

## Same Leader, Different Story:

The Mystery of Culture  
in Psychological Safety

By: Phoenix Soleymani Ashtiani

Supervisors: Katharina Näswall  
Sanna Malinen

# Can the same leader create psychological safety for some, but not others?

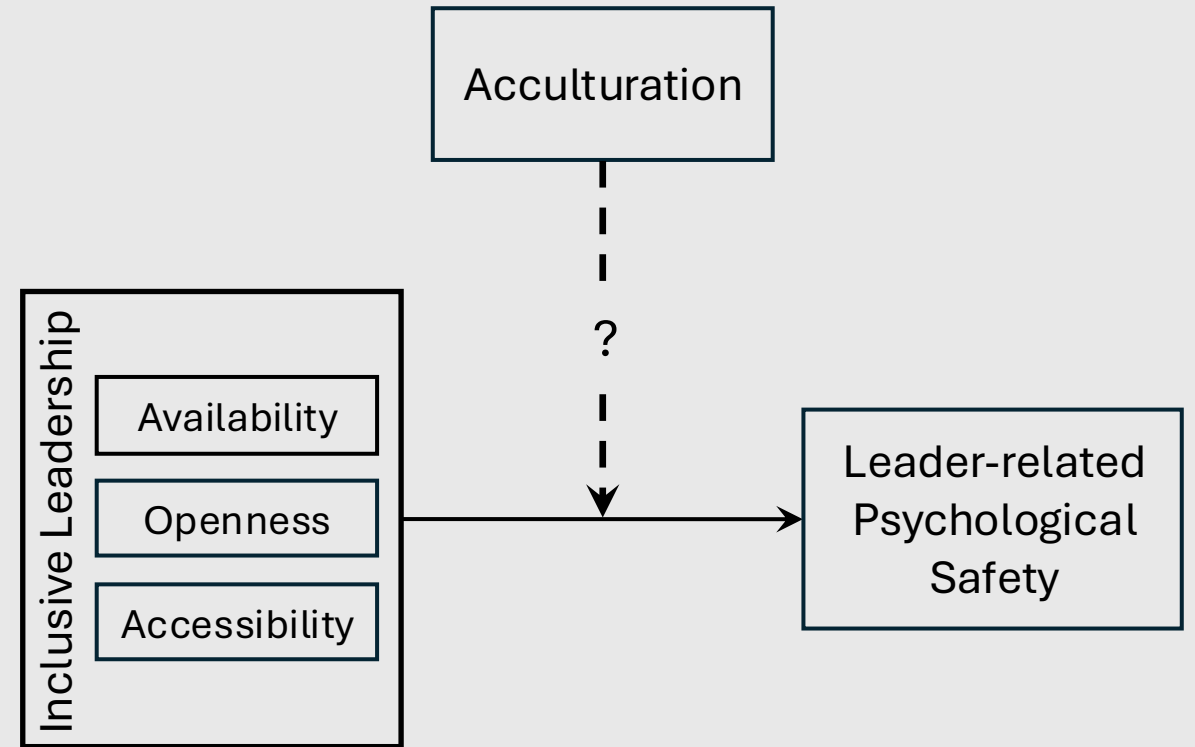


# Background

- Tree relocation metaphor
- Acculturation  $\approx$  Acclimatization
- NZ migrant population
- Leaders' role (the pine tree)



# Research Question



# Methods

- Quantitative / Two-phase (Prolific)
- Multi-country (Canada, UK, US)
- T1 (N = 432) → T2 (N = 353)
- Controls:
  - ✓ Discrimination
  - ✓ Leader Cultural Competence
  - ✓ SES
  - ✓ Tenure
- Analysis:
  - ✓ EFA
  - ✓ Reliability
  - ✓ ANOVA
  - ✓ Linear Regression
  - ✓ GLM



## Not a Qualitative Survey, yet...

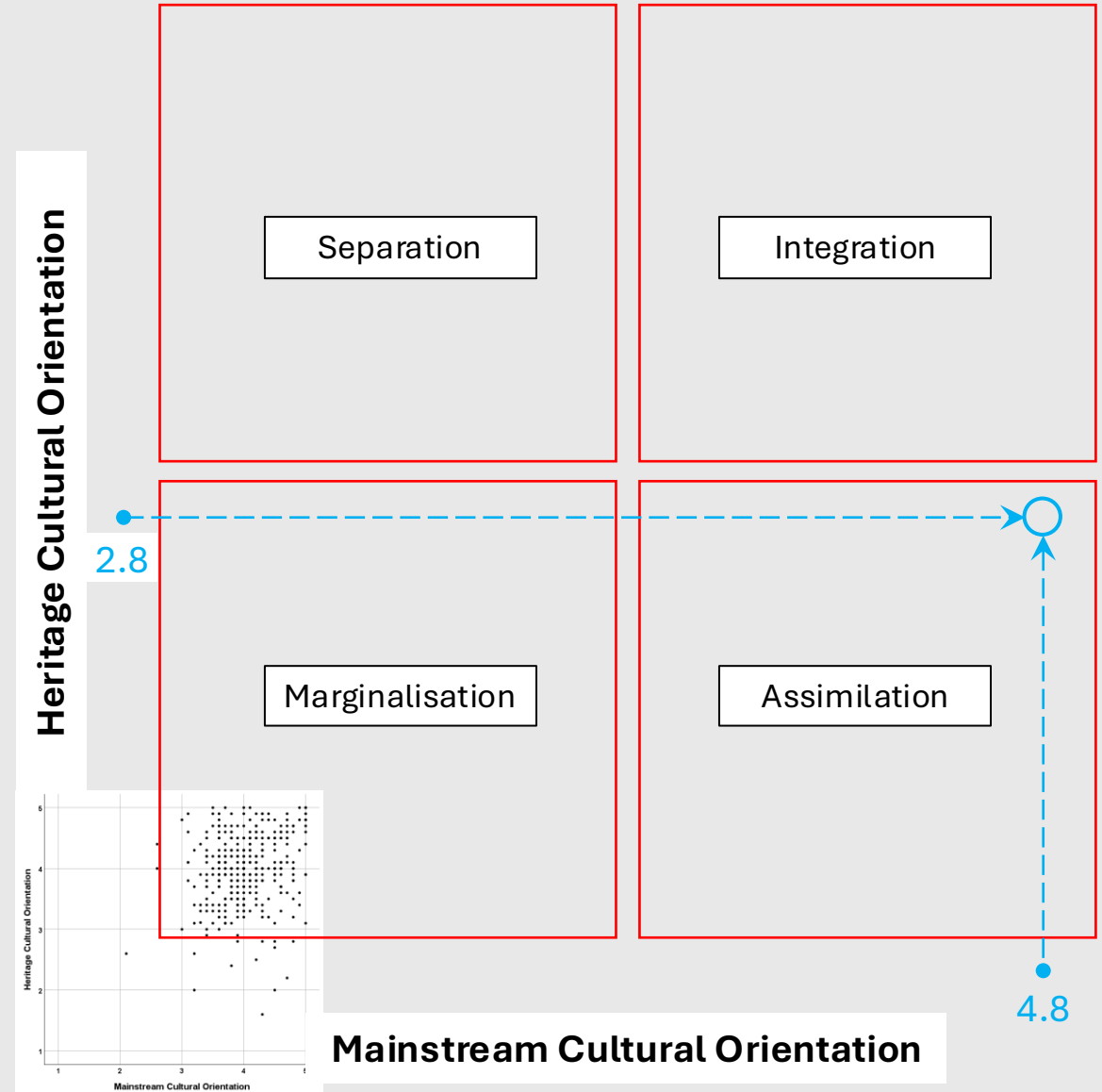
- Asian Female in UK: *“It's hard to be migrant in this country.”*
- White Female in UK: *“As I am white, I have had coworkers direct racist or anti-immigration comments about other people to me forgetting that I have immigrated here.”*
- Asian Male in CAN: *“It is common that racism is part of the culture of western countries and Europe and US and Canada. We are accepted to that and just pushing the days.”*
- White Female in US: *“I felt like I belonged to and contributed to this country in the past, but in the past decade (and especially over the last year) I have been made to feel like I do not belong, am not welcome, and my contributions have been for nothing. I am seriously considering moving back to Canada due to the current administration and political climate.”*

# Acculturation Model (by Berry)

- Two-dimensional space: ×2 Likert Scales
- 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
- Example datapoint
- Data collection: Prolific

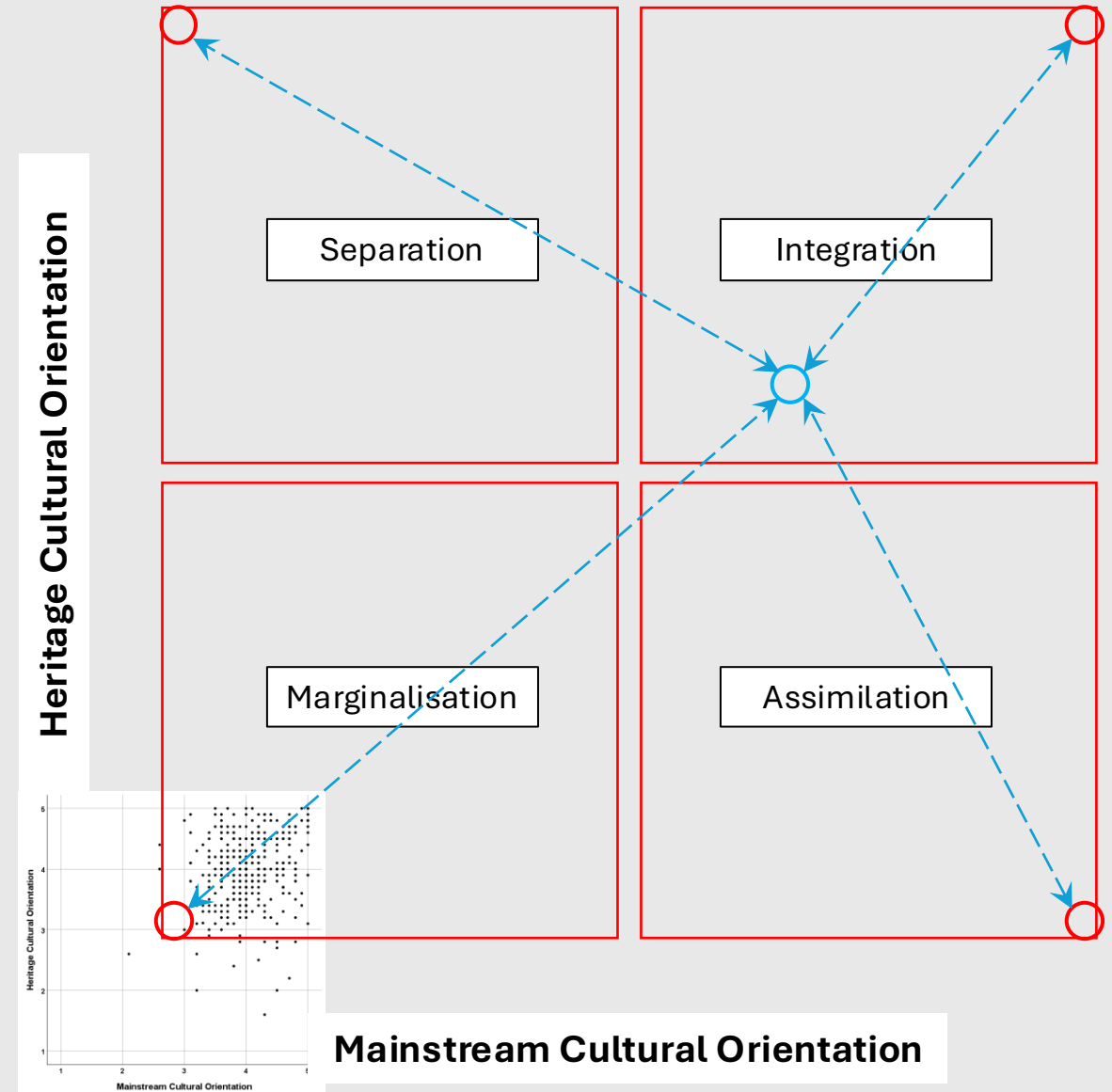
Sample (Mirroring) Items:

- *I often participate in cultural traditions of the **mainstream** culture.*
- *I often participate in cultural traditions of **my heritage** culture.*



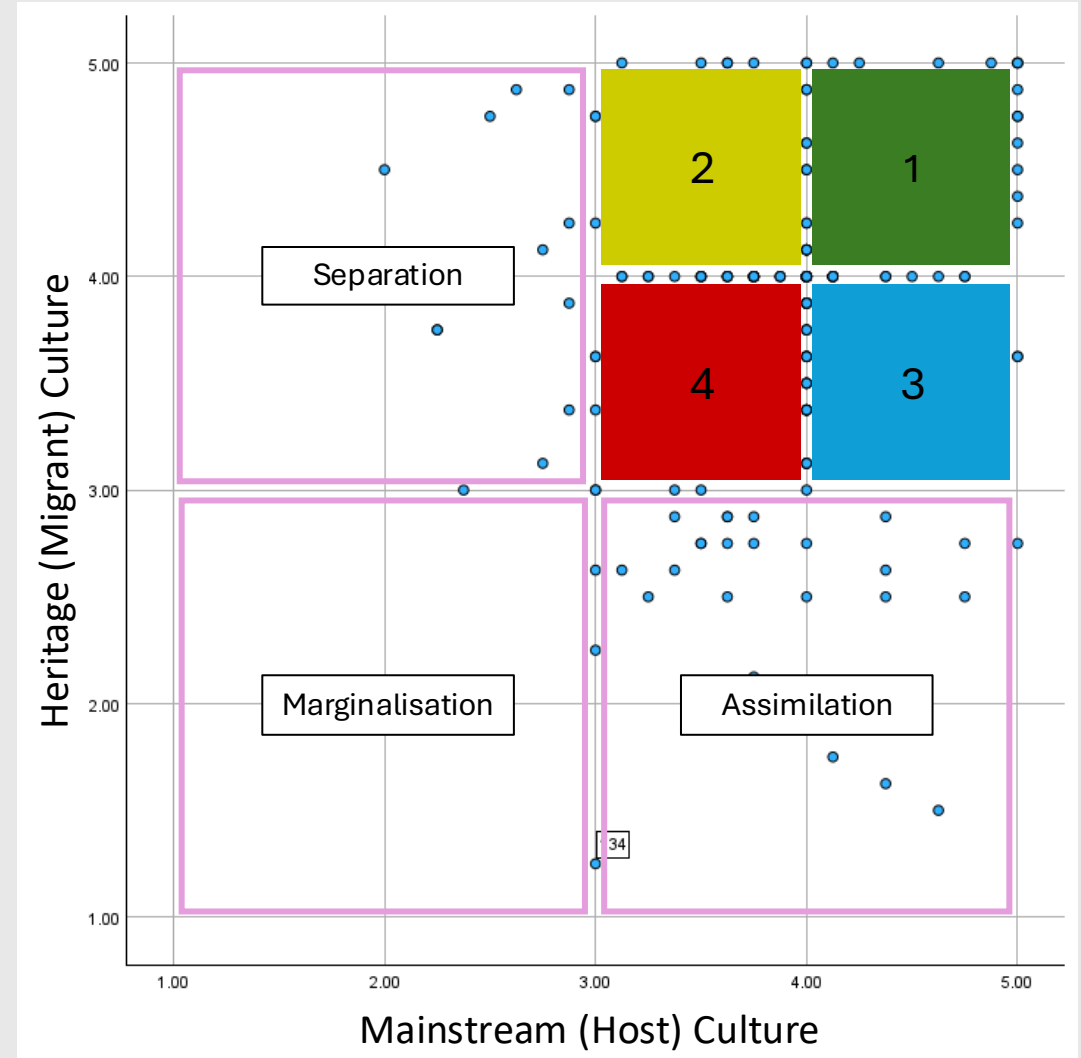
# Measuring Acculturation

- Ideal acculturation orientations
- Distance to each ideal orientation
- Shortest distance = Dominant orientation



# Creating Sub-Quarters

- 1 Integrated-Integration
- 2 Separated-Integration
- 3 Assimilated-Integration
- 4 Marginalised-Integration



# Analysis

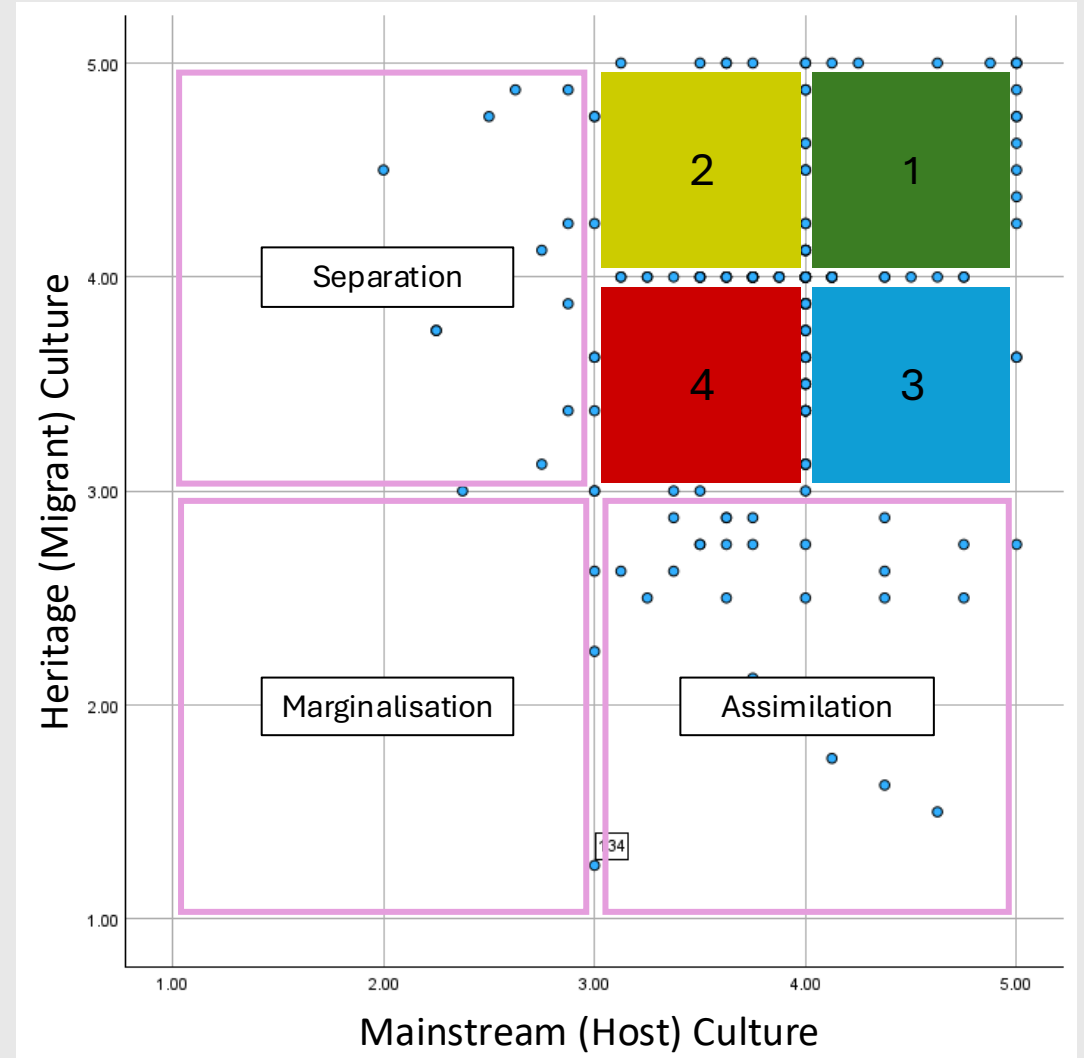
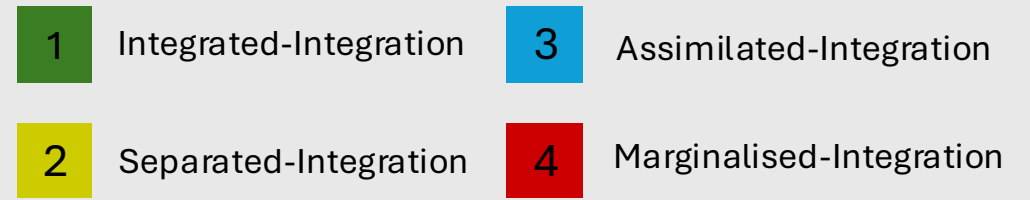
## ANOVA – Direct Group Comparisons

### ➤ Acculturation & Psychological Safety

1 > 3 4

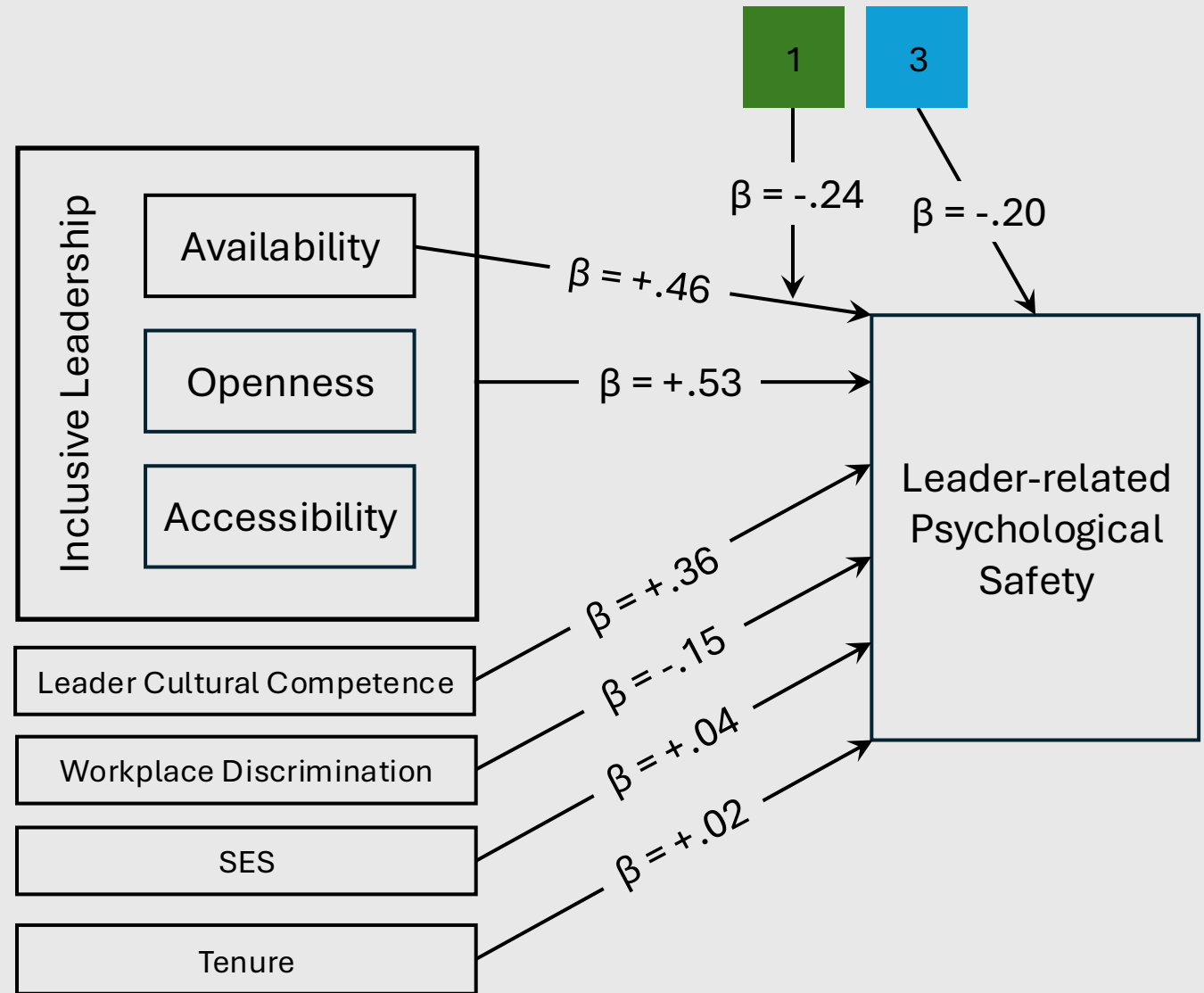
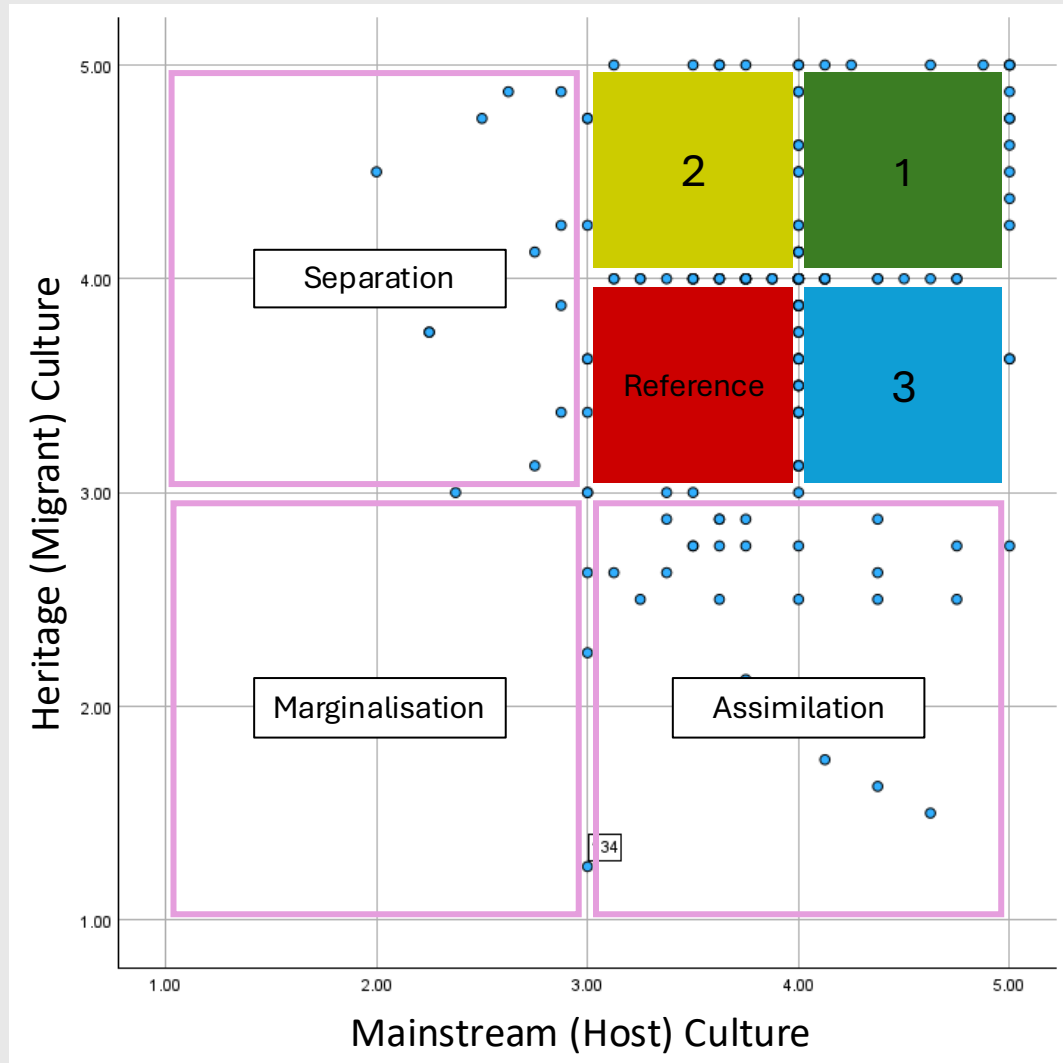
### ➤ Acculturation & Inclusive Leadership

1 > 2 3 4



# Analysis

## GLM – Moderation & Controls



# Results – Moderation

## ➤ Does Acculturation Moderate the Main Relationship?

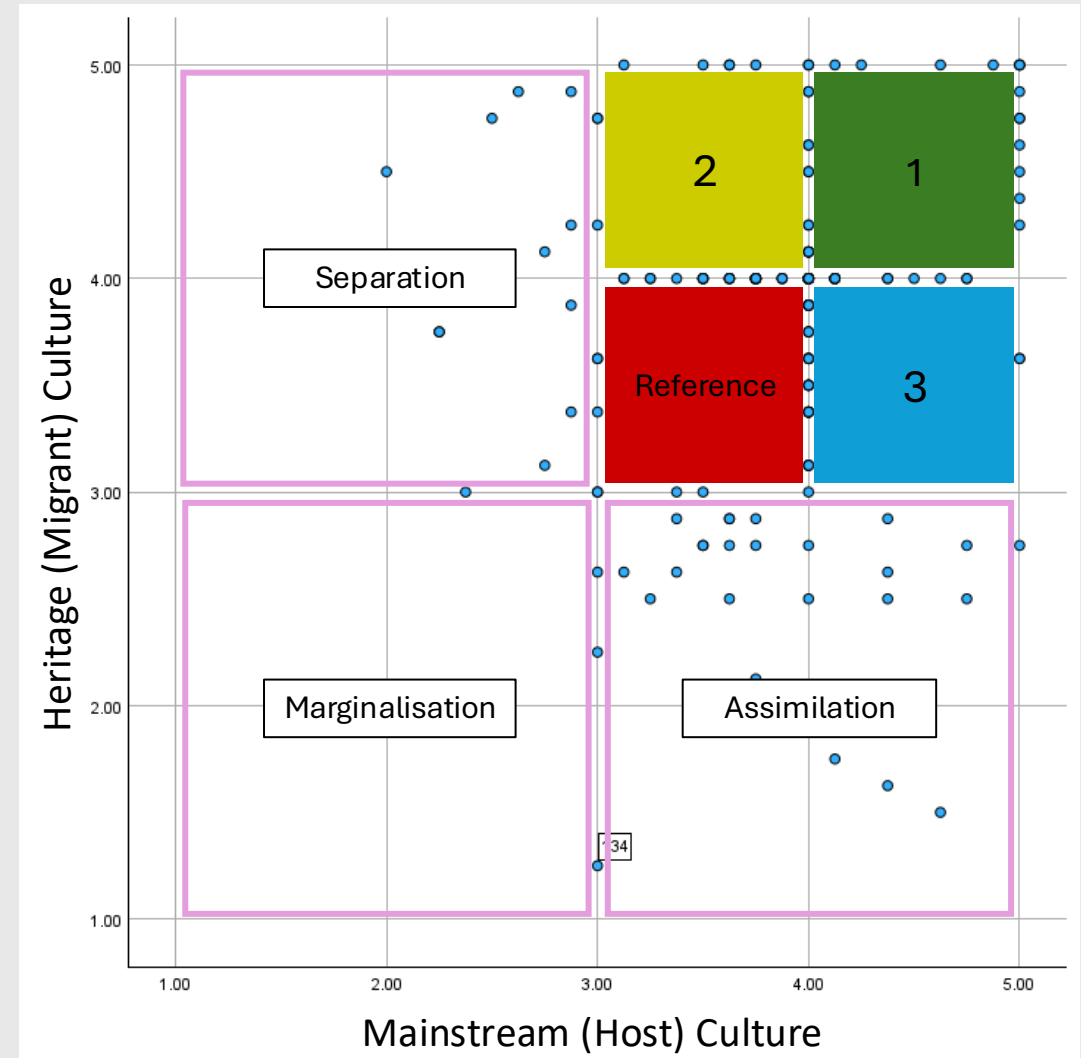
- No moderation
- IL strong direct predictors of PSS
- Other predictors: Cultural competence | Discrimination

## ➤ Subscale Differences (Important Insight)

- Leader availability → Strongest effect
- Moderation observed in **1**
- **3** lower PSS compared to **Rf**

## ➤ Cultural Competence as Moderator

- No moderation
- Overlap with IL | High correlation b/t constructs



# Implications

- High Integration ≠ Psychological Safety
- High-impact leadership behaviours
- Cultural competence: core capability
- Heterogeneity within homogeneity
- Go beyond leadership, e.g. subtle incivility
- Data-driven approach: use direct measures



# Key Contributions

- Reframing Psychological Safety:
  - Not universally experienced, but culturally interpreted
  - Perceptual and relational, shaped by acculturation
- Extending Inclusive Leadership Theory:
  - Dominant predictor at high levels of acculturation
  - Importance of specific behaviours
- Refining the Role of Acculturation:
  - Uniformity assumption within Integration orientation
  - Limited moderation at high levels of acculturation
- Integrating Culture into Leadership Models

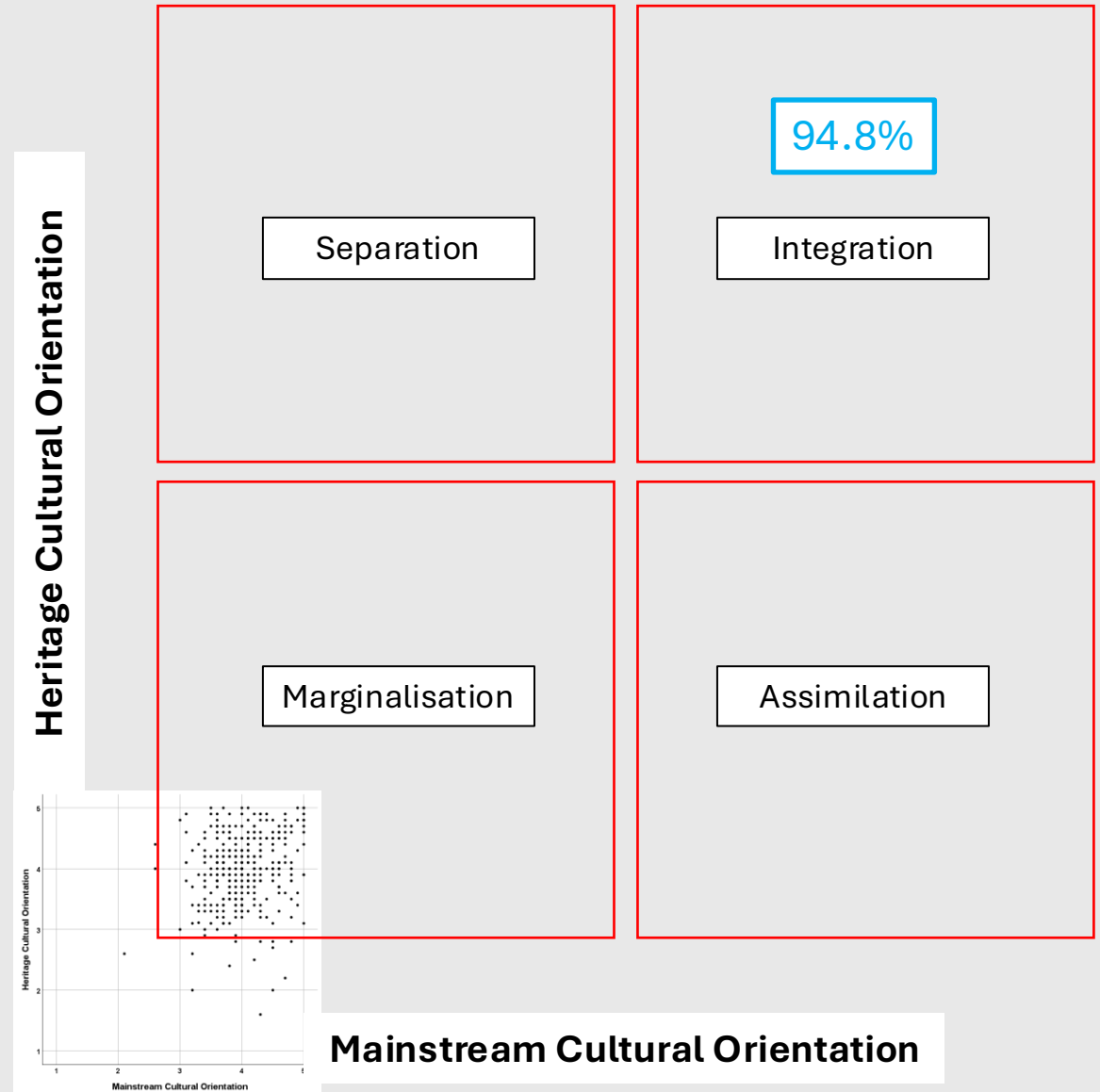


## One-Line Takeaway



# Bonus Discussion

- Framework limitation
- Benchmark comparison
- Measurement effect
- Language bias
- Sample composition
- Context of host country
- Platform bias



THANK YOU

Phoenix (Mohammad) Soleymani Ashtiani

Email: [phoenix@secondselfgenesis.com](mailto:phoenix@secondselfgenesis.com)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/phoenix-soleymani-ashtiani/>

# Correlations

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. PSS_CL	3.80	.69	–											
2. DCR	1.07	.78	-.57**	–										
3. BLG_W	3.79	.61	.59**	-.59**	–									
4. LCC	3.51	.72	.44**	-.30**	.59**	–								
5. SES	5.10	1.50	.10	-.03	.10	-.03	–							
6. SSS	5.77	1.36	.20**	-.17**	.18**	.03	.36**	–						
7. Mgrt_Yrs	12.25	9.38	.01	-.03	-.04	-.05	.03	.14*	–					
8. Tenure	4.17	4.04	.06	-.09	.07	-.06	.11*	.14*	.33**	–				
9. LBV	3.97	.72	.54**	-.40**	.62**	.69**	-.02	.08	-.13*	-.08	–			
10. ACC_M	4.02	.48	.21**	-.20**	.29**	.13*	.07	.02	.14**	.13*	.17**	–		
11. ACC_H	3.98	.57	.18**	.00	.13*	.19**	.03	.07	-.07	.00	.21**	.17**	–	
12. PSS_LD	3.71	.76	.50**	-.43**	.57**	.63**	.08	.13*	-.02	.02	.67**	.10	.15**	–

# GLM

Parameter	B	Robust SE	t	<i>p</i>	95% CI		Partial $\eta^2$
					LB	UB	
Intercept	3.73**	.06	64.58	<.001	3.62	3.84	.945
PSS_CL	.04	.08	.53	.595	-.12	.20	.001
DCR	-.15**	.06	-2.51	.013	-.26	-.03	.025
BLG_W	-.01	.11	-.05	.962	-.22	.21	.000
LCC	.36**	.08	4.60	<.001	.21	.52	.080
SES	.04*	.02	1.86	.064	.00	.09	.014
SSS	2.03E-5	.03	.00	.999	-.05	.05	.000
Mgrt_Years	.00	.00	-.06	.951	-.01	.01	.000
Tenure	.02*	.01	1.76	.080	.00	.04	.012
LBV	.53**	.12	4.42	<.001	.30	.77	.074
ACC_Group_1	.03	.10	.29	.769	-.16	.22	.000
ACC_Group_2	.09	.08	1.12	.264	-.07	.26	.005
ACC_Group_3	-.17	.12	-1.48	.141	-.40	.06	.009
ACC_Group_4 <sup>r</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–	–	–	–
ACC_Group_1 × LBV	-.21	.14	-1.47	.144	-.48	.07	.009
ACC_Group_2 × LBV	-.19	.13	-1.44	.152	-.45	.07	.008
ACC_Group_3 × LBV	-.14	.19	-.73	.465	-.51	.23	.002
ACC_Group_4 <sup>r</sup> × LBV	0 <sup>a</sup>	–	–	–	–	–	–