



Asian American Research Center on Health

Abstract

Title: [Acculturation Strategies and Symptoms of Depression: The Mediators of Atherosclerosis in South Asians Living in America \(MASALA\) Study.](#)

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Abstract:

Using latent class analysis, we previously identified three acculturation strategies employed by South Asian immigrants in the US. Members of the Separation class showed a preference for South Asian culture over US culture, while members of the Assimilation class showed a preference for US culture, and those in the Integration class showed a similar preference for South Asian and US cultures. The purpose of this study was to examine associations between these acculturation strategies and symptoms of depression, a common yet underdiagnosed and undertreated mental disorder. We used data from the Mediators of Atherosclerosis in South Asians Living in America (MASALA) study (n = 856). Data were collected between October 2010 and March 2013 in the San Francisco Bay Area and Chicago. Depressive symptoms were assessed using the CES-D Scale. Applying a simple new method to account for uncertainty in class assignment when modeling latent classes as an exposure, we found that respondents in the Separation class had more depressive symptoms than those in the Integration class, but only after taking into account self-reported social support (b = 0.11; p = 0.05). There were no differences in depressive symptoms among those in the Assimilation class vs. those in the Integration class (b = -0.06; p = 0.41). Social support may protect against elevated symptoms of depression in South Asian immigrants with lower levels of integration into US culture.