Emotion Concordance Is Higher Among Immigrants From More Individualist Cultures: Implications for Cultural Differences in Adherence to Emotion Norms

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Recent findings show that in more individualist cultures, people's emotions are more homogenous and more concordant with the emotions of others in their culture. These findings have been interpreted as evidence that adherence to emotion norms is greater in more individualist cultures. This investigation examined a consequence of this to the acquisition of emotion norms. If immigrants from more individualist cultures are more likely to adhere to emotion norms, they should be more sensitive to the emotion norms of their host culture and will acquire them more readily. Therefore, we expected that immigrants from more individualist cultures would acquire the emotion norms of their host culture to a greater extent than immigrants from less individualist cultures. This hypothesis was supported in two studies with diverse samples of immigrants ($N > 10,000$) that assessed emotion concordance with one's host culture, an implicit measure of the acquisition of emotion norms. We ruled out alternative explanations, such as cultural tightness and the cultural distance between host cultures and heritage cultures.

Keywords: culture, emotions, norms

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Social norms are the widely accepted rules that govern conduct in a society (Cialdini & Trost, 1998) and are a central focus in cultural psychology (e.g., Eid & Diener, 2001; Gelfand et al., 2011; Mu et al., 2015; Triandis, 1989; Uz, 2015). These norms tend to be more strictly adhered to and enforced in collectivist societies, where the group is valued over the individual, compared to individualist societies, which prioritize individual freedom (Triandis, 1989, 1995). Interestingly, this pattern does not hold for emotion norms—the rules that govern which emotions are desirable and appropriate to feel. In fact, norms for emotions appear to be more strictly adhered to in individualist societies (Vishkin et al., 2023). This discrepancy raises important theoretical questions. In the current article, we aimed to use acculturation as a lens by which to address some of these questions.

Emotion Norms in Individualist and Collectivist Societies

Emotion norms are a type of social norm that vary across cultures (Mesquita et al., 2017). As a type of social norm, emotion norms comprise an intersubjective consensus (Gelfand & Jackson, 2016) regarding which emotions are or are not appropriate in one's society (a prescriptive norm) or which emotions are or are not common in one's society (a descriptive norm). For instance, in the United States, there are norms in favor of experiencing positive emotions (Eid & Diener, 2001) and norms against experiencing negative emotions (Chentsova-Dutton et al., 2014). When comparing norm adherence across cultures, emotion norms diverge from norms governing behavior. While behavior norms tend to be more adhered to in collectivist cultures (Triandis, 1989) or in cultures high in tightness (Gelfand et al., 2011; Harrington & Gelfand, 2014), emotion norms are actually more adhered to in individualist cultures and unrelated to cultural tightness or looseness. Initial evidence for emotion norms being more stringent in individualist societies (compared to their collectivist counterparts) comes from a study comparing the United States and Australia (both individualist countries) with China and Taiwan (both collectivist countries; Eid & Diener, 2001). The study found greater consensus in individualist societies about which positive emotions are considered appropriate and desirable. In addition, a cross-cultural investigation of emotional display rules found that individualism predicts more homogeneity in the endorsement of emotion expressivity (Matsumoto et al., 2008), a finding which is consistent with greater emotion norm adherence. In a more recent and expansive study, Vishkin et al. (2023) examined two key indicators to assess the extent of adherence to emotion norms: (a) the dispersion in ratings of both emotional experience and appropriateness and (b) the extent to which these ratings align with societal averages. A smaller

dispersion in ratings suggests higher social consensus (Gelfand et al., 2006; Triandis, 1989; Uz, 2015), indicating greater adherence to emotion norms. Greater alignment of individual ratings with societal averages also indicates greater adherence to emotion norms (De Leersnyder et al., 2011). Individualism was found to: Predict both measures of adherence to emotion norms: Smaller dispersion and greater alignment with societal averages. Moreover, adherence to emotion norms positively correlated with well-being and particularly so in individualist cultures. This is consistent with findings that deviation from the social norms in one's culture predicts lower well-being (e.g., Gebauer et al., 2012; Stavrova et al., 2013). These findings were uniquely predicted by individualism–collectivism and not associated with cultural tightness.

Based on these findings, Vishkin et al. (2023) concluded that adherence to emotion norms is greater in more individualist cultures. One explanation for this rests on a functional understanding of social norms. Social norms function to promote a culture's values (Schmidt & Tomasello, 2012; Sherif, 1936). Given that individualist cultures value authenticity and the self-expression of internal states (English & Chen, 2011; Guignon, 2004; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; C. Taylor, 1989), they will develop norms regulating precisely those internal states. Such internal states include emotions, which are perceived as expressions of the authentic self in both the collectivist and the individualist cultural contexts (English & John, 2013). Thus, individualist cultures may develop greater adherence to emotion norms.

An Alternative Account

While these findings support the account that adherence to norms is greater in more individualist cultures, they can still be reconciled with the dominant view in the literature. The dominant view in the literature is that adherence to all social norms, including emotion norms, is necessarily greater in some cultures more than in others, whether those cultures are more collectivist (Triandis, 1989, 1995) or tighter (Gelfand, 2012; Gelfand et al., 2011). In particular, proponents of this dominant view may argue that adherence to social norms is more likely to occur in more collectivist or tighter cultures only to the extent that a culture's emotion norms are clearly formulated. When a clear intersubjective consensus is absent regarding which emotions are normative in one's culture, it is unclear to which emotions one is supposed to conform to; therefore, conformity is artifactually lower. Thus, according to this *dominant view* account, the previous findings demonstrating greater homogeneity in valued and experienced emotions in more individualist cultures do not reflect greater adherence to emotion norms in such cultures per se, so much as more clearly defined emotion norms in such cultures. According to this dominant view account, the effects would reverse in a collectivist or tight culture with clearly defined emotion norms.

Findings in the literature indicate that individualist cultures may indeed possess more clearly defined emotion norms. First, people from more individualist cultures are more likely to verbalize their thoughts and feelings (Kim, 2002; Kim & Markus, 2002), as well to disclose to others their personal and emotional experiences (Schug et al., 2010). When stressed, people from more individualist cultures are more likely to seek social support and share their feelings with others (Chen et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2006; S. E. Taylor et al., 2004). These lines of evidence reveal that emotion

experiences are more likely to be discussed and shared in more individualist cultures. On this basis, it may be argued that such cultures may be more likely to develop clearly defined emotion norms. The findings in Vishkin et al. (2023) may thus reflect the more clearly defined emotion norms in individualist cultures, rather than greater adherence to them.

Disentangling the Two Accounts by Investigating Norm Acquisition

One way to tease apart these accounts is by investigating the emotion norms acquired by immigrants. Immigrants undergo a process of acculturation, in which they experience psychosocial changes following the transition between socio-national contexts (Berry, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010). A critical aspect of acculturation is the acquisition of social norms regarding how to behave, communicate, and express oneself (Berry, 1997). Failing to integrate the norms of the host culture may lead to tension and conflict with members of the host culture and may translate into critical setbacks for successful integration, such as failing a job interview or having one's application for college rejected.

Recent work has investigated how immigrants' sensitivity to norms shapes their adaptation to the host culture. Specifically, tighter cultures have lower tolerance for deviance and are more likely to punish norm violators (Gelfand et al., 2011). Consequently, people who live in such cultures experience more pressure to adopt norms and are more attuned to them. Members of such cultures might be more attuned to norms even when they immigrate to a new culture. Consistent with this reasoning, sojourners who originated from tighter cultures showed better adaptation to their host culture, relative to sojourners who originated from looser cultures (Geeraert et al., 2019).

In the present investigation, we apply this reasoning to immigrants' acquisition of emotion norms. The process by which immigrants adopt the emotion norms of their host culture is referred to as emotion acculturation (De Leersnyder, 2017). The research program on emotion acculturation has investigated immigrants' acquisition of emotion norms via assessments of emotion concordances, which refer to the correlation between the profile of one's emotional experience with the average emotional profile in one's culture. Findings reveal that, just as acculturation increases with time spent in the host culture (Wilson et al., 2013), the emotion concordances of immigrants with members of their host culture increases as time passes (De Leersnyder et al., 2011). Emotion concordances are also higher for immigrants with a higher level of exposure to the host culture, as well as for immigrants whose country of origin is less geographically distant (Consedine et al., 2014; De Leersnyder et al., 2011; Jasini et al., 2019).

Who should more readily acquire the emotion norms of their host culture—immigrants from more individualist cultures or immigrants from more collectivist and/or tighter cultures? The two accounts discussed previously propose opposite answers to this question. According to the account that adherence to emotion norms is greater in more individualist cultures (Vishkin et al., 2023), immigrants from individualist cultures should be more attuned to them even when they immigrate to a new culture because they are more aware and receptive to emotion norms. Conversely, since adherence to emotion norms is weaker in more collectivist cultures, immigrants from collectivist cultures may have more difficulty identifying and

learning emotion norms (Savani et al., 2022). Thus, according to this account, emotion acculturation should be greater among immigrants from more individualist cultures.

Meanwhile, according to the alternative *dominant view* account, adherence to all social norms is greater in more collectivist cultures and/or tighter cultures, but the evidence from Vishkin et al. (2023) can be interpreted as showing that such cultures simply lack clearly defined emotion norms to which to adhere to, relative to individualist cultures where emotions norms are more clearly defined. Therefore, when immigrants from more collectivist and/or tighter cultures move to a culture with clearly defined emotion norms, they should be more receptive to the emotion norms of their host culture and consequently more likely to adhere to them. Thus, according to this account, emotion acculturation should be greater among immigrants from more collectivist and/or tighter cultures.

The Present Investigation

An assumption of the alternative dominant view account is that collectivist cultures lack clearly defined emotion norms. While there is evidence in support of this view that demonstrates that emotion experiences are more likely to be shared in more individualist cultures, as was summarized above, it is inconsistent with evidence demonstrating that collectivist cultures do possess internally coherent and empirically detectable profiles of idea emotional states (Ruby et al., 2012; Senft et al., 2022; Tsai, 2007). Therefore, we predicted that immigrants from more individualist cultures will demonstrate greater emotion acculturation.

We test these two accounts by examining immigrants' emotion concordances, which are Fisher-transformed correlations of the emotional profile of immigrants with the average emotional profile of natives in the immigrants' host countries (De Leersnyder et al., 2014). To establish that emotion concordances reflect immigrants' norm acquisition and are driven by their cultural background, we control for several variables. First, to the extent that negative emotions are typically experienced less frequently and positive emotions are typically experienced more frequently (Diener & Diener, 1996; Schimmack, 2001), the distribution of their mean levels might be skewed. This could create potentially artifactual associations between emotion concordances and mean emotion experience. To address this, we control for mean emotion experience. Second, given that emotion concordances are greater in more (vs. less) individualist countries (Vishkin et al., 2023), we control for the individualism of the host countries as well. Third, given that host countries tend to be more individualist than heritage countries, immigrants from more (vs. less) individualist countries might have more similar emotion profiles to members of their host culture, as might be reflected in cultural differences in ideal affect (Tsai et al., 2006) or in socially engaging or disengaging emotions (Kitayama et al., 2000, 2006). According to this explanation, it is not the case that immigrants from countries higher (vs. lower) in individualism have undergone greater emotion acculturation—instead, the emotion profile of their heritage country is, to begin with, more similar to the emotional profile of their host country. To address this, we controlled for the difference between the host and heritage countries in individualism–collectivism. In addition, immigrants' emotion concordance might vary as a function of cultural distance, which refers to differences between two countries aggregated across numerous cultural dimensions (Muthukrishna et al., 2020). According to such an explanation, it is not the level of

individualism or collectivism per se that drives immigrants' emotion concordance with members of the host culture but rather the cultural distance between heritage and host cultures across many different cultural dimensions. Since more distant cultures have less in common, greater cultural distance might predict lower emotion concordance. To address this, we control for cultural distance between the heritage and host countries. Finally, it may be argued that emotion concordances of immigrants, like other acculturation outcomes, vary by the extent to which cultures have greater or lesser adherence to norms for behaviors (tight vs. loose cultures; Gelfand et al., 2011). This is consistent with evidence that sojourners from cultures with greater adherence to norms for behaviors adapt better to their host cultures, ostensibly because they are better at responding to the normative requirements of their host culture (Geeraert et al., 2019). To establish whether the association with emotion concordances is specific to collectivism–individualism or is due to cultural differences in adherence to norms for behaviors, we tested whether a measure of cultural differences in adherence to norms for behaviors, cultural tightness (Gelfand et al., 2011), predicts the emotion concordances of immigrants with their host countries. Study 1 tested our prediction while controlling for these alternative explanations in an existing data set of native and immigrant youth. Study 2 tested our predictions while controlling for these alternative explanations in a large international data set, from which we identified immigrant populations. Data are open-access, and scripts for both studies are available at https://osf.io/vcwx5/?view_only=025f82e09e3840d1a5e56b45d85bed79.

Study 1

In Study 1, we conducted a secondary analysis of data from the International Study of Ethno-Cultural Youth (Berry et al., 2006, 2006), which collected data on first- or second-generation immigrant youth from 42 distinct immigrant groups originating from 25 heritage countries who settled in 13 host countries. This study also included samples of native youth in host countries, allowing us to test the concordance between the emotional profiles of immigrants with those of their native peers.

Method

Transparency and Openness

Data and codebooks were retrieved from the Dutch Data Archive and Networking Service (https://www.dans.knaw.nl/en). Scripts are available on the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/vcwx5/?view_only=025f82e09e3840d1a5e56b45d85bed79).

Sample

The original data set included 5,365 immigrant youth and 2,631 native youth. Native youth were collected predominantly from the same cities, neighborhoods, and schools as the immigrant youth (Berry et al., 2006). We removed respondents from six countries without scores for collectivism–individualism ($N = 594$). We also removed respondents without valid ratings of emotion experience (defined by the authors of the data set as missing more than 25% of items; $N = 108$) or with zero variation in their scores for emotions, which precludes the possibility of computing correlations of emotion concordances ($N = 156$). The final sample included

4,583 immigrant youth and 2,555 native youth. The immigrant youth comprised 36 distinct immigrant groups originating from 19 heritage countries who settled in 13 host countries (see Supplemental Table S1).

Materials

We relied on measures created by the original authors of the study. They defined as valid only those with less than 25% of missing scores on the items of a given measure. We followed this procedure for all measures listed below. The equivalence of the constructs across samples has been established in previous work (Vedder & van de Vijver, 2006).

Emotions. Respondents reported the frequency with which they experience 15 different negative emotional and affective states such as feeling sad, tense, or nervous (e.g., "I feel unhappy and sad"; Items K1–K15) on a 5-point scale from 1 to 5 with the endpoints *strongly disagree* and *strongly agree* (Items K1–K9) or the endpoints *never* and *very often* (Items K10–K15). Mean emotion experience was computed by averaging across all items ($M = 2.32$, $SD = 0.66$). We calculated emotion concordances using the following procedure used in Vishkin et al. (2023) and adapted from De Leersnyder (2017). First, we calculated average scores for each of these items among natives within each host country. Then, we calculated Spearman's correlations between each respondent's ratings on these 15 items and the 15 averaged scores, based on the respondents' country of residence. Finally, we transformed the correlations into a linear variable via a Fisher transformation. Thus, an immigrant with a higher score has a higher emotion concordance with the native peers in his or her host country. Means and standard deviations of emotion concordances are reported below for both natives and immigrants.

Country Scores for Collectivism-Individualism. We computed country-level scores for collectivism–individualism for both heritage and host countries using the same method from Vishkin et al. (2023). In particular, we normalized to a scale from 0 to 10 the Hofstede individualism index (Hofstede et al., 2010), Schwartz's scores for autonomy versus embeddedness (Schwartz, 1994, 2006), and Welzel's scores for emancipative values based on data from the World Values Survey (Welzel, 2014) and then averaged them to form a single index. A single factor explained 77.5% of the variance in a principal components analysis, with loadings ranging from .80 for Hofstede's scores to .93 for Schwartz's scores. All three indices have been treated as reflecting the same underlying construct (Minkov, 2020). This follows a common practice in cross-cultural psychology to average across several indices of individualism to achieve more reliable estimates (e.g., Fischer & Boer, 2011; Suh et al., 1998). A nearly identical method was used by Fischer and Boer (2011), who used Inglehart's scores for survival/self-expression (Inglehart & Baker, 2000) rather than Welzel's scores. Both rely on data from the World Values Survey. Emancipative values are similar to self-expression values but are more theoretically grounded, possess better psychometric properties, and are more consistently operationalized (Welzel, 2013).

One challenge was in identifying respondents' countries of origin. For instance, in the data set, immigrants from Vietnam to seven other countries are clearly marked under *Vietnam*. Meanwhile, immigrants from India to the United Kingdom, Canada, and Portugal are referred

to as *Indians*, *Indo-Canadians*, and *Indians in Portugal*, respectively. A close reading describing the different immigrant populations in this study (Berry et al., 2006) reveals that these different labels refer predominantly or exclusively to immigrants from India and therefore were categorized as such. Another challenging case was the categorization of *Aussiedlers* or Ethnic Germans who returned to Germany after many generations in territories to the East. To obtain an individualism score for their heritage country, we averaged across the individualism scores of Poland and Russia, which are the countries of origin of Aussiedlers in the present sample. Individualism was greater among host countries ($M = 7.46$ $SD = 1.17$) than among heritage countries ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.34$).

Cultural Distance. We obtained ratings for cultural distance between heritage and host countries from http://www.culturaldistance.com (Muthukrishna et al., 2020). No scores were available for Portugal or Surinam. Ratings for all other countries were available when including data from 1999 to 2014 in the cultural distance interface ($M = 0.21$, $SD = 0.11$).

Cultural Tightness. Scores for the cultural dimension of tightness–looseness are available for a limited set of countries from Gelfand et al. (2011). A larger set of countries, using the same measure but on a different scale, are available from Eriksson et al. (2021). The two studies used the same six-item measure but scaled them differently. Therefore, we normalized the two sets of countries to a scale from 0 to 10 and then averaged them to form a single index. Scores were available for 14 of 19 heritage cultures ($M = 4.72$; $SD = 2.51$).

Results

First, we tested whether natives display higher emotion concordances with their culture than do immigrants, as would be expected if emotion concordances reflect emotion acculturation. For ease of interpretation, we calculated this at the host country level by averaging emotion concordances across all respondents within each country for both natives and immigrants. As expected, a paired samples t test revealed that natives had higher emotion concordance ($M = 0.58$, $SD = 0.07$) than did immigrants ($M = 0.43$, $SD = 0.08$), $t(12) = 5.92$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.71$, 95% CI [0.09, 0.20]. A multilevel model yielded highly similar results. All subsequent analyses are multilevel models, with immigrants nested within heritage countries and/or host countries.

Next, we tested the central prediction regarding whether country-level individualism predicts higher or lower emotion concordance among immigrants. To aid interpretability, the Level 1 predictor (mean emotion experience) was centered at the group mean. The other variables, which were all Level 2 predictors, were centered at the grand mean. Random effects included country intercepts and by-country slopes of mean emotion experience. In Model 1 (Table 1), we tested whether the individualism of the heritage country predicts immigrants' emotion concordances. As expected, immigrants from countries that are higher (vs. lower) in individualism displayed higher emotion concordance with their host culture. This association held when controlling for mean emotion experience (Model 2 in Table 1). To illustrate this at the country level, we averaged emotion concordances within each heritage culture and regressed them on individualism scores. Individualism of the heritage country predicted higher emotion concordances, $r(17) = .77$, $p < .001$, 95% CI

Table 1
Multilevel Regressions Predicting Emotion Concordances From Heritage Country Individualism, Study 1

Predictor	Model 1 Heritage country (N = 19)						Model 2 Heritage country (N = 19)						Model 3 Heritage country (N = 19), host country (N = 13)						Model 4 Heritage country (N = 19), host country (N = 13)					
	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI
Observations	4,583						4,583						4,583						4,583					
Intercept	.45	.01	16.8	32.13	<.001	[.42, .48]	.45	.01	16.6	32.74	<.001	[.42, .48]	.43	.02	14.7	17.73	<.001	[.38, .49]	.43	.02	15.0	17.99	<.001	[.38, .48]
Heritage individualism	.05	.01	16.6	5.06	<.001	[.03, .08]	.05	.01	14.8	5.34	<.001	[.03, .08]	.05	.01	17.5	4.49	<.001	[.02, .07]	.04	.01	16.7	4.84	<.001	[.02, .06]
Emotion experience							−.06	.01	20.5	−3.83	.001	[−.09, −.03]							−.05	.02	13.4	−3.42	.004	[−.09, −.02]

Note. Nesting within heritage countries (Models 1 and 2) or both heritage and host countries (Models 3 and 4), without covariates (Models 1 and 3), or with mean emotion experience (Models 2 and 4). SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

[0.49, 0.91] (see Figure 1). This association remained significant after removing Finland for being an outlier, $r(16) = .67$, $p = .002$, 95% CI [0.30, 0.87]. These findings are consistent with the account that people in more individualist cultures are more likely to adhere to emotion norms; therefore, they are more likely to acquire the emotion norms of their host cultures than people from more collectivist cultures.

Testing Alternative Explanations

Next, to test alternative explanations, we ran multilevel models with samples cross-classified within heritage countries and host countries. Individualism of the heritage country remained a significant predictor when included as a solitary predictor in the cross-classified models (Model 3 in Table 1) as well as when including mean emotion experience (Model 4 in Table 1). Given that host countries also differ in their level of individualism, we controlled for the individualism of host countries. This was not a significant predictor of emotion concordances on its own (see Supplemental Table S2), and the individualism of heritage countries remained a significant predictor when the individualism of host countries was added as a covariate (see Model 5 in Table 2).

Next, given that the host countries were, overall, more individualist than the heritage countries, an alternative explanation to the present findings is that people from more individualist countries have more similar emotion profiles. Accordingly, variation in emotion concordances would not reflect differences in emotion acculturation—instead, the emotion profile of their heritage country is, to begin with, more similar to the emotional profile of their host country. If this account is correct, then the findings should be explained by the difference between the host and heritage cultures in individualism–collectivism. To test this, we controlled for the absolute difference between the heritage and host countries in individualism. As a sole predictor, larger differences in individualism–collectivism between heritage and host countries predicted smaller emotion concordances, $b = -.04$, $t(22) = -3.92$, $p < .001$; see Supplemental Table S2. However, the individualism of heritage countries remained a significant predictor when this variable was added as a covariate, and as a covariate it was no longer significant (see Model 6 in Table 2).[1]

Another alternative account is that immigrants' emotion concordances vary as a function of cultural distance. According to this account, it is not the level of individualism of the heritage cultures that drives immigrants' emotion concordance with their native peers but rather the cultural distance between heritage and host cultures. Since more distant cultures have less in common, greater cultural distance might predict weaker emotion concordances. To test this alternative explanation, we controlled for cultural distance between the heritage and host cultures. As a sole predictor, cultural distance predicted smaller emotion concordances, $b = -.56$, $t(16) = -4.02$, $p < .001$; see Supplemental Table S2. However, the individualism of heritage countries remained a significant predictor when cultural

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[1] Absolute differences in individualism–collectivism between heritage and host countries are a linear transformation of the individualism of heritage cultures and the individualism of the host cultures because all the difference scores are positive in this data set—that is, for all samples, host countries are more individualist than the heritage countries. Consequently, in Study 1, the values of the covariates in Models 5 and 6 (in which individualism of the heritage culture is also a predictor) are equivalent.

Figure 1

Collectivism-Individualism and Emotional Concordances of Immigrants With Natives in the Host Country, Broken Down by Heritage Country (r = .77), Study 1
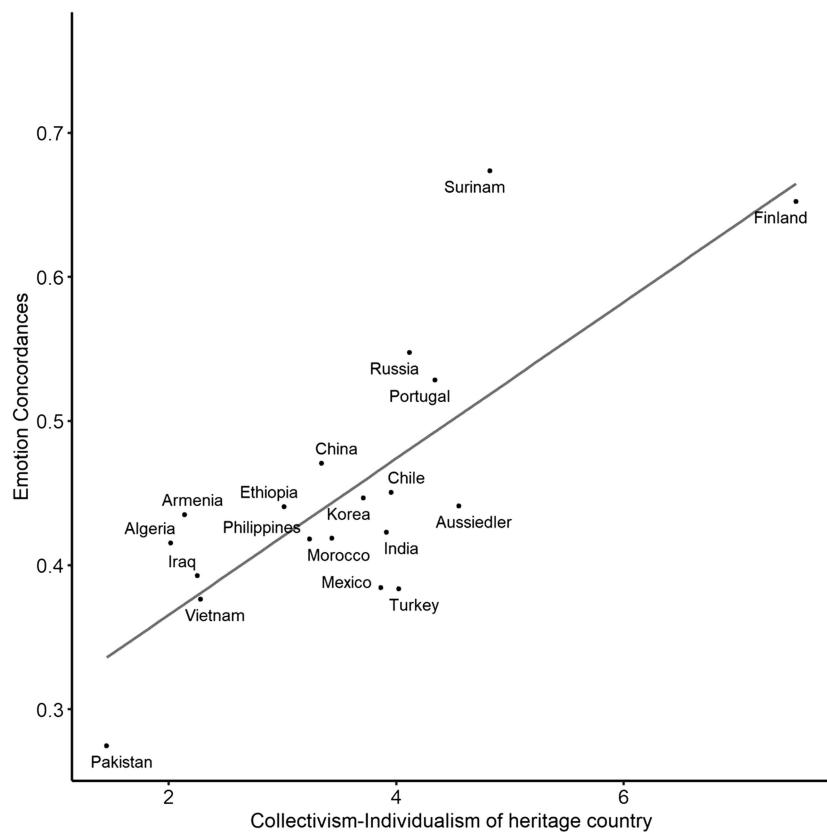
Note. Higher scores reflect more individualism.

distance was added as a covariate, and as a covariate it was no longer significant (see Model 7 in Table 2).[2]

A final alternative explanation is that differences are driven by cultural tightness, a dimension of cultural differences shown to impact acculturation. Specifically, immigrants or travelers from tighter cultures are quicker to pick up the norms of their host culture (Geeraert et al., 2019). However, as a sole predictor, cultural tightness predicted smaller emotion concordances, rather than larger emotion concordances, $b = -.02$, $t(12) = -3.12$, $p = .009$; see Supplemental Table S2. Furthermore, the individualism of heritage countries remained a significant predictor when tightness was added as a covariate, and as a covariate tightness was no longer significant (see Model 8 in Table 2).

Finally, we note that results remained unchanged when controlling for individual-level demographics, including age (range-restricted to ages 13–18, reflecting the focus of the original study on acculturating youth), gender, and parents' employment status (see Supplemental Tables S3 and S4).

Discussion

The purpose of Study 1 was to test whether immigrants from more individualist countries have higher or lower emotion concordances with members of their host country, compared to immigrants from more collectivist countries. Based on the concordances of immigrant youth with the average emotion experience of their native peers, we found that immigrants from more individualist countries have higher emotion concordances than immigrants from more collectivist countries. These findings are consistent with the account that adherence to emotion norms is greater in more individualist cultures. They were not explained by the individualism of the host country, by the difference between the heritage and host countries in individualism, by cultural distance, or by cultural tightness. In addition, higher mean emotion experience consistently predicted lower emotion concordances, indicating that among people who

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[2] We report a Supplemental Materials in which the only predictor was cultural distance, and we report the main analysis in Table 2 in which the predictors were the individualism of the heritage culture, mean emotion experience, and cultural distance. In an alternative analysis, with only the individualism of the heritage culture and cultural distance as predictors (without mean emotion experience), the individualism of the heritage culture was not a significant predictor, $b = .02$, $t(11) = 1.28$, $p = .227$, while cultural distance was a significant predictor, $b = -.39$, $t(16) = -2.33$, $p = .033$. We elected to report the main analysis when controlling for mean emotion experience because it consistently emerged as a significant predictor across the various models.

Table 2
Multilevel Regressions Predicting Emotion Concordances From Heritage Country Individualism, Mean Emotion Experience, and Covariates, Study 1

	Model 5						Model 6						Model 7						Model 8					
Nesting variable(s)	Heritage country (N = 19), host country (N = 13)						Heritage country (N = 19), host country (N = 13)						Heritage country (N = 17), host country (N = 12)						Heritage country (N = 14), host country (N = 13)					
Observations	4,583						4,583						4,199						4,028					
Predictor	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI
Intercept	.43	.03	13.2	17.06	<.001	[.38, .49]	.44	.03	12.9	16.88	<.001	[.38, .49]	.42	.02	13.5	18.39	<.001	[.37, .47]	.44	.03	13.7	17.19	<.001	[.38, .49]
Heritage individualism	.04	.01	16.4	4.82	<.001	[.02, .06]	.05	.02	15.2	2.49	.025	[.01, .10]	.03	.01	15.1	2.58	.021	[.00, .05]	.04	.01	14.7	3.88	.002	[.02, .07]
Emotion experience	−.05	.02	12.8	−3.44	.004	[−.09, −.02]	−.05	.02	12.8	−3.44	.004	[−.09, −.02]	−.06	.02	14.1	−3.39	.004	[−.09, −.02]	−.04	.02	15.3	−2.53	.023	[−.08, −.01]
Host individualism	.01	.02	12.2	0.62	.548	[−.03, .06]																		
Δ Heritage–host individualism							.01	.02	12.2	0.62	.548	[−.03, .06]												
Cultural distance													−.22	.12	18.6	−1.78	.092	[−.48, .04]						
Heritage tightness																			.004	.007	15.7	0.67	.513	[−.01, .02]

Note. Covariates include individualism of the host country (Model 5), heritage–host country differences in individualism (Model 6), cultural distance (Model 7), and tightness of the heritage culture (Model 8). *SE* = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

feel high mean levels of negative emotions, their emotions are less concordant with those of others in their culture.

Study 2

Study 1 examined concordances only for negative emotions and included immigrants from a limited number of heritage and host cultures. In Study 2, we sought to overcome these limitations using data from two rounds of the European Social Survey (ESS). We examined concordances for both positive and negative emotions with immigrants originating from, and settling in, a larger number of countries than in Study 1.

Method

Transparency and Openness

Data was retrieved from the ESS (https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org). Scripts are available on the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/vcwx5/?view_only=025f82e09e3840d1a5e56b45d85bed79).

Sample

Data was analyzed from Waves 3 and 6 of the ESS conducted in 2006 and 2012, respectively, which included modules assessing emotion experiences. Data was excluded from countries with missing emotion terms (Hungary in Wave 3 and Albania in Wave 6), countries without scores for collectivism–individualism (Kosovo), or respondents with missing data on their or their parents' country of birth, leaving in 97,013 respondents from 30 countries.

Immigrants were identified, as in previous research (Rudnev, 2014), based on not being born in their country of residence (N = 8,579). Furthermore, to ensure that respondents were not returning sojourners (e.g., someone with German heritage whose family moved to Czechia before he was born and back to Germany after he was born), we also selected respondents whose parents were not born in their country of residence, leaving in 6,907 respondents. Of these, 912 respondents originated from a country for which no score for collectivism–individualism was available, and another 331 respondents had zero variation in their scores for both positive and negative emotions or had so much missing data as to preclude the possibility of computing correlations of emotion concordances, such as respondents with only two data points, which necessarily results in a correlation of 1 or −1. The remaining 5,664 respondents originated from 109 countries. These respondents resided in the 30 different countries that were included in Waves 3 and 6 of the ESS. For computing the mean emotional profile in each country, we relied on data from 82,757 native respondents from the 30 host countries. Of the natives, 65,620 had scores from which emotion concordances for positive emotions could be computed, and 73,960 had scores from which emotion concordances for negative emotions could be computed.

Materials

Emotions. Respondents reported how often they felt 11 emotional and affective states in the past week on a 4-point scale from 1 (*none or almost none of the time*) to 4 (*all or almost all of the time*). Positive emotions referred to feeling happy, feeling calm and peaceful, having a lot of energy, and enjoying life. Negative

emotions referred to feeling depressed, restless, lonely, sad, anxious, not able to get going, and feeling that everything was an effort. Emotion concordances were computed as in Study 1, separately for positive emotions and for negative emotions. Mean positive emotion experience was computed by averaging responses for all positive emotions ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.65$), and mean negative emotion experience was computed by averaging responses for all negative emotions ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 0.54$).

Country Scores for Collectivism–Individualism. Country-level scores for collectivism–individualism were obtained as in Study 1. Individualism was greater among host countries ($M = 6.20$ $SD = 1.48$) than among heritage countries ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 2.02$).

Cultural Distance. Cultural distance scores between heritage and host countries were obtained from https://www.culturaldistance.com (Muthukrishna et al., 2020), as in Study 1. The maximal number of scores were available when including data from 1994 to 2014 in the cultural distance interface. Overall, scores were available for 99 countries and 550 pairs of heritage and host countries, out of 824 total pairs, comprising 74.4% of the sample of immigrants ($M = 0.14$, $SD = 0.10$).

Cultural Tightness. Country-level scores for cultural tightness were obtained as in Study 1. Scores were available for 58 of the 109 heritage cultures ($M = 3.85$; $SD = 2.30$).

Results

The number of immigrants in host countries varied widely, from 3 to 626 ($M = 188.8$; see Supplemental Table S5). In addition, the number of respondents from countries of origin varied widely, with four countries with as few as one immigrant and one country with as many as 902 immigrants ($M = 52.0$; see Supplemental Table S6). Analyses were conducted separately for positive emotions and for negative emotions. Out of the 5,664 immigrants, 1,072 respondents had zero variation for positive emotions[3] or too much missing data to compute correlations of emotion concordances, so analyses on positive emotions were conducted on the remaining 4,592 respondents belonging to 763 immigrant groups who originated from 107 countries. Meanwhile, 585 respondents had zero variation for negative emotions or too much missing data to compute correlations of emotion concordances, so analyses on negative emotions were conducted on the remaining 5,079 respondents belonging to 789 immigrant groups who originated from 108 countries. The analysis plan was identical to that of Study 1, conducted first on positive emotions and then on negative emotions.

Positive Emotions

First, we tested whether natives display higher emotion concordances with their culture than do immigrants. A paired samples *t* test revealed that natives had higher emotion concordances for positive emotions ($M = 0.38$, $SD = 0.18$) than immigrants ($M = 0.29$, $SD = 0.20$), $t(28) = 3.32$, $p = .003$, $d = 0.63$, 95% CI [0.04, 0.17]. A multilevel model yielded similar results. All subsequent analyses are multilevel models, with immigrants nested within heritage countries and/or host countries.

Next, we tested the central prediction regarding whether country-level individualism predicts higher or lower concordances for positive emotions among immigrants. We centered predictors and included random factors as in Study 1. As expected, immigrants

from countries that are higher (vs. lower) in individualism displayed higher emotion concordance with their host culture (Model 1 in Table 3). This association held when controlling for mean positive emotion experience (Model 2 in Table 3).

To illustrate this at the country level, we averaged positive emotion concordances within each heritage culture and regressed them on individualism scores. We included countries with at least 30 respondents to account for the unreliability of data points from countries with small sample sizes. Individualism of the heritage country predicted higher emotion concordances, $r(36) = .43$, $p = .007$, 95% CI [0.13, 0.66] (see Figure 2). Results remained unchanged when removing Ireland for being an outlier, $r(35) = .43$, $p = .008$, 95% CI [0.12, 0.66] and were significant for two other arbitrary cutoffs: countries with at least 10 respondents, $r(69) = .30$, $p = .011$, 95% CI [0.08, 0.50], and countries with at least 50 respondents, $r(22) = .55$, $p = .006$, 95% CI [0.18, 0.78].

Testing Alternative Explanations. Next, to test alternative explanations, we ran multilevel models with samples cross-classified within heritage countries and host countries. Individualism of the heritage countries remained a significant predictor when included as a solitary predictor in the cross-classified models (Model 3 in Table 3) as well as when including mean emotion experience (Model 4 in Table 3). Individualism of host countries emerged as a significant predictor of positive emotion concordances (see Supplemental Table S7), but individualism of the heritage countries remained a significant predictor when controlling for it (Model 5 in Table 4). In addition, the absolute difference between the heritage and host countries in individualism was not a significant covariate, and individualism of the heritage countries remained a significant predictor when controlling for it (Model 6 in Table 4). Next, cultural distance was not a significant covariate, but individualism of the heritage countries was not a significant predictor when controlling for cultural distance (Model 7 in Table 4). Notably, cultural distance was not a significant predictor of position emotion concordances when included as a solitary predictor (see Supplemental Table S7), suggesting that it does not capture the association between individualism of the heritage countries and emotion concordances. Instead, including cultural distance led to a significant loss of degrees of freedom and observations, which may have weakened the association between individualism of the heritage culture and negative emotion concordances. Finally, tightness of the heritage culture was not a significant covariate, and individualism of the heritage countries remained a significant predictor when controlling for it (Model 8 in Table 4).

Finally, when controlling for individual-level demographics, including age, gender, and unemployment status, all results but one remained unchanged (see Supplemental Tables S8 and S9). In particular, individualism of the heritage country was no longer a significant predictor with these covariates in Model 8, in which heritage tightness was included as a predictor. However, heritage tightness did not emerge as a significant predictor on its own, neither without covariates as noted above, nor with covariates ($b = -.01$, $t = -0.77$, $p = .45$). Thus, tightness of the heritage culture is not a viable

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[3] There is nothing inherently problematic with responses showing zero variance within positive emotions or negative emotions—rather, it is not statistically possible to calculate emotion concordance scores for such responses; therefore, such responses must be omitted from these analyses.

Table 3
Multilevel Regressions Predicting Positive Emotion Concordances From Heritage Country Individualism, Study 2

	Model 1						Model 2						Model 3						Model 4					
Nesting variable(s)	Heritage country (N = 107)						Heritage country (N = 107)						Heritage country (N = 107), host country (N = 29)						Heritage country (N = 107), host country (N = 29)					
Observations	4,592						4,592						4,592						4,592					
Predictor	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI
Intercept	.30	.02	72.3	12.72	<.001	[.26, .35]	.30	.02	72.4	12.73	<.001	[.26, .35]	.30	.04	35.8	8.09	<.001	[.22, .38]	.30	.04	36.2	8.11	<.001	[.23, .38]
Heritage individualism	.04	.01	75.5	3.36	.001	[.02, .06]	.04	.01	75.4	3.37	.001	[.02, .06]	.03	.01	69.1	2.85	.006	[.01, .05]	.03	.01	69.0	2.88	.005	[.01, .05]
Emotion experience							.03	.03	43.0	1.17	.248	[-.02, .08]							.04	.03	11.2	1.25	.235	[-.03, .10]

Note. Nesting within heritage countries (Models 1 and 2) or both heritage and host countries (Models 3 and 4), without covariates (Models 1 and 3), or with mean emotion experience (Models 2 and 4). SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

alternative explanation for the association between heritage–country individualism and emotion concordances.

Negative Emotions

A paired samples *t* test revealed that natives had higher emotion concordance for negative emotions ($M = 0.34$, $SD = 0.08$) than immigrants ($M = 0.30$, $SD = 0.11$), $t(29) = 2.28$, $p = .030$, $d = 0.42$, 95% CI [0.005, 0.083]. A multilevel model yielded similar results. As in Study 1 and the analysis of positive emotions in this study, all subsequent analyses are multilevel models, with immigrants nested within heritage countries and/or host countries.

Next, we tested the central prediction regarding whether country-level individualism predicts higher or lower concordances for negative emotions among immigrants. As expected, immigrants from countries that are higher (vs. lower) in individualism displayed higher emotion concordance with their host culture (Model 1 in Table 5). This association held when controlling for mean negative emotion experience (Model 2 in Table 5).

To illustrate this at the country level, we averaged negative emotion concordances within each heritage culture and regressed them on individualism scores. We included the same arbitrary cutoffs for numbers of respondents per country as for positive emotion concordances: 10, 30, and 50. Individualism of the heritage country predicted higher negative emotion concordances among countries with at least 10 respondents, $r(74) = .31$, $p = .006$, 95% CI [0.09, 0.50], and at least 30 respondents, $r(38) = .35$, $p = .025$, 95% CI [0.05, 0.60] (see Figure 3), but not among countries with at least 50 respondents, $r(23) = .21$, $p = .312$, 95% CI [−0.20, 0.56].

Testing Alternative Accounts. Next, we tested alternative accounts using multilevel models with samples cross-classified within heritage countries and host countries. Individualism of the heritage country remained a significant predictor when included as a solitary predictor in the cross-classified models (Model 3 in Table 5) as well as when including mean emotion experience (Model 4 in Table 5). The individualism of the heritage countries remained a significant predictor after controlling for the individualism of host countries (Model 5 in Table 6). Next, the absolute difference between the heritage and host countries in individualism emerged as a significant predictor of positive emotion concordances (see Supplemental Table S10). As a covariate, it was no longer significant, but individualism of the heritage countries was also no longer significant when controlling for it (Model 6 in Table 6). We attribute the lack of a significant association with either of these predictors when entered simultaneously to the high multicollinearity between them, $r = .80$. Next, cultural distance was not a significant covariate, but individualism of the heritage countries was not a significant predictor when controlling for cultural distance (Model 7 in Table 6). Notably, as we found for positive emotions, cultural distance was not a significant predictor of position emotion concordances when included as a solitary predictor (see Supplemental Table S10), indicating that it does not capture the effect between individualism of the heritage culture and emotion concordances. Instead, we suggest that the weakened association between individualism of the heritage country and negative emotion concordances is driven by the loss of degrees of freedom when including cultural distance. Finally, tightness of the heritage culture was not a significant covariate, and individualism of the heritage

Figure 2

Collectivism-Individualism and Positive Emotional Concordances of Immigrants With Natives in the Host Country, Broken Down by Heritage Countries With at Least 30 Respondents (r = .43), Study 2
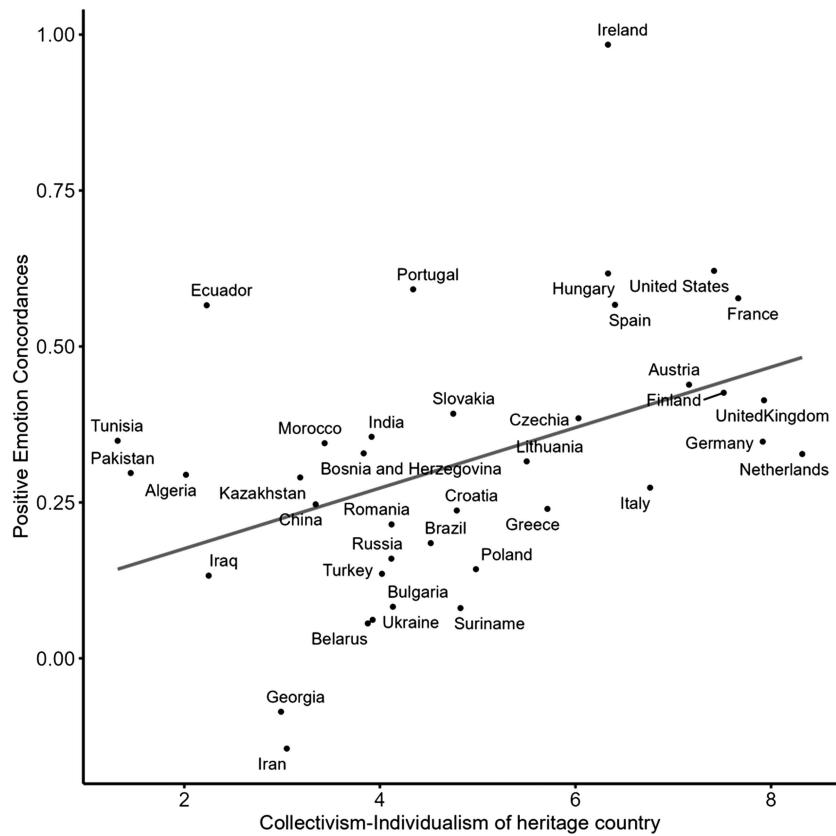
Note. Higher scores reflect more individualism.

countries remained a significant predictor when controlling for it (Model 8 in Table 6).

Finally, we note that results remained unchanged when controlling for individual-level demographics, including age, gender, and unemployment status (see Supplemental Tables S11 and S12).

Discussion

The purpose of Study 2 was to replicate the findings from Study 1 and extend them to a sample of immigrants from a larger number of host and heritage cultures, for both positive and negative emotions. We found that the emotions of immigrants originating from more (vs. less) individualist countries were more concordant with the emotional profiles of their native peers. This finding was not fully explained by the individualism of the host country, by the difference between the heritage and host countries in individualism, by cultural distance, or by cultural tightness.

General Discussion

The purpose of the present investigation was to test two different accounts for previous findings that indicated that adherence to

emotion norms is greater in more individualist cultures. According to the dominant view, people from more collectivist cultures have greater adherence to all norms, including emotion norms, but only so long as there are clearly defined emotion norms. Proponents of this account would argue that previous findings, which indicated that people in more individualist cultures have greater adherence to emotion norms (Vishkin et al., 2023), are an artifact of individualist having more clearly defined emotion norms. If this account is correct, immigrants from more collectivist cultures who immigrate to more individualist cultures should acquire the emotion norms of their host culture to a greater extent.

Meanwhile, according to the alternative account, adherence to emotion norms is greater in more individualist cultures. Thus, immigrants from more individualist cultures can be expected to be more attuned to emotion norms and consequently acquire the emotion norms of their host culture to a greater extent. Two studies investigated this question, each with samples of immigrants originating from across the entire globe and all five major continents. Results were consistent in revealing that across both studies, for both negative emotions (Studies 1 and 2) and positive emotions (Study 2), immigrants from more individualist cultures had higher emotion concordances with members of their host cultures. We ruled out similarity in individualism of the heritage and

Table 4

Multilevel Regressions Predicting Positive Emotion Concordances From Heritage Country Individualism, Mean Emotion Experience, and Covariates, Study 2

	Model 5						Model 6						Model 7						Model 8					
Nesting variable(s)	Heritage country (N = 107), host country (N = 29)						Heritage country (N = 107), host country (N = 29)						Heritage country (N = 89), host country (N = 23)						Heritage country (N = 56), host country (N = 29)					
Observations	4,592						4,592						3,412						3,296					
Predictor	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	B	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI
Intercept	.29	.04	38.0	7.88	<.001	[.21, .36]	.31	.04	35.9	8.55	<.001	[.23, .38]	.27	.04	26.9	6.29	<.001	[.18, .36]	.31	.05	40.6	6.56	<.001	[.21, −.40]
Heritage individualism	.03	.01	69.2	2.82	.006	[.01, .05]	.05	.02	148.9	3.30	.001	[.02, .08]	.02	.02	84.1	1.48	.144	[−.01, .05]	.03	.01	39.8	2.08	.043	[.00, −.06]
Emotion experience	.04	.03	34.2	1.44	.159	[−.02, .10]	.04	.03	34.6	1.33	.192	[−.02, .10]	−.01	.03	6.8	−0.38	.718	[−.09, .07]	.03	.03	19.4	1.00	.328	[−.03, −.09]
Host individualism	.05	.02	28.8	2.09	.045	[.00, .09]																		
Δ Heritage–host individualism							.03	.02	230.4	1.84	.067	[−.00, .06]												
Cultural distance													−.09	.32	152.5	−0.30	.766	[−.72, .53]						
Heritage tightness																			−.004	.01	41.2	−0.31	.757	[−.03, −.02]

Note. Covariates include individualism of the host country (Model 5), heritage–host country differences in individualism (Model 6), cultural distance (Model 7), and tightness of the heritage culture (Model 8). SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

host cultures as an alternative explanation. We also ruled out cultural distance as an alternative explanation, which predicted higher emotion concordances in Study 1but did not predict neither positive nor negative emotion concordances in Study 2. Finally, given that previous work has shown that acculturation outcomes are predicted by the extent of adherence to norms for behaviors (Geeraert et al., 2019), we also tested whether the cultural tightness of norms for behaviors (Gelfand et al., 2011) predicted emotion concordances. Just as cultural tightness is not a reliable predictor of emotion norms (Vishkin et al., 2023), so too tightness was not a reliable predictor of immigrants' emotion concordances with their native peers. Specifically, as a single predictor, tightness predicted adherence to emotion norms in the opposite of the expected direction and was not a significant predictor when entered simultaneously with individualism of the heritage country (Study 1). Furthermore, tightness never emerged as a significant predictor in Study 2.

Why might adherence to emotion norms be greater in more individualist cultures? One account suggested by Vishkin et al. (2023) is that social norms function to promote a culture's values (Schmidt & Tomasello, 2012; Sherif, 1936), and given that individualist cultures value authenticity and the self-expression of internal states (English & Chen, 2011; Guignon, 2004; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; C. Taylor, 1989), such as for emotions, they will develop norms regulating those states. One counterargument is that it is logically inconsistent for a culture which values self-expression and authenticity to have greater norm adherence in these domains. It is indeed *logically* inconsistent but not *psychologically* inconsistent. Cultures may develop institutions that undermine their very values. For instance, recent work has documented how negative attitudes among Protestants toward accruing debt led to more stable financial institutions, which has led to Protestants carrying higher levels of debt (Cohen et al., 2021). Similarly, we argue that, given the function of social norms to promote a culture's values, valuing self-expression and authenticity can lead to norms that regulate self-expression and authenticity.

Acculturation is a complex process in which diverse elements interact, such that "specific setting conditions of specific people at specific times moderate specific domains in acculturation by specific processes" (Bornstein, 2017, p. 3). The present investigation is a step toward revealing how characteristics of immigrant populations might combine with norms of native populations to predict the acculturation of a certain type of acculturation outcome. Such an approach has proven fruitful in other studies of acculturation (e.g., Geeraert et al., 2019). The present investigation is unique in testing how features of immigrants' background affect their acquisition of the norms of their countries of settlement. These findings can further our understanding of how to support immigrant populations. For instance, one reason for culture shock is that immigrants receive negative reactions from members of the host culture for breaking norms but do not know exactly which norm they have broken (Bhawuk et al., 2006). This might be particularly so for emotion norms, whose outward expression may be more subtle than certain cultural practices with clear behaviors, such as taking off one's shoes or bowing.

If individualist cultures have greater adherence to norms for internal states, in general, rather than just for emotions, then the present findings can be extended to norms for other internal states as well, such as personality traits. For instance, the salient norm of

Table 5
Multilevel Regressions Predicting Negative Emotion Concordances From Heritage Country Individualism, Study 2

	Model 1						Model 2						Model 3						Model 4					
Nesting variable(s)	Heritage country (N = 108)						Heritage country (N = 108)						Heritage country (N = 108), host country (N = 30)						Heritage country (N = 108), host country (N = 30)					
Observations	5,079						5,079						5,079						5,079					
Predictor	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI
Intercept	.29	.01	62.2	25.41	<.001	[.27, .31]	.29	.01	62.7	25.48	<.001	[.27, .31]	.29	.02	28.7	15.42	<.001	[.25, .33]	.29	.02	28.5	15.39	<.001	[.25, .33]
Heritage individualism	.01	.01	68.0	2.61	.011	[.00, .03]	.01	.01	68.1	2.62	.011	[.00, .03]	.01	.00	82.2	2.84	.006	[.00, .02]	.01	.00	81.9	2.88	.005	[.00, .02]
Emotion experience							−.04	.02	46.8	−2.07	.044	[−.07, −.00]							−.03	.02	34.6	−1.79	.082	[−.07, .00]

Note. Nesting within heritage countries (Models 1 and 2) or both heritage and host countries (Models 3 and 4), without covariates (Models 1 and 3), or with mean emotion experience (Models 2 and 4).
SE = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

extroversion in American individualism may hamper the integration of immigrants (Cain, 2013). Failing to adhere to personality norms might hamper the adaptation of immigrants in various domains, including in the development of interpersonal relationships and succeeding in job interviews.

Constraints on Generality

Previous studies on emotion acculturation have typically assessed emotion acculturation among two to four groups (Consedine et al., 2014; De Leersnyder et al., 2011, 2014). A key advantage of the present investigation is the diverse set of immigrant groups it includes. Nevertheless, a limitation of the data is the relatively few items used for computing emotion concordances, particularly for positive emotions in Study 2. This limited set of items make the emotion concordance scores less reliable and also limit the breadth of assessment of the emotional domain. Furthermore, while the emotion terms did differ in arousal, their limited variability in sampling the entire emotional domain may decrease the reliability of the emotion concordance scores. Future studies could employ the Emotional Patterns Questionnaire, which assesses a larger number of emotions as they may occur in different contexts (De Leersnyder et al., 2011). The assessment of emotions across situations can also address the question animating this research from a different angle.[4] In particular, emotion norms might be more clearly defined in certain situations (e.g., sadness at a funeral, happiness at a birthday party) than in others (e.g., competing with a close friend on the same job). If it is indeed the case that adherence to emotion norms is greater in more individualist cultures, this should be evident across situations where emotion norms are more clearly defined, as well as in situations where emotion norms are less clearly defined.

One concern regarding the data is the restricted range of collectivism–individualism of the heritage cultures. For instance, as shown in Figure 1, heritage countries are predominantly high in collectivism. Furthermore, host countries are predominantly high in individualism. The samples in Study 2 are more diverse but also comprise immigrants originating from predominantly collectivist cultures who settled in predominantly individualist cultures. While these restricted ranges limit the ability to extrapolate to other instances, such as immigrants from more individualist countries who settled in more collectivist countries, we note that these ranges reflect the dominant trends in immigration (de Haas et al., 2019; Niva et al., 2023) and are thus high in external validity.

We have argued that the higher emotion concordances of immigrants from more individualist cultures reveal that emotion norms are easier to acquire for immigrants from such cultures. Yet, the cross-sectional data did not enable us to demonstrate the process of emotion norm acquisition over time. Future studies could employ longitudinal designs to test whether the rate of acquisition of emotion norms in one's heritage is steeper for immigrants from more individualist cultures.

The emotion acculturation of immigrants contributes to their well-being and particularly to establishing strong social relationships (Consedine et al., 2014; De Leersnyder et al., 2014). This type of well-being, termed relational well-being, could not be

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[4] We thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

Figure 3

Collectivism-Individualism and Negative Emotional Concordances of Immigrants With Natives in the Host Country, Broken Down by Heritage Countries With at Least 30 Respondents (r = .35), Study 2
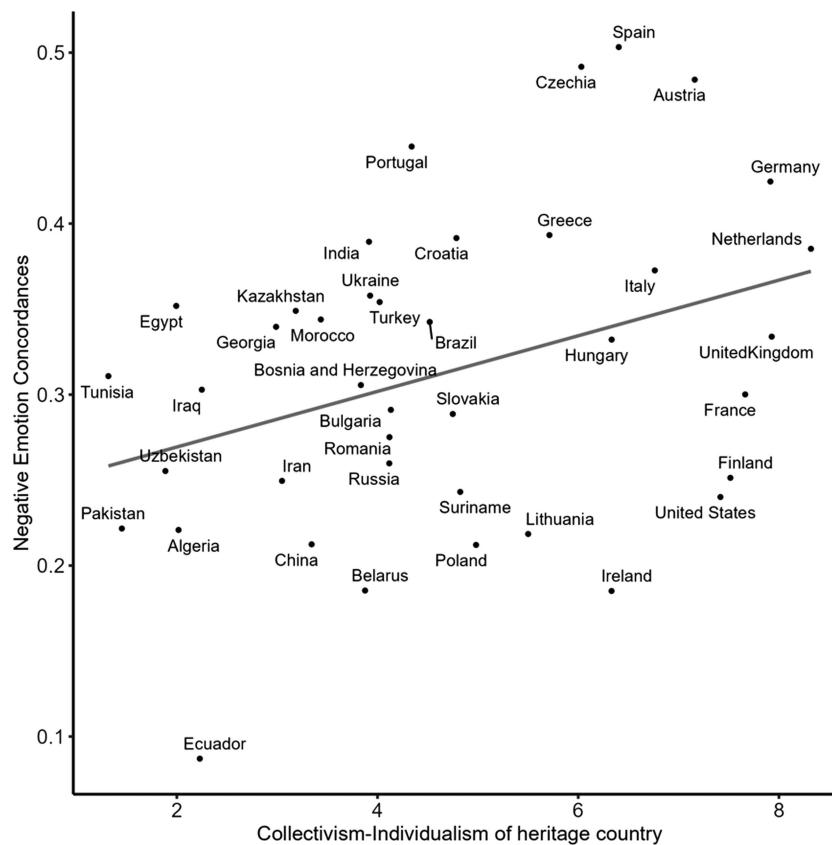
Note. Higher scores reflect more individualism.

assessed in the present investigation. Since adherence to emotion norms is more consequential for members of more individualist cultures (Vishkin et al., 2023), emotion concordance may be consequential to the relational well-being of immigrants from more individualist cultures. Future research could test this proposition.

Conclusion

Previous accounts of cultural differences in adherence to social norms have argued that, in some cultures, social norms are more adhered to than in other cultures, whether those cultures are high in collectivism (Triandis, 1989, 1995) or high in cultural tightness (Gelfand, 2012; Gelfand et al., 2011). Contrary to this perspective, recent work has found evidence consistent with the account that adherence to emotion norms is actually greater in more individualist cultures (Vishkin et al., 2023). This includes findings that in more individualist cultures, emotion are more homogenous, concordances with mean emotional experiences in one's country are higher, and deviation from mean emotional experiences

predicts lower well-being. Nevertheless, it may be argued that adherence to all social norms is greater in more collectivist and/or tighter cultures and that these findings are not driven by greater norm adherence in more individualist cultures but by individualist cultures having more well-defined emotion norms. The present investigation rules out this account by demonstrating that, even when immigrants move to predominantly more individualist cultures, it is those from a more individualist cultural background, rather than those from a collectivist or tighter cultural background, who more readily acquire the emotion norms of their host cultures.

The present investigation is also a first step in understanding how emotion norms may shape processes in acculturation. Many countries have implemented interventions to improve the adaptation of immigrants, yet these lack an understanding of which norms are most adhered to in the cultures that typically receive immigrants. The present findings highlight the importance of accounting for the norms that are most adhered to in receiving cultures and suggest that accounting for them may improve the adaptation of immigrants to such cultures.

Table 6

Multilevel Regressions Predicting Negative Emotion Concordances From Heritage Country Individualism, Mean Emotion Experience, and Covariates, Study 2

	Model 5						Model 6						Model 7						Model 8					
Nesting variable(s)	Heritage country (N = 108), host country (N = 30)						Heritage country (N = 108), host country (N = 30)						Heritage country (N = 91), host country (N = 24)						Heritage country (N = 58), host country (N = 29)					
Observations	5,079						5,079						3,792						3,677					
Predictor	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI	b	SE	df	t	p	95% CI
Intercept	.30	.02	29.5	15.19	<.001	[.26, .34]	.30	.02	28.8	15.41	<.001	[.26, .33]	.29	.02	22.6	13.32	<.001	[.25, .34]	.29	.02	34.4	14.01	<.001	[.25, −.33]
Heritage individualism	.01	.00	85.4	3.03	.003	[.01, .02]	.02	.01	145.5	1.86	.065	[−.00, .03]	.01	.01	94.1	1.33	.187	[−.01, .03]	.02	.01	37.4	3.03	.004	[.01, −.03]
Emotion experience	−.04	.02	32.3	−1.91	.066	[−.07, .00]	−.04	.02	34.3	−1.97	.057	[−.08, .00]	−.03	.02	4.5	−1.52	.195	[−.09, .03]	−.03	.02	25.9	−1.33	.196	[−.08, −.02]
Host individualism	−.01	.01	26.1	−0.39	.698	[−.03, .02]																		
Δ Heritage–host individualism							.00	.01	20.3	0.11	.916	[−.02, .02]												
Cultural distance													.00	.17	118.2	−0.01	.994	[−.33, .33]						
Heritage tightness																			.00	.01	40.4	0.27	.787	[−.01, −.01]

Note. Covariates include individualism of the host country (Model 5), heritage–host country differences in individualism (Model 6), cultural distance (Model 7), and tightness of the heritage culture (Model 8). *SE* = standard error; CI = confidence interval.

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