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ABSTRACT

Acculturation research has explored the relation between orientation of migrants towards home and host cultures and predicted their adaption to the host society in different domains of life. Migrants' mobile phone communication with friends' networks in the host country as well as to family and relatives in the home culture has been supportive in the adaptation process. We investigated whether migrants adapted differentially to life and work domains, and probed further into the reasons behind it. Data from survey questionnaire (n=519) were analysed to test the relationships between: (i) acculturation (parsed as 'cultural identification' and 'multiculturalism'); (ii) mobile communication to home and host cultures; and, (iii) adaptation outcomes – indicated by life satisfaction and organizational commitment. Results showed that multiculturalism positively affected life satisfaction and organizational commitment, while cultural identity positively affected only organizational commitment. Mobile communication to other cultures positively affected organizational commitment, whereas calling to home culture did not affect either life satisfaction or organizational commitment. We suggest the host society to actively interact with the labor migrants in order that the actual potential of mobile phones as bridge between cultural divides can be actualized. The research advances scholarship in acculturation by incorporating culturally-salient mobile phone communication into the theoretical schema.

Keywords: mobile phone, migrants, acculturation, cultural identity, organizational commitment, cosmopolitanism, integration

INTRODUCTION

The concept of acculturation helps describe the problems migrants face in the new culture, and to eventually categorize and predict the migrant adaptation outcomes (Liu, 2007; Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, & Obdrzálek, 2000). A key issue migrants need to resolve is their relationship with the culture to which they are acquainted (home culture) and the dominant cultures of the country to which they migrate (host culture). A life-domain specific – e.g. work, social life, religion and beliefs, etc. – understanding of acculturation is also important in the case of labor migrants given that they face different challenges in each domain (Edwards & Lopez, 2006; Navas et al., 2005).

This study draws on from the tradition that considers acculturation as a communication process (Kim, 1978), and investigates how migrant acculturation in a domain informs, determines, but also works independent of acculturation in other domains. We chose to focus on mobile phone given its widespread diffusion among labor migrants world over, and studied how it affected migrants' differential acculturation in the domains of work and social life. In the context of Singapore, a Southeast Asian nation that has 27% of population as labor migrants, civil society's response to migration has maintained dichotomy between work and social life of migrants, which is reflected in an effective management of the migrant labor in industrial spaces (MoM, 2013) contrasted by increased discrimination against migrant laborers in virtual and public spaces (Jacobs, 2012, "Singapore's angry", 2013).

We identified factors that explained labor migrants' acculturation, their mobile communication and their eventual well-being in work and social domains: (i) migrants' level of cultural affinity towards home and host cultures both in social and work domains; (ii) migrants' varying levels of communication engagement with members of home and host cultures; and (iii) their level of engagement in organization and their level of satisfaction in social life. The study investigates how acculturation attitude and mobile communication determine migrants' adaptation in social and work domains.

BEYOND THE BI-DIMENSIONAL MODEL

From a bi-dimensional perspective, acculturation can be explained using the typology of *assimilation, integration, separation* and *marginalization* (Berry, 2010; Zagefka & Brown,

2002). *Assimilation* denotes lack of concern for cultural heritage but greater interest in relating to other cultures; *integration* denotes retention of cultural heritage and relationship with other cultures at equal measure; *separation* occurs when one hesitates to engage with other cultures, but keep to one's own culture; and, *marginalization* denotes lack of acceptance or willful disengagement from home and host cultures. Often migrants are pressurized to follow the acculturation orientation prescribed by the governmental policies and civil society attitudes in the host country.Despite pluralistic nature of the approach, scholars have criticized the low reliability of Mutual Intercultural Relations in Plural Societies (MIRIPS), or evaluation projects based on bidirectional models (Rudmin, 2003; Vijver, Helms-Lorenz, & Feltzer, 1999). We decided to adopt concepts from MIRIPS, but ensured that the factors were not ipsative character:

(i)   *Cultural identity* is used to denote the strength of loyalty and extant affinity of migrants towards their home culture. Previous research has produced mixed results on the effect of ethnic identity on acculturation (Jeffres & Hur, 1981). Cultural identity often overlaps with concepts like ethnicity and nationalism.

Cultural identity has also been identified as a latent characteristic of migrants, which is evoked in the face of host society's discriminatory practices and policies (Rumbaut, 2008). Identified mostly in second generation migrants, 'reactive ethnicity' denotes "one mode of ethnic identity formation [among ethnic minorities] that highlights the role of a hostile context of reception in accounting for the rise rather than the erosion of ethnicity" (p. 110). Virtual spaces allow for constant co-construction of identities, a phenomenon widely observed among migrants (Chan, 2005). Political exiles and transnational migrants use internet to preserve their cultural identity against the incursions from outside world (Perez & Ben-David, 2012). The present study investigates the influence of cultural identity on acculturation outcomes in social and work domains, and explores the role of mobile communication in strengthening or weakening the relationship.

(ii)   *Multiculturalism in organizational setting* denotes the level of acceptance and willingness for co-existence a migrant worker displays towards other cultures, especially among co-workers. The concept of multiculturalism in workplace is part of 'diversity' studies conducted widely in organizations. While studies have focused on the impact of diversity within

organizations on the functioning and productivity of groups, the focus in present research is on individual worker's perception and attitude towards cultural diversity in the organization.

Although earlier research found a normatively negative influence of multiculturalism on individual adaptation, leading to conflict and confusion (Griffith, Childs, Eng, & Jeffries, 2007), recent research has identified positive outcomes like cognitive complexity, adaptability (Chae & Foley, 2010; Chatman, Polzer, Barsade, & Neale, 1998), and opportunity for integration and learning (Ely & Thomas, 2001).

This study extends the scope of earlier investigations by exploring how multiculturalism of migrants at workplace determined their adaptation not only to work but also to the life domain in general.

MIGRANTS AND MOBILE PHONE

Migrants' usage of mobile phone has received sufficient research attention, especially on how the technology has helped migrant workers retain ties with home culture (Thompson, 2009), leverage economic benefits in the host country (Qiu, 2009) and in the case of foreign domestic workers (FDWs) overcome employer control (Law & Peng, 2008). Migrants have a range of communication needs in work as well as social life owing to the nature of their work and the level of control maintained by the employers.

While an overlap of work- social life domains are evident in FDWs' use of mobile phone, we investigated whether the dichotomy between these domains determined the differential adaption of male migrant workers to the host country (Birman, Trickett, & Buchanan, 2005). The adaptation outcome in social domain was identified as *adaptation to social life* constituted by three constructs – competency in host society language, level of compliance with host society rules and overall comfort in the host country (Skuza, 2007).

   a)   Proficiency in host society language: Gaining proficiency in host society language is considered a necessary prerequisite for optimal adaptation of migrants in the new culture. Language proficiency is also a measurable index of migrant adaptation. Scholars have acknowledged that individuals who look beyond their cultural identity and preferences learn new languages quickly and get easily adapted to the cultures they migrate to (Citron, 1995). By learning the language of the host society a migrant can build a complex and nuanced perceptual

structure about the host culture (Kim, 1978). This perceptual complexity has been found to have a positive relationship with the migrant's knowledge of and adaptation to the host society.

b)   *Migrants' overall comfort in host country:* Migrants often complain about some unknown discomfort that they feel in the new culture. Skuza (2007) notes that there is an increasing tendency in acculturation studies to capture feelings of personal and social isolation and confusion experienced by migrants to measureable psychological categories of depression. However, the emphasis should be given to the overall comfort level of the migrants rather than compartmentalizing of the experiences (Skuza, 2007).

c)   *Adaptation to host country rules:* Asian political contexts and governance styles are so diverse that the continent is home to democratic and autocratic states alike. Liberal and conservative groups thrive in varying numbers in this region. If laws against consumption of alcohol are strictly enforced in Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia, countries like Singapore have strict laws prohibiting drug trafficking and littering (Al-Rajhi, Altman, Metcalfe, & Roussel, 2006). Thus, the set of laws and rules become a negotiation platform for the migrants in their cultural adaptation process.

THE WORK DOMAIN

While there have been researches in different cultural contexts to evaluate the acculturation orientations of migrants in social life (Liu, 2007; Piontkowski et al., 2000), management scholars acknowledge that "the concept of acculturation has rarely been discussed in the context of organizational behavior" (Cox & Finley-Nickelson, 1991, p. 91). This study used organizational commitment as an index to evaluate migrant workers' level of adaptation to work.

Organizational commitment is a complex concept with broad definitions in literature (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). A central theme that underpins the definitions of organizational commitment is the employees' psychological attachment to an organization. Research in business communication has highlighted that internal communication helps achieve better employee engagement (Mishra, Boynton, & Mishra, 2014). Saks (2006) maintained that clear and sustained communication with employees helps achieve employee engagement, which in turn results in employees' having better relationships with the employer.

Drawing on from earlier studies that have highlighted the importance of communication within organizations, which help workers to be informed about company policies, obtain information on professional tasks and to solve problems (Anderson & Martin, 1995; McMillan & Lopez, 2001), it is logical to predict that greater amount of communication among coworkers would be positively related to greater organizational commitment.

We were guided by the research question: How do acculturation orientations of cultural identity and multiculturalism and mobile calling to home and host cultures affect migrants' adaptation to social life and work in the host country?

ADAPTATION TO SOCIAL LIFE

H1: Multiculturalism in workplace, mobile phone calling to other cultures and mobile phone calling to home culture positively affect migrants' adaptation to social life, whereas cultural identity negatively affects migrants' adaptation to social life.

> *H1a: Multiculturalism positively affects adaptation to social life.*

> *H1b: Mobile phone calling to other cultures positively affects migrants' adaptation to social life.*

> *H1c: Mobile phone calling to home culture positively affects migrants' adaptation to social life.*

> *H1d: Cultural identity negatively affects adaptation to social life.*

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT*H2: Multiculturalism in workplace and mobile phone calling to other cultures will positively affect migrants' organizational commitment, whereas cultural identity and mobile phone calling to home culture negatively affect migrants' organizational commitment.*

> *H2a: Multiculturalism positively affects organizational commitment.*

> *H2b: Mobile phone calling to other cultures positively affects migrants' organizational commitment.*

> *H2c: Mobile phone calling to home culture negatively affects migrants' organizational commitment.*

> *H2d: Cultural identity negatively affects organizational commitment* (see Figure).

METHODS

Sample

The sample included 519 male migrant workers from Bangladesh and India who had been in Singapore for varying amount of time. Only workers in semi-skilled and unskilled positions, employed in the industrial sectors of construction, oil refining, shipping and other factory/plant related jobs were included in the study. Workers in these categories are given work permit or 'S' pass as per the immigration rules of the government of Singapore. The migrants were from four regions in the two countries, each with its own language and ethnic culture: Malayali, Tamil and Telugu (from the south Indian states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, respectively) and Bengali (from India's northeastern region as well as from Bangladesh).

Data collection

Questionnaire responses were collected between March 2011 and June 2013. The questionnaire was translated to four languages, Bangla, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam; the initial translations and the back translations of the questionnaire were conducted by two different people who were proficient in both English and the respective language. The questionnaire survey was administered by the researcher personally and typically completed in 20 minutes; although some respondents took longer time to complete it, due mainly to their limited level of literacy and non-familiarity with survey questionnaires. The minimum age for participating in the study was 21, as per the Institutional Review Board guidelines for social research put up by Nanyang Technological University. An honorarium of 5 SGD (~3.85 USD) was paid to each questionnaire respondent. Funds to pay the honorarium to the respondents were provided jointly by an Internet research group in Singapore and the University where the researcher was based.

The present study used a mixture of purposive and snowball sampling methods and a face-to-face interview technique similar to other quantitative mobile phone studies (e.g., Fortunati, Manganelli, Law, & Yang, 2008). Actual response rate was not calculable for the questionnaire survey. However, broadly, one in five migrant workers approached by the researcher agreed to fill in the questionnaire.

Quantitative measures

Two acculturation factors related to strength of cultural identity and multiculturalism in workplace emerged with meaningful combination of survey questions. They were finally used in the statistical modeling.

a)   *Cultural Identity*: Items like 'I think of myself as [ethnic]', 'I feel that I am part of [ethnic] culture', 'I am proud of being [ethnic]' and 'I am happy to be [ethnic]' grouped on to the same factor. A five-point Likert scale with eight items recorded responses from '1 – strongly disagree' to '5 – strongly agree'. The scale was reliable, Cronbach's alpha: .87

b)   *Multiculturalism in workplace*: Items like 'It is a pleasure to work with people of different ethnicities' and 'It is best for an organization if all workers forget their different ethnic and cultural differences and work in unison' were adapted from MIRIPS questionnaire (Berry, 2010) to represent the multicultural character of industrial workforce in Singapore. A five-point Likert scale with four items recorded responses from '1 – strongly disagree' to '5 – strongly agree'. The scale was reliable, Cronbach's alpha: .76

c)   *Adaptation to social life:* Items to measure adaptation outcomes in social domain were drawn from the sub-scale 'socio-cultural competence' in MIRIPS questionnaire (Berry, 2010) and were supplemented with context-specific questions. Items like "How difficult it is to cope with the pace of life in the new country" have been split and changed to "How comfortable are you with the metro life" and "How comfortable are you with the city's night life". A factor analysis with varimax rotation and unrestricted number of factors was used to determine which items best captured the adaptation outcomes for this sample population. Although five factors emerged following factor analysis, only three factors measuring different aspects of adaptation were used.

(i) Compliance with the host society rules: Five items on rules and regulations loaded on the same factor. Questions included, "While staying in Singapore, how comfortable are you with obeying rules in public transport while travelling," "Obeying anti-littering law" and "How comfortable are you with the overall order and discipline in this society."

(ii) Competency in host society language(s): Six items on language competency in host culture loaded on the same factor. Questions included, "While staying in Singapore, how comfortable are you with communicating with people of a different ethnic group," "Making yourself understood," "Finding your way around" and "Dealing with authority".

(iii) Overall comfort in host culture: Five items on overall comfort in host culture loaded on the same factor. Questions included, "While staying in Singapore, how comfortable are you with festivities of groups other than yours," "With metro culture" and "Status given to workers in this society."

The adaptation to social life scale was created by taking the average of 16 items that grouped in three factors and was internally reliable; Cronbach's alpha = .81.

Adaptation outcome in work domain

In order to understand work-related acculturation, respondents' organizational commitment was measured.

(d) Organizational commitment: was measured using a five-point Likert scale (from 1 "totally disagree" to 5 "totally agree"). Questions included, "Unless I'm rewarded for it in some way, I see no reason to expend extra effort on behalf of this organization" and "In my job here, I sometimes have to act in ways that are not completely consistent with my true values" (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986).

The 31-item measure was internally reliable (Cronbach's alpha: .863).

Amount of mobile phone communication

Duration and frequency measures were used as the measures to denote one-on-one voice communication. This was in line with the measurements used by media effect studies to analyze the media-use behavior of audiences (Shrum, 2002). In this study, frequency and duration have been measured along the axis of cultural referencing; i.e. calls that are likely to make home culture salient and those that make host culture salient. All the measures related to mobile communication were developed by the researcher, since prior research combining cultural orientation and mobile phone use was absent.

A factor analysis with varimax rotation and unrestricted number of factors was used to determine whether the conceptual foundation distinguishing host and home culture calls was valid in the sample population. Three factors emerged, but they did not reflect the cultural orientation of mobile calling. Hence, the scales were created based on the conceptual foundation of calling to home and host cultures.

(e) Mobile calling to other cultures in the host country: Six items were included in the scale, reflecting both frequency and duration dimensions. Frequency items included, "How often do you call your friends from other communities in Singapore?" and "How often do you call your fellow-workmen, at or below your level?". Responses ranged from "Virtually never" (0). "Once in a week (2), to "At least once in a day" (5). Duration items included, "For how long do you talk to your friends in other communities in Singapore?" and "For how long do you talk to your fellow-workmen, at or below your level?". Responses ranged from "Not applicable" (0), "Approximately 5 to 10mts" (2), to "More than an hour" (5). The measure was internally reliable (Cronbach's alpha: .71).

(f) Mobile calling to home culture: Eight items were included in the scale, reflecting both frequency and duration dimensions. Frequency items included, "How often do you call your family back home" and "How often do you call your friends from your own community in Singapore?". Duration items included, "For how long do you talk to your friends back home at a time over phone?" and "For how long do you talk to your friends in other countries over phone at a time?". The measure was internally reliable (Cronbach's alpha: .66).

Demographic variables

Demographic variables included: (i) age (measured in years after birth), (ii) religion, (iii) education (number of years of formal education, including technical courses), and (iv) income (using the categories of 'less than SGD 500,' 'between SGD 500 and 1000,' 'between SGD 1000 and 2000' and 'above SGD 2000' per month).

Mean age was 28.75 (*SD* = 5.35), with a range of 21 to 50; education ranged from five years to 21.5 years, with a mean of 11.97 (*SD* = 2.21); and, duration of residence ranged from one month to 192 months (16 years), with a mean of 50.3 months (*SD* = 35.46). The sample constituted 174 Bengali (33.5%), 172 Tamilian (33.1%); 103 Telugu (19.8%); and, 70 Malayali (13.5%). The frequency distribution of the income slabs of the sample was: 60 respondents (11.6%) earned a monthly income below SGD 500; 349 (67.2%) earned between SGD 500 and SGD 999; 99 (19.1%) earned between SGD 1,000 and SGD 1,999; and, 8 (1.5%) earned SGD 2,000 or above.

RESULTS

Correlation between the variables were assessed before running the regression tests (see Table 1). Multicollinearity between the independent variables cultural identity, multiculturalism in workplace, mobile communication to home and host cultures, as also between the demographic variables was within the acceptable limit (Variance-Inflation Factor being less than 1.7 in all cases).

Adaptation to social life

To test hypothesis 1, a hierarchical regression was run (see Table 2). Demographics was the first block. Age (β = .17, p < .01) and education (β = .17, p < .01) significantly predicted migrants' adaptation to social life. The results indicated that those who are of higher age and higher educational qualification tended to experience better adaptation to social life in the host country. As the second block, acculturation explained 1.6% of the variance, with multiculturalism (β = .12, p < .05) found to be a significant predictor. The results indicate that the participants who were favorably disposed to other cultures were more likely to show adaptation to social life in the host country. Finally, mobile communication was the third block, and the results show that neither calls to home nor calls to host was a predictor for adaptation to social life. As the last block, mobile communication explained 1.8% of the variance. The hierarchical regression explained 9.1% of the variance in total. H1a was supported. H1b, H1c and H1d were not supported.

Organizational commitment

To test hypothesis 2, a hierarchical regression was run (see Table). Demographics was the first block. The variables did not have any effect on organizational commitment. As the second block, acculturation explained 31.3% of the variance, with both multiculturalism (β = .3, p < .001) and cultural identity (β = .39, p < .001) emerging as significant predictors. The results indicate that the participants who were favorably disposed to other cultures, and who showed greater identification to their ethnic culture were more likely to show greater commitment to organization in the host country. However, the direction of effect of cultural identity was opposite to what was hypothesized (H2d). Finally, mobile communication was the third block, and the results show that amount of calling to other cultures in the host country (β = .23, p < .001) was a significant predictor for organizational commitment. As the last block, mobile

communication explained 3.7% of the variance. The hierarchical regression explained 37% of the variance in total. H2a and H2b were supported. H2c and H2d were not supported.

DISCUSSION

One key theoretical assumption of the study was that migrants tended to retain their cultural identity and preferences while trying to foster relationships with other cultures in the host country. However, those who show greater affinity towards their own culture at the expense of not relating to other cultures have been found less adapted to the host culture(s) (Berry, 2010). Prior studies have shown that mobile phones help migrant workers receive social support as well as the information needed for adaptation as they stay in the host country (Qiu, 2008; Thompson, 2009). This research specifically focused on the domains of social life and work as it investigated the validity of the theoretical assumption in the two domains. The findings showed that low-skilled migrant workers' positive disposition towards cultural diversity in organizations had positive impact on their adaptation to both social life and work; the impact of mobile phone calling on migrants' adaptation was not uniform across the two domains; and, the assumption that strength of cultural identity negatively affects a migrant's commitment towards organization is unsupported, whereas the reverse was true for the population under study. The theoretical and practical implications of the results are discussed in the subsequent sections.

Acculturation, mobile communication and adaptation to social life

The first part of the research question asked how adaptation to social life in the host country is determined by amount of mobile communication and acculturation factors like cultural identity and multiculturalism in workplace. Only multiculturalism in workplace, which corresponds to integration in the pluralistic-typological model (Berry, 2010), had positive influence on migrants' adaptation to social life. The results validate the results of earlier studies. In addition, by evaluating integration in organizational spaces and predicting adaptation in social life, the study has extended the scope of earlier research in two ways: (i) by establishing that integration is indeed the desirable acculturation attitude in both social and work domains (Liu, 2007; Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, & Obdrzálek, 2000); and, (ii) by establishing that while integration in the social domain was relevant for migrants with greater permanency in their residents statuses, this concept is more valid in the work domain for migrants who have only transient statuses in the host country.

In most cases, the migrants acquired a footing in the new culture through engagement with their teammates from different cultures, as they jointly performed the organizational tasks. As reported by prior studies, micro-coordination using mobile phone was also a means by which migrants improved their proficiency in English proficiency.

The fact that migrants' adaptation to social life is decided by their multicultural orientation in workplace also explains the peaceful co-existence of different ethnic groups in around 50 purpose-built dormitories and innumerable worksite accommodations in Singapore. Migrants' acceptance of other cultures takes place not only in the context of the organization, but in the social spaces too, leading to their greater adaptation in social life.

Relatedly, cultural identity does not influence migrants' adaptation to social life. As minority groups with low socio-economic status and low political standing, the low-skilled migrants would not want to stake claims based on their identities. This is line with the findings of earlier studies that low-vitality groups desisted from expressing strong loyalty towards their cultural identity at the expense of negatively affecting their relationship with the dominant cultures in the host country (Liu, 2007). The absence of influence of cultural identity on adaptation to social life portends a healthy trend in cosmopolitan Singapore, as far as migrant workers are concerned. It means that migrants do follow multicultural and secular qualities in their life in Singapore, such that the strength of their identification to ethnic culture does not determine their adaptation to social life. However, the host society needs to transform itself and show greater tolerance and acceptance of the migrants in order to achieve social harmony in the nation.

The non-existence of relationship between cultural identity and social adaptation may be understood with caution. While operationalizing, cultural identity was conceived as a static concept, non-responsive to changing dynamics between interacting cultures. On the contrary, the migrant rioting incident of 2013 in Singapore ("Singapore's angry", 2013) shows that 'reactive ethnicity' (Rumbault, 2008) would afflict even culturally passive populations in the face of perceived threat and discrimination[1].

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[1] The incident that triggered migrants' rioting in Singapore involved the death of a Tamil migrant in a bus accident in Little India, a busy business district in the country. The driver of the bus was a Singaporean. Suggesting that a 'reactive ethnic' backlash was at play, most of the 57 rioters

Age and education positively affected adaptation to social life, whereas income and period of residence did not have an effect. In prior studies migrants of higher age were less adapted to the host society (Liu, 2007). Hence, the result calls for greater attention, as it tells something unique about the migration situation in Singapore. Either the migrants are becoming more submissive in their social life as they grow old, or, the older migrants' expectations from life in Singapore are much less as compared to that of young migrants. Further investigation is needed to understand this phenomenon.

Higher education leading to better adaptation is in line with the findings of earlier studies, which show that migrants with better language skills, higher knowledge of the process of migration and higher education tend to adapt better to the host country (Al Rajhi et al., 2006). Further investigation is required to understand how advanced mobile devices are better utilized by migrants with higher education to access information that can facilitate their better adaptation, in comparison to those who have less education.

Finally, the model with the predictors – demographics, acculturation and mobile communication – has only accounted for a low amount of variance in migrants' social adaptation. Prior studies have identified a series of predictors involving cultural affinity and interpersonal and mass media communication as influencing the social adaptation of migrants (Kim, 1978). However, the model used in the study failed to consider these variables, which resulted in a low R^2 value for the model. It would be worth investigating which all predictors outside acculturation and mobile communication decide low-skilled migrants' social adaptation – e.g. what is the differential impact of low-end mobile phone and smartphone on the social adaptation of migrants?

Acculturation, mobile communication and organizational commitment

The second part of the research question inquired how acculturation and mobile communication affected organizational commitment. The positive influence of cultural identity on migrants' commitment to organization was contrary to prediction. Prior research in similarity-attraction paradigm has established that people feel favorably disposed to those who are similar to them in

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later repatriated by the Singapore government were from the Tamil community (MHA, 2014, p. 11).

a group, leading to greater communication within group and group effectiveness (Chatman et al., 1998). Conversely, members of minority cultures in an organization are likely to perceive threat to their identities which would eventually cause negative attitudes toward others, leading to the minority group's low organizational commitment. The results of the present study modify the existing understanding on minority groups' commitment to organization, as they show that the stronger the migrant workers identify themselves with their own ethnic culture, the more committed they become towards their organization. One explanation is the existence of co-ethnic groups in organizations, which help migrants from those communities to coordinate among each other and get work done easily. Multiculturalism in workplace leading to better organizational commitment supports the findings of prior research that has observed positive outcomes like cognitive complexity, adaptability (Chae & Foley, 2010) and integration and learning (Ely & Thomas, 2001) among migrants who desire greater diversity in organizations. However, this study did not differentially assess migrants' acceptance of diversity across classes of workers in an organization.

The leap in the effectiveness of the statistical model with the introduction of acculturation variables (R^2 value changed by 31.3%) suggests that the two factors are decisive in understanding low-skilled migrants' commitment to the organization.

The positive influence of mobile calling to other cultures on organizational commitment shows that mobile communication, along with acculturation, does have a role to play in deciding the organizational commitment of low-skilled migrants. Calls originated from members of other cultures, but also directed to them were captured by the scale. However, the variance explanation power of the mobile communication variables was low, highlighting the need for more factors in the block, or more effective measurement scales.

Demographics did not decide migrants' organizational commitment. It suggests that in a multicultural work context, acculturation-communication variables have greater power to predict workers' organizational commitment, in comparison to their demographics. Positive outcomes at work may not be achieved only by ensuring that the workforce is young and is well paid and well educated – concerns typical of conventional managerial outlook. On the contrary, issues related to cultural identity and multicultural disposition of the workforce need increased attention.

Finally, the model with predictors of demographics, acculturation and mobile communication has accounted for considerable amount (37%) of variance in organizational commitment. It suggests that organizations would benefit if they take an effort to assess periodically the cultural identity, mobile calling behavior, and multiculturalism of the migrant workers at the lower stratum. It is important to understand the factors affecting organizational commitment of migrant workers, as the latter has extended impact on other favorable organizational outcomes, like productivity and job satisfaction.

From a communication perspective, more effective models that can predict adaptation with the help of acculturation and mobile communication may be adopted in future research. For example, studies have identified factors like migrants' interpersonal communication, mass media usage and participation in recreation clubs and religious groups in the host country as mediating the effect of acculturation on adaptation (Birman et al., 2005). In line with these models, mobile phone calling to host and home cultures may be introduced as mediating factors in future research. Considering the widespread diffusion of feature and smartphones among migrants world over, especially among those located in the developed countries, more research is needed to understand the effect of mobile communication as predictors or mediators on acculturation and adaptation.

CONCLUSION

 The primary objective of this research was to explore the role of acculturation and mobile communication in the adaptation of migrant workers in Singapore. The quantitative results showed that in work spaces migrants' increased use of mobile communication with members of host society does positively affect their adaptation, whereas in social spaces it does not affect migrants' adaptation. The results of this study support the proposition that in Singapore those migrants who follow a positive attitude towards other cultures can be better committed to their work, while such an attitude does not ensure their satisfaction in social life. In addition, results show that those who communicate with members of host society are better committed to their work, whereas there is no guarantee that those same individuals would be satisfied with their social life in the host country. The results point to a clear division in the host society's receptiveness and sensitivity towards migrant issues in work sector and in the socio-political and cultural milieu.

By making the concept of acculturation relevant to the migrants at the lower strata, we critique the exclusionary practices in host society at the level of discourse as well as of practice. In micro contexts and immediate problem solving situations mobile phones have enabled the capacities of migrants to co-ordinate and become more productive and efficient. However, from the broader perspective that spans across individual's cultural experience we find that mobile phone does not help migrants to engage with the social life of host country Singapore.

The economic logic of labor migration itself presents an unstable acculturation context for the migrants and the host society. It presents a symbiotic relationship between the host and the migrant, typical of that of caste hierarchies in South Asian societies: one depending on the other for survival, but with minimum social interaction. This ostracism at the hands of the host society has a class and a racial tinge, as experienced by migrant workers in Singapore depending upon the specific contexts of interaction. Multiculturalism of migrants leading to their better organizational commitment may be explained by the fact that in most of their organizational interaction, they work with a multicultural team that is no different from their own class. Whereas, in social space, with all visible markers of cosmopolitanism and affluent consumerism, the labor migrants remain marginalized as people with low-purchasing power. In this context, a techno-deterministic quest on the communication technologies that can fulfill the needs of migrant workers itself is another way of subjection. This study is an antithesis to such a techno-deterministic approach, as it understands acculturation as lived experience and highlights the problems of adaptation in different domains, motivated by different mobile usage patterns.

As long as the economic and policy structures supporting labor migration remain the same, we expect the differential adaptation of migrants in personal and professional domains to sustain. However, we are unable to decide how far a conscious and collective will – from host society or from migrants, or both – can change the course of this destiny

Nevertheless, we recommend sustained research interest on the acculturation experience of migrants at the lower strata, which can systematically unravel the diverse acculturation patterns in disparate demographic groups. Indeed, the societal challenge is to acknowledge that the acculturation experience of each individual migrant is ultimately irreducible and unique.

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Table 1: Zero-order Pearson correlations among cultural identity, multicultural outlook in workplace, mobile communication to home and host cultures and adaptation outcomes

	2	3	4	5	6
1. Cultural identity	.38**	-.12**	-.11*	.1*	.48**
2. Multiculturalism in workplace		-.05	-.03	.17**	.44**
3. Mobile communication to host culture			.56**	.06	.17**
4. Mobile communication to home culture				.09	.02
5. Adaptation to social life					.22**
6. Organizational commitment					

Notes: *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$; N =519

Table 2: Hierarchical regression analysis of the impact of cultural identity, multicultural thinking in organizational context, mobile phone calling to home and host cultures on two adaptation outcomes – adaptation to social life and organizational commitment

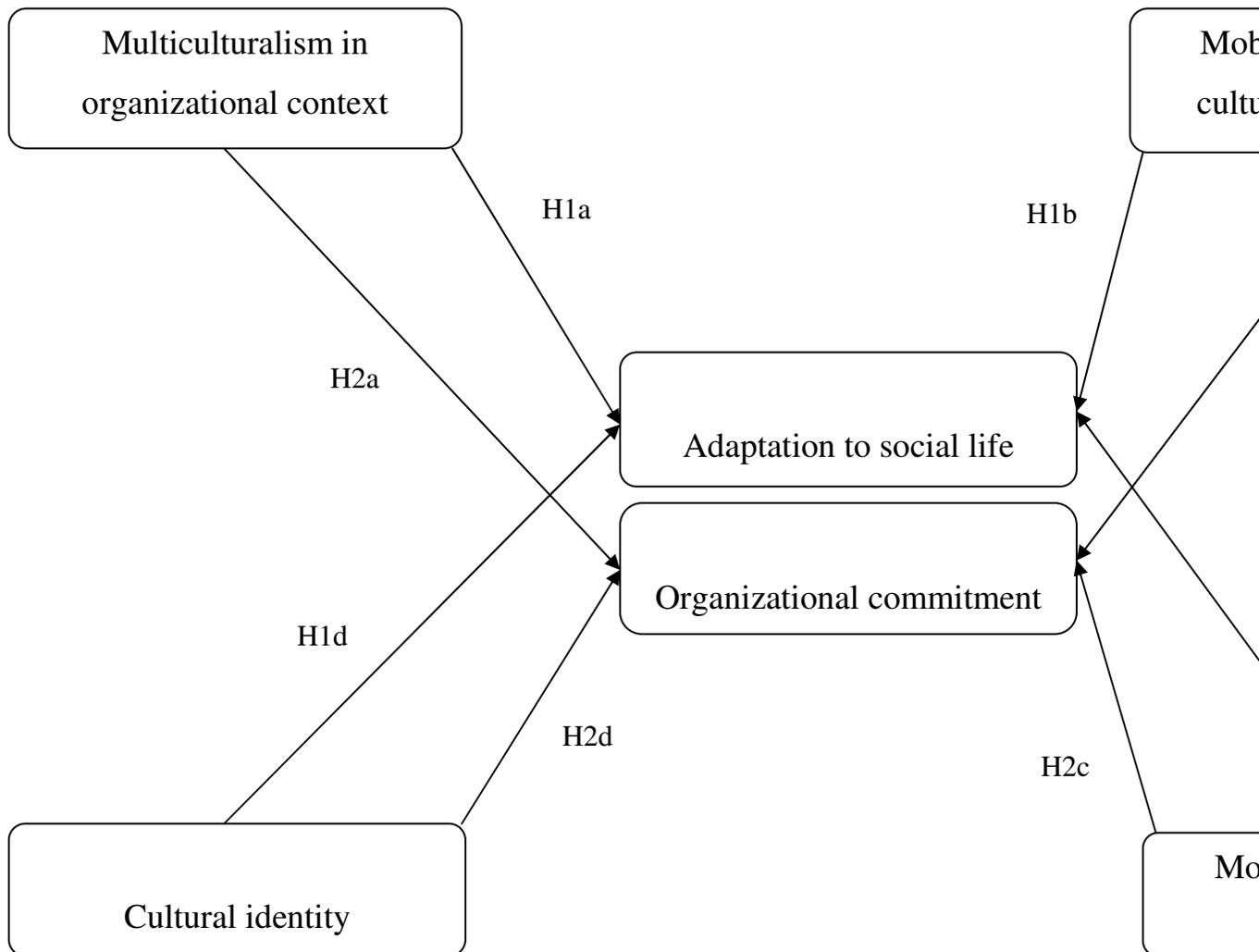| Predictors	Adaptation to social life, β	Organizational Commitment, β	Δ R² Adaptation to social life	Δ R² Org. Commitment
Block 1: Demographics				
Age	.171**	.074		
Education	.168**	-.07		
Period of residence	-.07	.023		
Income	.028	-.018	.056	.02
Block 2: Identity and multicultural orientation				
Cultural identity	.044	.393***		
Multicultural orientation	.115*	.298***	.016	.313
Block 3: Mobile phone calling				
Mobile calling to home culture	.104	-.071		
Mobile calling to other cultures	.053	.232***	.018	.037
R Square			.091	.37
Adjusted R Square			.071	.356

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

Figure. The model showing the relationship between acculturation variables – cultural identity and multiculturalism in workplace – mobile communication variables and adaptation outcomes – adaptation to social life and organizational commitment