such as age, gender, race and income were not significantly associated with immigrant academics’ perceptions of conflict. Similar to acculturation strategy models (Tables 3a – 3d), the model evaluating the relationship between migrant personality and perceptions of conflict revealed that life and work satisfaction are significant negative predictors of perceptions of conflict.

As the length of time spent in the host country can affect the ways in which individuals interpret interpersonal interactions (Berry, 1980) I expected that longer US residency would influence perceptions of conflict at work. Years spent in the USA, however, did not impact perceptions of conflict, neither in the acculturation strategy models nor in the migrant personality model. This result could be attribute to the autonomous and independent nature of the academic training and professorship (Arimoto, Teichler & Cummings, 2013).

The positive association between migrant personality and perceptions of conflict at work represents one of the key findings of the study. The fact that the relationship is maintained even after controlling for life and work satisfaction – both significant suppressors of workplace conflict (Barsade, Ward, Turner & Sonnenfeld, 2000) – specifically highlights the importance of the finding. Although the relationship between migrant personality and work conflict has not been identified previously, many of the former’s characteristics, such as competitiveness, high achievement, or low affiliation predicted this association.
Generally, individuals tend to have an inflated view of their cooperativeness and tend to be apprehensive about their counterpart’s competitiveness (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008). This bias was found to hinder the management of work related conflicts (Babcock, Loewenstein, Issacharoff & Camerer, 1995) and to increase the negative evaluations of counterparts and their conflict resolution behavior in intergroup conflicts (Mo’az, Ward, Katz & Ross, 2002). Moreover, when placed in high competitive environments, individuals displaying high competitiveness tend to be more susceptible to negative social cues, and consequently perceive certain social interactions as antagonistic (Houston, Kinnie, Lupo, Terry & Ho, 2000).

High achievers were also found to report more conflict. While some suggested that envy toward high achievers may contribute to the occurrence of contentious situations in the workplace (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf & Cooper, 2011; Qureshi, Iftikhar, Janjua, Zaman, Raja & Javed, 2015) others attributed such situations to the fact that high performing persons may not conform to group norms, behavior that is sanctioned by the rest of the group (Zapf, 1999). The need for power was also identified as predicting conflict (Terhune 1968; Stewart & Rubin 1976).

The bivariate analysis (Table 2) revealed that migrant personality was not negatively associated with assimilation or integration strategies of acculturation, as predicted ($H3b_1$ and $H3b_2$), but was positively associated with separation and marginalization ($H3a_1$ and $H3a_2$). The increased competitive nature of those scoring high on the migrant personality line together with their reduced need for group affiliation may contribute to their minimal interest to blend into the mainstream population. Equally plausible could be the fact that those who did not find the host country values appealing, and who did not foster close relationships with the natives became more competitive and less willing to form long-term connections.
5.2. The impact of foreign-born professors’ identity markers on private life satisfaction

Although life satisfaction in general, or work satisfaction have been comprehensively studied by scientists of various disciplines, the satisfaction with private life and work among foreign-born professors has rarely taken the front seat in social sciences studies. Some of the reasons for this relatively reduced interest may be the small number of professional immigrants compared to low-skilled ones, presumed high cultural and adaptive competencies, and incomes high enough to repel poverty as a source of life strain. Yet, foreign-born professors experience numerous life events that are prone to negatively affect their levels of life and work satisfaction. Among them are the immigration process in itself that entails disruptions from the cultural and physical comfort zone, the adaptation to a new culture, as well as the career advancement strain that is heightened by the non-native speaker status and lack of professional networks. Moreover the current academic environment has the potential to add another set of professional obstacles to foreign-born professors due to the increased pressure to publish more and to secure external funding.

The current study sought to capture foreign-born professors’ levels of private life and work satisfaction with the aim of highlighting an issue of significant importance, yet less inquired within the aforementioned populations. Private life and work satisfaction are important predictors of health, achievement, productivity, cooperativeness, social relations, prosocial behavior and parenting to name a few (Sirgy, 2002). The distinction between private life and work satisfaction was created because foreign-born professors may experience them differently than natives do. While work achievements may generate high levels of work satisfaction, the disruptions embedded in immigration may lower the satisfaction with private life. Consequently the study differentiated between these variables with two distinct set of questions. Foreign-born
professors’ life satisfaction was captured by items measuring satisfaction with their financial situations, health, marriage, neighborhood, physical appearance, social life, friends and leisure time. Work satisfaction was captured by items measuring the satisfaction with opportunities for career advancement, requirements for tenure and promotion, academic freedom, workloads, collegiality and personal life accommodation.

Contrary to predictions \((H4a2)\), results of the current study revealed that adopting host country’s values through integration strategy of acculturation impact positively private life satisfaction, and rejecting them through the processes of separation or marginalization impact negatively the variable \((H4c1\) and \(H4c2\)). One of the reasons for this finding may constitute the immigration circumstances and education level of the studied population. Unlike other categories of immigrants – such as those arriving in the USA to reunify with family, seek asylum or through visa lottery – foreign-born professors immigrated for career opportunities and most of them completed their terminal degrees in the United States (Open Doors, 2015). Thus, their immigration journeys begun in academic environments where they had to master the language. Moreover studying in an American university allowed them a prior socialization into academia. Usually, university campuses rarely harbor ethnic or national enclaves, fact that forces foreign students to interact on a daily basis with Americans or other foreign students with various cultural backgrounds. Consequently, their process of integration into the US society progresses in an environment very different than their native ones, facilitating the adoption of American values and practices.

Moreover, their cultural adaptation is accompanied by demanding educational processes that happened in a language that, most of the times, differs from their native ones. Linguistic theorists proposed that the languages individuals use can influence the ways in which they think,
and how they perceive the world (Adelson, 2005; Gilbert et. al, 2006; Ozgen & Davies, 2002, Robertson et. al, 2004). As foreign-born professors’ learning processes happen in English, their perceptions of reality may differ from those immigrants whose settlement process happens in national ethnic /enclaves using native languages. Therefore, the adaptation process to the US society experienced in university campuses, together with the intensive use of English language are prone to facilitate foreign-born professor’s adoption of host country’s values and to increase the satisfaction with life over time.

A second explanation of the positive association between integration strategy and heightened levels of life satisfaction resides on the balanced aspect of this acculturation strategy. Unlike assimilation, that involves the stressful process of abandoning original cultural values (Berry, 2006), integration strategy allows immigrants to embrace the local values that are appealing to them while maintaining their original ones. This strategy was identified as the least intrusive one that helps immigrants to settle in their new country without feelings of complete abandonment of identity and national origins (Rudmin, 2003). The fact that assimilation strategy was not significantly associated with life or work satisfaction (Tables 5 and 7) supports this assumption. Sustained processes of cultural shedding while embracing new systems of values may result eventually in blended identities and feelings of inauthenticity which are prone to depress the satisfaction with life, rather than enhance it (Teja & Akhtar, 1981; Mori, 2000).

Further explanations of the positive impact of integration strategy on life satisfaction draw on the various domains of life satisfaction. Neighborhood, for instance, and the quality of relationships with other residents were identified as significant predictors of life satisfaction (Jeffres & Dobos, 1995). Neighborliness was found as having a positive effect not only on perceived quality of life but also on self-reported health (Muhajarine, Labonte, Williams &
Randall, 2008), and social cohesiveness – that is, consistent, close contact with neighbors – predicting heightened levels of well-being (Dittmann & Goebel, 2010). Moreover, community involvement was identified as an important determinant of community pride and well-being (Baker & Palmer, 2006), and community development culture, as reflected by residents’ preference for residential development, as a crucial factor in the economic development of the communities (McKee, Wall & Luther, 1997).

As people prefer to reside closer to their workplaces (Lawton, Murphy & Redmond, 2013) it is expected that foreign-born professors live in the vicinity of university campuses rather than in immigrant/ethnic enclaves. This makes neighborhoods where natives constitute the predominant population the most likely residences for foreign professors. Moreover, one study found that better educated persons are more willing to cross cultural boundaries and move to regions that are culturally different from their homes (Bauernschuster, Falck, Heblich, Suedekum & Lameli, 2014). Therefore, foreign-born professors are most likely to live in areas where the predominant population is American or mixed, further advancing their cultural integration in the United States. Possessing high inter-cultural competencies help foreign-born professors to communicate better with their neighbors, to form close relationships, and to participate in their home communities – factors that are prone to increase their life satisfaction.

Foreign-born professors adopting the integration strategy can also develop more meaningful friendships with Americans and their fellow countrymen in the USA. Understanding and appreciating local values helps foreign-born professors go beyond the circumstantial or utilitarian relationships resulted from daily interactions with coworkers or neighbors, and to develop meaningful, long term friendships based on mutual understanding and common views of reality. At the same time, by preserving their original beliefs as well, foreign-born professors
continue to interact effortlessly with their compatriots in the USA and to re-create, to a certain extent, the comfort zones of nationally homogenous groups.

Contrary to expectations \((H4c_1 \text{ and } H4c_2)\), separation and marginalization strategies of acculturation were negatively associated with life satisfaction. While the result for marginalization strategy are not surprising given the overall psychological maladjustments related with this strategy (Ince et. al, 2014; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Han, Berry, Gui & Zheng, 2015) the result for separation contradict previous studies that recognized living in ethnic enclaves and preserving original identities as the most rewarding adaptation approaches for immigrants (Knies, Nandi & Platt, 2016). As previously mentioned, however, foreign professor’s immigration journeys and their education levels differ from those of other categories of immigrants. These factors may render foreign-born professors’ adaptation to the US society less stressful and the American value system more comprehensible and attractive.

Gender is one of the few variables that consistently displayed associations with life satisfaction across acculturation strategy models: foreign-born female professors experience higher private life satisfaction than males, regardless of the acculturation strategy adopted. However, the relationship is significant only in the second step, when work satisfaction is introduced in the analysis, which points toward the intervening effect of the latter variables. Although there is some evidence suggesting that females do experience higher levels of happiness (Di Tella, MacCullock, & Oswald, 2001) comprehensive literature reviews point toward conflicting evidence – some evidence confirm this relationship while other evidence point to no gender differences (Dolan et al, 2008). Dolan and colleagues concluded that gender interact with many other factors in relation to happiness.
As the models suggest (Table 5), a significant intervening factor into gender - life satisfaction relationship is the work satisfaction variable. The strength of the relationship between private life satisfaction and work satisfaction as well as their spillover effects, have been recognized by numerous studies (Sirgy, 2012). New strands of research, however, sought to identify other intervening factors in this relationship. The intersection between gender and life goals is one of them. Macrcelli and Easerlin (2007) argued that women start their lives happier than men but in time they become less happy because they reach their life goals sooner. Most of the women seek satisfaction in two important life domains: family life and financial, while most of the men are more interested in advancing their careers. Because women reach their goals sooner than men they reach their happiness peak sooner as well. Immigrant female professors, however, chose careers that require longer periods of training which together with the adaptation time required by the immigration journey places their happiness peaks at a level in time comparable with men’s.

Another moderator of the relationship between gender and life satisfaction could be country of origin. Focusing on country effects, Graham (2012) analyzed the effects of gender on happiness in many countries using large-scale surveys, and her analysis revealed that women are happier in the USA while men are happier in Russia. She speculates that the reason for these findings is the disparities in status; women hold a lower status in Russia than the USA. Foreign-born female professors may experience an increase in status in the USA due to comparisons with their statuses in their home countries as well as due to their professional achievements.

Race is another variable that displayed a significant impact on life satisfaction, in the first step of the analysis, when work satisfaction was not considered. When work satisfaction is introduced, however, the association disappears, which is expected if we take into consideration
the powerful effect that work satisfaction has on life satisfaction. The surprising fact is, however, that in three of the four models (Table 5) – integration, separation and marginalization – whites experience lower levels of life satisfaction. This finding contradicts previous studies on life satisfaction in the USA which pointed towards higher levels of happiness among whites (Dolan, Peasgood & White, 2008).

One of the reasons for this unexpected relationship can be the socio-economic level of immigrant’s countries of origin and the projected expectations of life satisfaction once settled in the USA. In the sample of the current study, of 117 whites 60 originate from countries with advanced economies such as Germany, France, Canada or Italy (The World Factbook, 2017), and the other 57 from countries with advanced developing economies, mostly European, such as Romania, Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, Estonia or Russia (The World Factbook, 2017). Because developed countries have relatively low levels of income inequality, rank the highest on happiness scales, have stable governments, functional bureaucracies, and subsidized health-care and education institutions (Minkov & Hofstede, 2013), they can increase citizens’ expectations in many aspects of life. Once settled in the USA immigrants for developed countries may find unsatisfactory certain aspects of the US society, such as the profit-oriented health-care system, the right to bear arms, soaring costs of higher education, or the overly competitive work environments as a result of market-oriented educational institutions.

Another explanation for this finding draws on differences in life style between the United States and European countries. As most whites in the sample emigrated from Europe, they may find American settlements at odds with those from their home countries. Because European countries have heightened population densities their citizens live closer to each other, in tight-knit communities, most of the time in blocs of flats. Such communities are less frequent in
American residential places that are usually characterized by stand-alone houses, remote from downtowns or historical parts of a city. Usually, these types of residential places are less conducive to feelings of belonging to a community and close relationships. Another aspect of European cities that is less developed in the United States is the large number of sidewalk coffee-shops, parks within the city, plazas, historic sites and other public spaces. Such developments are more conducive to socialization and shared experiences. Numerous studies pointed toward the benefits of such amenities as reflected by the easy access to facilities for leisure time, walking rather than reliance on cars and by the shared experiences with fellow citizens (Jeffres & Dobos, 1993; Santos, Martins & Brito, 2007). Although the effect of years spent in the USA on life satisfaction is very small, it is worth mentioning. As previous studies indicated, the time spent in the country of destination helps immigrants to better understand and adopt the local life styles and values, therefore to feel more at home and part of the host society (Berry, 2006).

Contrary to prediction ($H5a$), migrant personality – the second identity marker of foreign-born professors (Table 6) – was not associated with private life satisfaction. The interplay between acculturation strategy adopted, the time spent in the USA, the satisfaction with work or the cultural background could mitigate traits such as competitiveness or low affiliation propensities, that were previously identifies as negatively influencing satisfaction with life.

In sum, the positive predictors of private life satisfaction were integration strategy of acculturation, work satisfaction and being female, and the negative predictors were separation and marginalization strategies of acculturation and being white. Future studies on foreign-born professionals operating in different fields, such as medicine or law, could reveal different predictor of well-being that could create a better imagine of the professional immigrant’s adaptation process in the USA.
5.3. The impact of foreign-born professors’ identity markers on work satisfaction

As predicted ($H4b_2$), adopting integration strategy of acculturation increases work satisfaction. This comes as no surprise as good relationships with coworkers and a positive perception of organizational climate influence the ways in which individuals assess their work satisfaction (Ostrognay, Hart, Griffin, Norris & Wearing, 1997). Although teaching is characterized by a large degree of autonomy (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005) professors still have to collaborate with their colleagues in departmental issues such as building the curriculum, establishing tenure and promotion criteria, or creating student evaluation standards, to name a few. In order for foreign-born professors to participate in department-related projects and to positively experience the work, not only they have to have cooperative skills but they also have to share with their colleagues similar views of reality, which most of the times comes with shared systems of values. Moreover without a good understanding of the organizational goals and vision foreign professors would be less likely to competently participate in their departments’ decision making processes.

This finding echoes the domain specificity theory of acculturation (Keefe & Padilla, 1987; Arends-Toth & Vijver, 2006) which points towards understanding the acculturation phenomenon as a multidirectional process that evolves differently and has different outcomes, that is different acculturation strategies for distinct domains of life. For instance, an immigrant may seek assimilation in organizational culture but may opt for separation in family and gender-related matters, with equally satisfying results in all these life domains.

Assimilation was not associated with work satisfaction, as predicted ($H4b_1$). As discussed above, assimilation strategy can generate responses that vary within the immigrant population just as much as they vary within the host country population, therefore not
influencing the work satisfaction in any particular directions. As anticipated, separation and marginalization strategies of acculturation were negatively associated with work satisfaction (\(H4d_1\) and \(H4d_2\)) as shared values and beliefs are essential for the functioning of any social group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Because nationally diverse work groups are by nature characterized by a variety of cultural prescripts brought into the group by immigrant employees, values’ alignments are necessary for effective collaborations. If co-workers hold significantly different perceptions of reality and world views, they are less likely to collaborate on projects and agree upon decisions, facts that may decrease their productivity and job satisfaction (Godin & Gingras, 2000)

Moreover, different values and beliefs can be interpreted as threats to identity which, not only prevent collaborations but can transform cordial relationships into hostile divisions (De Dreu & Gelfand, 2008).

Except life satisfaction, which was positively associated with work satisfaction in all four models, gender is the only variable that consistently displayed an association with work satisfaction across all models and steps. Female foreign-born professors experience less satisfaction with their jobs even when controlling for satisfaction with the private life. This result echoes many previous studies that revealed decreased work satisfaction among female professors due to still existing sexism, heightened experiences of bullying (Gilbert, Raffo, & Sutarso, 2013) or the “queen bee” syndrome manifested through lack of support especially from female coworkers (Ely, 1994; Sheppard & Aquino, 2013). Another prevalent factor contributing to lower levels of work satisfaction among female professors is the insufficient accommodation of their private lives, especially among faculty with young children (Jones, Burke, & Westman, 2013; Lunau et al., 2014).
The foreign status may also play a role in the low levels of work satisfaction among foreign-born female faculty. Not only they have to overcome gender discrimination barriers or work-life balance issues, but they also have to permanently mitigate their minority status in an environment where they are actually expected to behave according to their cultural prescripts (Shrake, 2006). Some faculty declared that students and some of their colleagues expect behaviors that reflect mainstream cultural stereotypes associated with their specific countries.

As expected (H5b), migrant personality was negatively associated with work satisfaction. The higher the propensity towards this personality type, the lower the work satisfaction is. This is not a surprising finding give the high competitive nature of those with a pregnant migrant personality and their power needs. Although productive, competitiveness and the need for power can depress work satisfaction especially if they are not rewarded as expected. The fact that satisfaction with private life does not render the relationship between migrant personality and work satisfaction insignificant points toward the powerful connection between the two variables; irrespective of the levels of private life satisfaction, those manifesting strong propensities toward a migrant personality have lower levels of work satisfactions. Nevertheless, assessments of private life and work satisfaction as well as perceptions of conflict at work cannot be attributed to identity markers alone since multiple contextual factors contribute to individuals’ evaluations of reality. The next section places the connection between identity markers and satisfaction with work and private life into the global context.

5.4. Identity markers and well-being in the current socio-economic global context

The socio-economic differences between country of origin and country of destination together with the current market-oriented global context can influence international professors’
acculturation process. Additionally this combination is prone to affect life and work satisfaction, as well as perceptions of conflict at work. Traditionally, the theoretical framework of acculturation has focused on cultural differences between sending and receiving countries, without consideration of the countries’ economic and cultural powers. Stephens (2016), however, argues that the hierarchical relations that currently exist between countries can affect the ways in which immigrants perceive their own cultural values as well as the values of their countries of destination. If the country of destination ranks economically higher than the country of origin and holds more cultural power, immigrants will purposefully seek to embrace the host country’s values and to blend eventually into the mainstream populations. Stephens (2016) names this strategy of acculturation *opportunistic assimilation*, warning against the psychological maladjustments that result from artificially molding identities that oppose original ones. This type of assimilation is likely to be found among individuals who emigrated from countries with underdeveloped or developing economies and who have been exposed to the idea of cultural supremacy of the economically developed ones.

Rostow (1960) proposed that economically advanced countries harbor cultural values that drive material success. These values include individualism, openness to technological progress, appreciation and practice of free-market principles, and a break from traditional values. By contrast, countries that are not economically developed support fatalism, collective orientation, and the perpetuation of traditional values with little receptivity to progress. Social Scientists generally agree that this classification reflects the dichotomy of Western and non-Western countries and their implicit characteristics: individualism vs. collectivism and rich vs. poor. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010).
As most of the current immigration flows from Non-Western to Western countries, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of immigrants arrive in the USA with ingrained assumptions of American cultural supremacy. Consequently, many immigrants will try to adopt American values and practices regardless of the stark differences between the latter and their original ones. Moreover, if people emigrate for professional reasons and work in environments marked predominantly by American values, as is the case with foreign-born professors, the opportunistic assimilation is likely adopted. Such paths of acculturation, however, can lead in time to feelings of inauthenticity and alienation from both host-country’s population and original national groups and it can have negative effects on individual’s mental well-being (Reiss et al., 2015; Oakkar et al., 2015; Behrens et al., 2014).

Although findings of this study did not reveal an association between assimilation strategy and life satisfaction, work satisfaction, or perceptions of conflict at work, the potential inadequate outcomes of opportunistic assimilation cannot be overlooked. The current study made use of an already existing acculturation scale that did not differentiate between opportunistic and mechanical assimilation, which may explain the missing association. Integration strategy, however, displayed a positive association with life and work satisfaction, which points toward the desirability of this type of acculturation path.

The unique aspect of the positive association between migrant personality and perceptions of conflict at work and the negative association between migrant personality and work satisfaction derives from the conjunction of individual behavioral predisposition, cultural influences of sending and receiving countries, and workplace characteristics as reflections of the existing socio-economic ethos. Because national cultures equip individuals from birth with the
necessary skills for social interactions, it is reasonable to assume that early socialization would continue to influence individuals throughout their lives.

Although the findings of this study did not indicate a significant relationship between perceptions of conflict and original national culture measured on the collectivism-individualism continuum, they revealed, as predicted, a positive association between the original culture and migrant personality; individuals from collectivistic societies tent to score higher on the migrant personality line (Table 2).

Because many of the collectivistic societies are characterized by slower economic development with fewer opportunities for advancement (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010), flawed democracies (Matthijs, 2014; Kekic, 2007), and an overall higher societal cynicism (Bond et al., 2004), the “push factors” (Lee, 1966) and a propensity for migration are likely to occur. Therefore, it can be inferred that national cultures carve individual preferences, desires, and behaviors and can influence perceptions of reality. At the same time, Sirckeci and Cohen (2016) cautioned that immigrants may constitute a population that is particularly sensitive to conflict. They argued that instead of seeing immigrants as a group in “search for a better life” to understand transnational migration as a flight from latent or overt conflicts in the country of origin, leading to perceptions of insecurity. Furthermore, Sirckeci (2009) insists that ethnic or religious clashes should not be viewed as the main sources of conflict in a country. Equally critical are feelings of oppression, lack of economic opportunities, and extreme competitive environments.
5.5. Perceptions of conflict at work, life satisfaction and work satisfaction in the US academic context

Acculturation strategies carved by American and original cultural values as well as individual predispositions toward a migrant personality cannot be seen as sole responsible for international professors’ satisfaction with work or private life, or for their perceptions of conflict at work. Equally significant is the current academic climate in the USA.

The recent economic crisis coupled with a market / consumer approach have changed the higher education climate. Today the academic environment is very competitive and demanding. The tenure and promotion requirements increased significantly over the last two decades. While no longer that 10-15 years ago, university professors could obtain tenure with good student evaluations and a few publications, now they have to build very substantial portfolios with numerous publications in top tier journals, yearly conference participations, undergraduate students’ engagement in research, and a variety of professional service and administrative tasks. Moreover, many universities underwent funding cuts which translated into heavy workloads and increased expectations of securing external funding (Bentley et al, 2012; Fredman & Doughney, 2012; Lorenz, 2012; Wilson, Marks, Noone, & Hamilton-Mackenzie, 2010). Such changes usually heighten the competition and tensions between employees and generate conflicts over distribution of resources and professional merit and recognition (De Dreu & Gelfad, 2008).

Another change brought by the managerial model is the decreasing contribution of faculty members in the decision making process. Shared governance has always been one of the hallmarks of the academic profession. Recently, however, many decisions are taken top-down with little contribution from the professorial body (Gerber, 2014).
Besides overcoming resource-driven conflicts with co-workers, immigrant scholars have
to cope with feelings of loneliness and cultural estrangement (Stephens & Gheorghiu, 2016).
Many times foreign professors are the only representatives of their countries in their
departments, or they adapted to the American culture in a different way than other compatriots,
which can induce a permanent feeling of being an outsider. Due to language barriers many
foreign-born professors develop negative professional identities, constantly fighting feelings of
inadequacy for their careers (Liang, 2006). Moreover, the increased requirements for tenure and
promotion puts additional pressures on foreign-born faculty.

Many of them hold a working visa only. Because their applications for US residency is
tied to their employers, the pressure to reach higher levels of performance is even greater than
that of native professors or other international faculty who are already US residents or citizens.
Foreign scholars whose financial and residential security depend exclusively on their employers
not only have to overcome fears of professional failure but they also contend with terrifying
feelings of returning to, often, unstable countries of origin.

In sum, the multivariate regression models revealed immigration related identity markers
as significant sources of perceptions of conflict at work, as well as private life satisfaction and
work satisfaction. The next subsection will discuss answers to the survey’s open-ended question
that asked respondents to describe a conflict situation with a colleague, administrator, or student
that they felt was generated by differences in cultural backgrounds.
5.6. In their own words

Of 241 respondents, only 19 answered the open-ended question. Based on the analysis of the answers, the reasons for culture-generated conflicts could be classified in 4 themes: perceived competitive values of some American faculty members, exclusion from both formal / research groups and informal gatherings, lack of respect from students due to faculty’s foreign status and lack of credibility in the classroom due to having a foreign accent.

Echoing previous research (Deutsch, Coleman & Marcus, 2011) some respondents associated competition with a difficult work environment. A female professor from Brazil noticed that:

“When you have colleagues that are arrogant, dominant and competitive even with their other American colleagues it makes the work environment really difficult”.

Another female professor from Spain stated that because Americans have a high sense of competition they feel threatened by hard-working colleagues.

Competition may generate higher quality and increased productivity but it can also deteriorate relationships between co-workers. Especially in academia, where professors’ performance is measured based on individually generated outputs, competition can escalate to very high levels and consequently can transform ordinary frictions in hidden conflicts. Competitive environments are usually appreciated by employees when they triggers high levels of performance. However, when competition transforms in conflict, even the most competitive employees, such as foreign professors who immigrated to advance their careers, can find work environments troublesome.
A second recurrent reason for perceived conflict at work was the exclusion of foreign faculty from work-related or informal gatherings, as well as snubbing. One female faculty of Romanian origin recounted a party organized by one of her colleagues, where the host did not exchange with her any words the entire night. Then, she states:

“I ended up leaving the party without talking to the host who considered that I was very impolite for not talking to her. She has held a grudge on me ever since”

Another female professor who emigrated from Spain argued that differences in values, socio-economic background and nationality makes American professors uncomfortable, which ultimately results in avoidance and exclusion.

“People develop affinities based on personality, perceived similarities in socio-economic background and cultural/national background. When some people perceive you as “different” from them on some level, they can consciously or subconsciously start avoiding you, ignoring you or feeling somewhat uncomfortable around you”.

She also considers competition one of the main reasons for conflict:

“Although no overt conflict was ever expressed, I have felt ignored or “bypassed” in the past, in some situations, with some colleagues. One thing is for sure: due to constant pressures for competition, American workplaces are not environments where you want to develop any friendship, least of all when you are an immigrant. Being collegial – yes. But friendships? Hardly.

Another male professor from Malaysia declared that colleagues formed a private consulting business in his area of expertise without including or informing him.

Although cultural differences could represent lines of segregation within groups, many scholars did not consider them reasons for contentious relationship within universities. The idea
that diversity of backgrounds generates diversity of ideas (Ely & Roberts, 2008) was highly embraced by the diversity advocates in higher education. Moreover, some supporters of this idea thought that American professors are going to benefit from the unique cultural perspectives brought by foreign-born faculty and are going to productively collaborate on projects.

Moreover, the general understanding of the acculturation phenomenon as a linear process with the final outcome complete assimilation into the host society led to the assumption that international professors’ formative years spent in US universities will minimize the cultural differences between them and their American counterparts. This outcome however is not always the case. Many times, the prolonged exposure to host country’s values strengthen the original identity as in the case of separation strategy, or does not completely erase individuals’ original beliefs, as in the case of integration strategy.

Therefore, many foreign professors still behave consistent to their native cultural prescripts, many years after immigration. Moreover, most of them will never completely lose their accents which is always going to constitute an indicator of “being different”. When competition imperatives escalate ordinary arguments between employees, cultural differences can become real reasons for conflict.

Another cause for contentious interactions at work was the lack of credibility from the students’ part. One female professor, from South America, declared that:

“I have had conflicts with students. I feel that some students do not respect me or my expertise”.

Another female professor from India stated that:

“Sometimes I have felt students being rude to instructors of international origin. Personally, I have seen students would make faces in response to announcement of a new assignment”
Finally, a German male professor explained how German culture influences the expectations that he has from students and how they react to his expectations:

“German culture focuses on taking self-responsibility for your academic work/accomplishments and that of your team. U.S. students expect others to take responsibility and accommodate their needs and like to blame others for their lack of output. If I point out that they have to take responsibility for their output and how their actions negatively affect the teams output/accomplishments, they do not adapt to the situation but retreat rather than change because they have learned that somebody else will step up for them.”

Current assessments of American universities pointed towards the growth of the idea of “students as consumers” and some scholars argued that this practice will erode key values in higher education. As long as universities continue to direct their efforts in advertising, recruiting more and more students, and retaining them for financial reasons, the quality of the final outcome that is, the quality of students’ education, as well as students’ expectations from the professorial body are going to change (Fredman & Doughney, 2012). Rather than spending their efforts in improving school-related outcomes, students embrace the current university ethos seeking to obtain the diploma only. The differences between professor’s interests who want to pass forward their knowledge, and students’ interest who chase a diploma only is very likely to generate conflicts in the classroom.

Ultimately, the last theme that emerged from the analysis of the open-ended question is the foreign accent as a reason for student’s complaints. Six respondent reported that having an accent affected their authority in the classroom. One male of Canadian origin declared that students:

“Make fun of how I pronounce certain words”
A female professor also from Canada stated that her accent affected her student evaluations:

“All sure I would describe it as a conflict, but I have had students note my mispronunciation of words on evaluations (e.g. pronouncing agriculture more like eggggriculture) many times for very large sections. Just a note that it impacts evaluations and student assumptions”

As mentioned above, accents are probably one of the identity indicators that will never completely erase. Linguistics studies, however, could reveal what type of accents prevent the understanding of the message, the degree to which accents take away from the meaning, and to what extend accents impair student’s learning. The next and last section concludes the study and proposes future lines of research that could extend the current findings.
Chapter 6
Conclusions

6.1. Summary of the findings

The current study reveals that immigration-related identify-markers are predictors of perceptions of conflict at work, private life satisfaction and work satisfaction among foreign-born professors in the USA. Integration strategy was positively associated with private life and work satisfaction and negatively associated with perceptions of conflict at work. Contrary, separation and marginalization strategies of acculturation were negatively associated with private life and work satisfaction and positively associated with perceptions of conflict at work. Migrant personality was not associated with private life satisfaction but was negatively associated with work satisfaction and positively associated with perceptions of conflict at work.

These findings suggest that the ability to assimilate host country’s values while maintaining at least in part the original ones rewards the best foreign-born professors in the USA. Such approach of adaptation to the host country not only increases the private life and work satisfaction but also diminishes the negative affects resulted from conflictual interactions at work. On the other hand, a pregnant propensity towards the higher end of the migrant personality line - that is, high competitiveness, increased achievement desires and low affiliation with family and friends - decreases the work satisfaction and exacerbates the negative affects resulted from conflict at work.

Three other findings point towards the significance of this study. First, except gender, none of the other demographic variables traditionally associated well-being and conflict were substantially significant. Age, income, years spent in the US, immigration status, or years spent
at the current institution were not significant in any of the models. Being female, however, was associated with reduced work satisfaction, increased perceptions of conflict at work, and heightened private-life satisfaction.

Second, the models predicting the association between acculturation strategies and life satisfaction revealed a significant relationship between race and well-being. However, the finding is a rather unexpected one: whites are less satisfied with their private life than non-whites. One of reasons of this finding can be the culture and lifestyle of countries of origin. As most of the whites emigrated from economically advanced countries such as Canada, Australia or Northern European countries, or from advanced developing economies such as Romania, Poland etc., they have heightened expectations of leisure time, social interaction, urban development as well as social support as manifested in subsidized education and health care.

Lastly, contrary to expectations, the cultural background measured on the collectivism - individualism continuum did not play a role in any of the OLS models. However, cultural background presented important associations at the bivariate level of analysis. Individuals from collectivistic countries tend to have a higher propensity towards a migrant personality and marginalization strategy of acculturation. Moreover, collectivistic cultural background was associated with reduced private life and work satisfaction, yet it was not associated with perceptions of conflict at work.

6.2. Significance of the study

The current study is the first to draw attention on the impact of immigration-related identify markers on organizational conflict in American universities. Previous study examined nationally diverse work departments but the focus has always been on demographics, such as age
gender, race or nationality. None of the studies conducted before looked at the adaptation of foreign-born professors to the host country’s culture and at their desire to emigrate for professional advancement reasons. The findings of this study revealed that the cultural adaptation rather than any other demographic affects foreign-born professors’ life and work satisfaction as well as their perceptions of conflict at work. Moreover, the results were based on a new data-set, specifically collected for this study, which increases the validity of the findings.

The study is important for university administrators and policy makers as well. Becoming aware of the fact that regardless of the numbers of years spent in the USA, some immigrants will never fully adopt local values, should help administrators design policies of integration and build nationally diverse work teams in such ways that cultural incompatibilities are accommodated and minimized. Cultural diversity, if properly managed, has the potential to generate invaluable ideas and unique understandings of our social world.

6.3. Limitations

An important limitation of this study is that respondents self-selected into the sample; however, I made efforts to address biases related to a possible lack of randomness by setting up a cluster sampling design as specified in the Methods section. All of the variables displayed acceptable levels of skewness which indicates that lack of randomness was not a significant problem and that the results of the study are solid. Another related limitation is that the sample composition in terms of country of origin is not proportional with the world population. Although the populations of India and China, for instance, are significantly bigger than those of Germany or Romania, all these countries were relatively equally represented.
A second limitation is that a temporal order cannot be established between acculturation strategies and the emergence of the reported conflict at work. Therefore I cannot ascertain that acculturation strategies were a causal agent of respondents’ perceptions of workplace conflict any more than I can ascertain that the level of objective or perceived conflict may have influenced immigrant academics to favor a certain acculturation strategy. Moreover, perceptions of workplace conflict are inherently subjective and can only offer a one-sided view of the reported problems. Similarly, the use of self-reports for acculturation strategies remains a validity-related concern as concepts seeking to capture a newcomer’s degree of fit with a dominant culture are inherently prone to the social-desirability bias. This limitation, however, applies to virtually all existing acculturation measures.

As a result, researchers have been recently called upon to increase the practical utility of acculturation constructs by validating measures sensitive enough to detect inauthentic outcomes and to estimate the risk of long-term negative psycho-social adaptation in the lives of immigrants (Stephens, 2016). For example, do self-reports of assimilation truly reflect an American identity, largely indistinguishable from the native-born? Do self-reports of separation indicate active rejection of host country values or the mere convenience of preserving original culture in ethnic enclaves? Such conceptual challenges notwithstanding, I used validated and reliable measures of acculturation strategies, migrant personality and private life and work satisfaction that cover a variety of life domains. Results should be interpreted with caution, however, as the study examined tendencies or preferences towards a certain acculturation style and not membership in categorically determined groups.

Finally, the study focuses specifically on the case of academia which, despite growing resemblance with the corporate world, retains unique features such as academic freedom, higher
autonomy and a critical orientation to social dynamics. Therefore, I reiterate that findings cannot be generalized to the larger immigrant population.

6.4. Future Research

Future research should examine causal paths between professional immigrants’ acculturation strategies and conflict dynamics, as well as the agents involved, the nature of these conflicts and effects on workgroup cohesion, productivity, creativity and morale. Studies should also examine whether differences in acculturation strategies may cause conflicts among foreign-born immigrants themselves, and how this may affect work-groups.

Findings of this study invite researchers to give due consideration to the highly exigent and diverse processes of cultural adaptation that make the foreign-born an important agent of organizational diversity. Administrators and practitioners should be mindful of differences in acculturation and craft interventions that can minimize the negative effects of cultural identity-based clashes. Moreover, rather than focusing on the elimination of such differences for purposes of harmonious but uniform integration, organizations may benefit more by harnessing the creativity and substantive diversity in solutions and ideas inherent in the acculturation processes.

For instance, department chairs could propose research group’s compositions where faculty with similar interests but different cultural backgrounds could collaborate on projects. Throughout collaboration faculty would have a chance to get to know each other better and to understand the others’ intellectual approaches. At the college level, administrators could create events where foreign-born faculty have a chance to meet other international employees and eventually discover various common interests. Such events have the potential to mitigate feelings of alienation and to create avenues for relationships outside the workplace.
Administrators and department chairs could also administer surveys to identify the type of cultural adaptations that employees have undergone and to try to maximize the potential of intellectual differences inherent in cultural differences. Rather than trying to bring foreign employees to a common cultural denominator, chief diversity officers and administrators could channel these differences towards fruitful collaborations and harmonious relationships.

Ultimately, both faculty and students could benefit from cultural competency trainings where they could be exposed to the behavioral and percept differences of foreign employees. Such trainings have the potential to shorten the perceived cultural distance between the United States and other, more traditional, countries, and to actually prompt interest in different countries, cultures, and understanding of the world.
Appendixes

Appendix 1a - Invitation Letter

Dear faculty member,

My name is Elena Gheorghiu and I am Ph.D. Candidate in International Conflict Management at Kennesaw State University. My co-investigator Dr. Lepadatu and I are inviting you to participate in a research study titled *Acculturation Strategies of Immigrant Professionals: The Impact on Work and Private Life Satisfaction of International Faculty in the USA* that supports my doctoral dissertation and that is one of the very few studies exploring work and life satisfaction, as well as perceived experiences of work related conflicts of international faculty in the USA.

Please follow the link below if you are a foreign-born faculty member, spent your first 18 years of life outside the USA, and earned a doctorate degree.

[https://kennesaw.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_egj7XIsRoTxG7UV](https://kennesaw.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_egj7XIsRoTxG7UV)

The completion of the survey does not take more than 15-20 minutes.

Although we do not anticipate that you will receive direct benefits from participating in this study, your contribution is essential for the scientific community to better understand the impact of acculturation processes of immigrant professionals on their work and private lives. Findings of this study may inform future organizational regulations and policies regarding foreign employees.

This study received IRB approval from the IRB office at Kennesaw State University (#15-146 – 11.11.2014)

Please forward this email to as many foreign-born faculty members from your professional network to ensure that faculty from different types of institutions of higher education and across many disciplines and states are included in the study.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any of us.

Thank you very much for reading this e-mail and considering participating in this study.

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Appendix 1b - Informed Consent

THANK YOU for your participation.

The purpose of this research study, Acculturation Strategies of Immigrant Professionals: The Impact on Work and Private Life Satisfaction of International Faculty in the USA, is to identify how the various outcomes of the acculturation process impact foreign faculty’s work and private life satisfaction.

This study represents my doctoral work and will help advance knowledge in the areas of immigration, acculturation and quality of life, as well as organizational culture and dynamics.

The completion of the survey will not take more than 10-15 minutes.

There are no anticipated risks as a result of participating in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time.

Participants’ names or computer IP addresses will not be collected.

If you have questions about this project you may contact Elena Gheorghiu at egheorg@kennesaw.edu, or by phone: (678) 559-5652.

Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding these activities should be addressed to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, 1000 Chastain Road, #0112, Kennesaw, GA 30144-5591, (678) 797-2268.

PLEASE PRINT A COPY OF THIS CONSENT DOCUMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS, OR IF YOU DO NOT HAVE PRINT CAPABILITIES, YOU MAY CONTACT THE RESEARCHER TO OBTAIN A COPY.

Choose CONTINUE if you agree and give your consent to participate in this research project; you understand that participation is voluntary and that you may withdraw your consent at any time without penalty.

Choose EXIT if you do not agree to participate; you will be excluded from the remainder of the questions.
Appendix 2a - Perceptions of Conflict Scale

On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) how would you answer to the following:

1. My colleagues cooperate with me
2. My colleagues avoid sharing information with me
3. My supervisor treats me fairly
4. My colleagues tend to spread rumors about me in the workplace
5. I can get help from my colleagues when I ask for it
6. I have felt excluded by my co-workers from informal gatherings
7. Sometimes my co-workers turn away when I am talking
8. Sometimes my co-workers avoid talking to me
9. I have engaged in physical altercations with my colleagues because disagreements
10. I have engaged in verbal altercations with my colleagues because disagreements.

Open Ended Question
Please describe a conflicting situation with a colleague, administrator or student you felt it was generated because of your different cultural background

Appendix 2b - Life Satisfaction

1. I am satisfied with my financial situation
2. In general I can satisfy all my material needs
3. I am satisfied with my overall state of health.
4. I live in a safe environment
5. In most ways I am satisfied with my neighborhood
6. I am generally satisfied with myself as an individual.
7. I am satisfied with my physical appearance.
8. I am satisfied with my social life
9. I have friends with whom I can share my personal problems
10. In times of need I can count on my close friends to help me
11. I am satisfied with the amount of free time that I have
12. I am satisfied with my relationship/marriage.
Appendix 2c - Work Satisfaction Scale

On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1= strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) how would you answer to the following:

1. I am satisfied with the opportunities for advancement on my job on the following areas:
   1. Teaching
   2. Research
   3. Professional Service
4. I am satisfied with the requirements for tenure and promotion
5. I am free to research the topics that I want
6. My teaching is affected by the overall work load
7. My research is affected by the overall work load
8. My service is affected by the overall work load
9. I fell an increasing pressure to obtain external funding
10. I feel an increasing pressure to publish more
11. I am happy with the competence of my department chair.
12. I respect my colleagues
13. I am satisfied with the vacation time
14. I am satisfied with how my personal life is accommodated
15. I like the level of collegiality in my department
16. I have the freedom to develop the curriculum of my classes as I please
17. I have the freedom to teach my classes the way I like
18. I can choose the classes that I want to teach

Appendix 2d - Acculturation Strategies Scale

On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1= strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) how would you answer to the following:

Assimilation
1. When I am at home I typically speak English
2. I get along better with Americans than with my fellow countrymen in the USA
3. I feel that Americans understand me better than my fellow countrymen in the USA
4. I find it easier to communicate my feelings to Americans than to my fellow countrymen in the USA
5. I feel more comfortable socializing with Americans than I do with my fellow countrymen in the USA
6. I feel that Americans value me more than my fellow countrymen in the USA
Integration
1. I tell jokes both in English and in my native language
2. I think as well in English as I do in my native language
3. I have both American and fellow countrymen friends
4. I feel that my fellow countrymen in the USA and Americans value me equally
5. I feel equally comfortable around Americans and my fellow countrymen in the USA

Separation
1. My closest friends are from my country
2. I prefer going to social gatherings where most of the people are from my country
3. I feel that my fellow countrymen in the USA treat me as an equal more so than Americans do
4. I would prefer to go out on a date with somebody from my country than with an American
5. I feel more relaxed when I am with someone from my country than when I am with an American
6. I feel that my fellow countrymen value me more than Americans do

Marginalization
1. Generally, I find it difficult to socialize with both Americans and my fellow countrymen
2. I sometimes feel that nobody likes me
3. There are times when I think no one understands me
4. Sometimes I feel that my fellow countrymen and Americans do not accept me
5. Sometimes I find it hard to trust both Americans and my fellow countrymen in the USA
6. I find that both my fellow countrymen and Americans often have difficulty understanding me
7. I feel that nobody values me

Appendix 2e - Migrant Personality Scale

On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree) how would you answer to the following:

1. I rely on myself most of the time; I rarely rely on others
2. I often do “my own thing”
3. I’d rather depend on myself than others
4. It is important that I do my job better than others
5. Competition is the law of nature
6. When another person does better than I do I get tense and displeased.
References


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