HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO

Contested belonging

The role of collective epistemic ownership and discordance in shaping national identification of second-generation immigrants in Finland

Master's Programme in Contemporary Societies
Social Psychology
Master's thesis

Author:
Anastasiia Semykin

Supervisors:
Professor Inga Jasinskaja-Lahti
Postdoctoral researcher Zea Szebeni

19.1.2026
Helsinki

Title: Contested belonging: The role of collective epistemic ownership and discordance in shaping national identification of second-generation immigrants in Finland
Author: Anastasiia Semykin
Month and year: January 2026
Number of pages: 48
Keywords: second-generation immigrants, national identity, discordance, collective psychological ownership, collective epistemic ownership
Where deposited: E-thesis

Abstract:
Second-generation immigrants constitute a growing share of European societies, making the sense of national belonging among this group increasingly important for social cohesion and democratic participation. Despite being born in the country, research shows that they continue to face barriers to full social, political, and symbolic inclusion. This thesis examines national identification among second-generation immigrants in Finland through the lens of collective psychological ownership (CPO). While existing research on CPO has focused mainly on its territorial dimension, far less attention has been given to epistemic ownership, which relates to shared knowledge, meanings, and narratives that define the nation.

Drawing on the Social Identity Approach, the study examines whether mismatches between individuals' own epistemic ownership claims and their perceptions of majority recognition of such claims—referred to as *discordance*—are associated with weaker national identification. Survey data were collected in spring 2024 from Finnish-born individuals with one or two parents of foreign background (N = 1,462). The analyses employ hierarchical multiple regression and simple slopes analysis to assess the associations between national identification and (a) own collective epistemic ownership, (b) perceived collective epistemic ownership, and (c) their discordance.

The findings show that national identification is not associated with individuals' own epistemic ownership claims per se, but with perceived majority recognition of these claims. High personal epistemic ownership combined with low perceived recognition was associated with weaker national identification, indicating that epistemic discordance undermines feelings of national belonging. Overall, the results underscore the relational nature of national identification and demonstrate that contested participation in shared meaning-making can weaken national attachment even among native-born citizens. Epistemic inclusion—recognition as a legitimate co-owner and co-creator of national meanings—thus plays a central role in shaping belonging among second-generation immigrants.

Table of contents

1 Introduction

In this thesis, I examine the relationship between collective epistemic ownership and national identification of second-generation immigrants in Finland. The work begins from the idea that national identity is an important component of social cohesion (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012), influencing whether people feel they belong, are accepted as full members of society, and can meaningfully participate in shaping their country's direction. Therefore, supporting a sense of belonging among individuals with a foreign background is essential. Second-generation immigrants are a growing group in European societies, already accounting for 10% of the population EU-wide (OECD report, 2023). A similar demographic pattern is evident in Finland: the number of individuals with a foreign background born in Finland has doubled between 2014 and 2024 and now approaches 100,000 (Statistics Finland, 2025 - Appendix 1). As this population grows, they are becoming an increasingly important group participating in shaping the country's future.

The concept of second-generation immigrants has different interpretations in the literature. Some studies define this group as being exclusively composed from individuals born in the host country who have at least one parent with a foreign ethnic origin (Crul, Schneider, & Lelie, 2012). Another view considers people who moved into the country before the age of twelve also as second-generation immigrants, because they go through the school system and are therefore well enculturated (Popescu & Pudelko, 2024). In this thesis, the sample of second-generation immigrants includes only people born in Finland with at least one parent of a foreign origin. Despite such a definition being widely used and accepted, many researchers, including myself, are highly critical of using the term *immigrants* to refer to people born in the country. Researchers have called to fully omit the use of immigrant-label when referring to this group of people, or to use the term "first-generation [majority group]" (e.g., first-generation Finns) to root a more inclusive terminology into a societal discourse (e.g., Airamaa, 2023).

However, in this work I use the term "*second-generation immigrants*" for three reasons: (1) to engage with existing literature that employs this terminology, (2) to align with the participant panel's categorization, and (3) to distinguish this group from first-generation immigrants who migrated themselves and face qualitatively

different challenges related to language acquisition, cultural adaptation, and legal status. Throughout this thesis, I also use the terms "*person with a foreign/immigrant background*" or "*native-born/Europe-born descendants of migrants*", as more neutral descriptions, though I recognize this too has limitations as it still centers foreignness, but attempts to express more inclusivity. Towards the end of this thesis, when discussing the results and their implications, I also employ the term "*first-generation Finns*". This is intended both as a further step toward adopting terminology that reflects a more inclusive understanding of national belonging and as a contribution to establishing what I view as a more suitable normative standard for academic and societal discussions concerning native-born individuals with migrant heritage.

The main motivation of this study is to explore the barriers to a sense of national belonging among second-generation immigrants in Finland. Specifically, I examine how a mismatch between an individual's personal feelings of collective psychological ownership over Finland and their perceptions of majority group members´ acceptance of these feelings are related to the degree of their national identification. For second-generation immigrants, there often exists a discrepancy between how they see themselves (as majority or natives) and how they are perceived by the wider society (as minority or immigrants) (Crul et al., 2012). This is an example of discordance. Since identity is a complex multidimensional construct, this tension can emerge in different domains. One such domain is feelings of national ownership that refers to the sense that this country is "ours" to care for, shape, and inhabit fully. While discordance has been widely discussed in acculturation and intergroup relations research (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, Horenczyk, & Schmitz, 2003; Piontkowski, Florack, Hoelker, & Obdrzálek, 2002; Postmes & Branscombe, 2002; Zagefka & Brown, 2002), this thesis introduces a new perspective—discordance in collective epistemic ownership—and explores how the concept of psychological ownership can deepen our understanding of intergroup dynamics and belonging.

The lens of collective psychological ownership is very relevant considering the current right-wing turn in politics across European countries. First of all, the exclusionary rhetoric of right-wing politicians often relies on the core premise of psychological ownership—control. For example, as reported by Nijs et al. (2021), this

can be seen in slogans such as “Take back control of our country” (UK) and “The Netherlands ours again” (The Netherlands). A similar message appears in the Finnish context, where the Finns Party has used the slogan “Äänestä Suomi takaisin” [Vote Finland back] (Hakahuhta, 2019). Their main intention has been to legitimize exclusion of ‘others’, who are defined in increasingly narrow terms. This has important implications for people who are on the border of belonging and how they experience attachment to different cultural identities. However, ownership has the potential to be more inclusive than identity. People with foreign backgrounds cannot claim the same ancestry as natives, but they can become co-owners of a country, caring for it, contributing to it and investing in its future. This could be a productive shift in the interpretation of in-groups and out-groups, stimulating more positive mutual intergroup relations.

In terms of theoretical framework, this thesis relies primarily on the Social Identity Approach (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), which distinguishes between personal and social identities and highlights the key role of social identity for intergroup dynamics. Understanding social identity as a “social reality” (Verkuyten, 2018, p.79), shaped not only by how we see ourselves but by how others categorize and recognize us, is well suited for examining the effect of discordance between personal perceptions and societal interpretations. The study employs a quantitative methodology to explore the relationship between collective epistemic ownership and national identification, with particular attention to the specific role of experienced discordance.

The thesis proceeds as follows: I begin with a literature overview, where I first outline existing research on belonging experiences of second-generation immigrants. I then introduce the core theoretical framework of Social Identity Approach (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987) in more detail, highlighting its most relevant aspects for this particular study. Next, I open up the central theoretical concepts: the importance of national identity, ethnic and civic understandings of national belonging, discordance, as well as psychological ownership and its epistemic dimension. The theoretical background part ends with research questions and hypotheses, from where I move on to explaining the methods and results of the study. The final discussion provides an overview of the contributions of this study to

the existing body of literature and goes through limitations and unaddressed questions for future research.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Navigating between belonging and exclusion - second-generation immigrants in Europe

2.1.1 Societal challenges: education, employment, and discrimination

While being born and raised in the country of residence might suggest equal treatment and life opportunities for second-generation immigrants when compared to the native population, empirical evidence presents a more complex picture. Even though overall, the pattern appears to be one of socioeconomic integration across generations, indicating that the children of immigrants tend to achieve better outcomes than the first generation (Drouhot & Nee, 2019), they still continue to face structural and social barriers that limit their full societal inclusion (Chimienti, Bloch, Ossipow, & Wihtol de Wenden, 2019; Crul et al., 2012). Ethnicity and migrant background continue to matter beyond the first generation, impacting the economic, social, and political lives of individuals.

Educational attainment is frequently identified as a key driver of intergenerational mobility and socioeconomic improvement (Drouhot & Nee, 2019). Evidence from Europe indicates that educational gaps between second-generation immigrants and natives have narrowed over time (Algan, Dustmann, Glitz, & Manning, 2010). Despite higher educational attainment and socioeconomic status compared to the first-generation, the second-generation continues to face significant disadvantages in employment outcomes (Algan et al., 2010). Structural barriers at the point of labour market entry appear to be particularly consequential, indicating unequal access to employment opportunities for descendants of migrants (Drouhot & Nee, 2019; Heath, Rothon, & Kilpi, 2008). It has been reported that second-generation immigrants are more likely to be unemployed and more likely to be overqualified for their jobs compared to native workers (OECD, 2023).

Crucially, studies demonstrate that these employment gaps cannot be fully explained by differences in age, gender, education level, work experience, or regional allocation. Frattini and Cugini (2025) have found that persistent labour market disadvantages remain even after controlling for these factors, suggesting that ethnic background plays a decisive role. Similar conclusions were reached by Algan et al.

(2010), who show that ethnic penalties in employment persist when controlling for education, potential experience and regional allocation. These findings point to the existence of structural discrimination in labour markets, indicating the unequal position of descendants of immigrants.

Beyond education and employment, discrimination constitutes a central challenge shaping the lived experiences of second-generation immigrants. According to recent OECD data, more than one in five second-generation individuals report experiencing discrimination based on ethnicity—at higher rates than first-generation immigrants (OECD, 2023). Moreover, perceived discrimination increased between 2016 and 2020, particularly among groups exposed to multiple and intersecting forms of disadvantage (OECD, 2023).

These patterns are closely linked to the so-called “immigrant paradox,” whereby later-generation immigrants often exhibit worse psychological, behavioural, and health outcomes than the first generation, despite being more structurally integrated into the host society (Chun & Mobley, 2014; García Coll et al., 2012). For example, for some second-generation individuals, discrimination results in more severe consequences for well-being and a more negative impact on national identification compared to first-generation counterparts (Giuliani, Tagliabue, & Regalia, 2018). The “immigrant paradox” raises a critical question: why do second-generation individuals, who are more integrated into mainstream society than their parents, often experience worse outcomes? One central explanation points to psychological demands of managing multiple cultural identities and engaging in ongoing identity negotiation.

2.1.2 Identity struggles and misaligned labelling

Second-generation immigrants must navigate complex identity processes, which entail moving between cultural frameworks and managing multiple identity options simultaneously (Verkuyten, Wiley, Deaux, & Fleischmann, 2019). Compared to their first-generation parents, the second-generation is more likely to develop plural identities and, in many cases, expresses stronger national identification (Behtoui, 2019; Chimienti et al., 2019; Popescu & Pudelko, 2024), likely because their socialisation involves sustained exposure to at least two cultural contexts.

However, greater exposure to multiple cultural repertoires does not necessarily make identity formation easier. On the contrary, empirical evidence suggests that second-generation immigrants often experience even more pronounced identity challenges and struggles than both their first-generation parents (Barros & Albert, 2020) and later generations (Ullah, 2025). One possible explanation could be that they experience their "in-between" position particularly acutely. While maintaining close ties to their ancestral roots through their parents, second-generation individuals simultaneously establish strong bonds with the society of residence through education, peer networks, and everyday social participation. Although this cultural plurality can constitute a resource, the ongoing negotiation between competing cultural narratives may challenge a stable sense of belonging and the formation of a cohesive self-concept. For some individuals, managing these multiple affiliations generates internal dissonance that may be experienced as fragmentation in identity construction.

This tension has given rise to new conceptualisations in the literature, such as "ambivalent identity" (Barros & Albert, 2020) and "ambiguous identity" (Popescu & Pudelko, 2024), which seek to capture the complexity of second-generation identity experiences. Supporting this view, Behtoui (2019), in a qualitative study of second-generation youth, found their identities to be situational and dynamic, with individuals emphasising different identifications depending on context—for instance, presenting themselves as more ethnic in Sweden while appearing more Swedish abroad. Similarly, Schwartz and Pfammatter (2024) demonstrate that it is the interaction between heritage and national identities that significantly shapes the well-being of second-generation immigrants in Switzerland, highlighting the importance of including biculturalism in the wider discourse of national belonging.

It is precisely this identity multiplicity that is problematic, since it runs contrary to lay understandings and political representations that often view identities as unidimensional (Schneider et al., 2012). Although second-generation immigrants often claim a stronger national identity than their parents, the development of their sense of national belonging is not always straightforward, and the legitimate use of national identification as part of their self-definition is often questioned. This contestation is embedded in the very terminology used to describe this population. If second-generation immigrants are defined as individuals born in the country, then,

as Crul et al. (2012) argue, many of them do not possess any other "outside society" to which they belong or could return. Similarly, Barros and Albert (2020) question the continued usefulness of referring to a "host culture" in relation to second-generation immigrants, since the metaphor of hosting presupposes an external guest, a framing that no longer reflects the lived reality of individuals who are native-born members of that society. Nevertheless, descendants of immigrants in Europe are still frequently framed as "outsiders", rendering questions of belonging and identity particularly salient for this group. According to Chimienti et al. (2019), the name "second-generation immigrants," adopted in European countries, suggests that these individuals are not seen as belonging to the country in which they were born. The authors posit that it is a socially constructed category, and this perception of still being foreigners often serves as grounds for discrimination. Even the term "person with a migration background," introduced in Germany, proved to be problematic, as a clear discrepancy was found between self-identification and the official statistical definition (Nesterko & Glaesmer, 2019), and it was criticised for reinforcing exclusionary norms (Vietze, Moffitt, Schwarzenthal, & Civitillo, 2023).

Labels used in both societal and institutional spheres either afford or withhold recognition of national belonging from certain individuals (Andreouli & Howarth, 2012). These dynamics of contested belonging are clearly visible in the Finnish context. For instance, Haikkola (2011) uncovered processes of identity negotiation among second-generation immigrant youth, characterised by the experience of continuously facing "the danger of being pushed to the wrong side of the boundary of belonging". In another study exploring how youth in Finland feel about their opportunities to participate in society (social inclusion) and how their Finnish identification is accepted or denied, Saarela (2022) found that many feel excluded from "Finnishness" and full participation. This puts them in the challenging position of "having been born in Finland, but not always feeling fully Finnish".

Overall, I argue that this tension between self-perception and societal categorisation seems to be one of the key characteristics of the experience of second-generation immigrants in Europe in general, and in Finland in particular. As with any social identity, it is not enough to claim national identification; for it to become a legitimate group membership, it must be accepted by the wider community (Valentine, Sporton, & Nielsen, 2009). This study will provide insight into a specific domain of

such a mismatch between self-perception and experience of its acceptance by the social environment (discordance), opening a conversation about individuals with an immigrant background becoming legitimate co-owners of the country.

2.2 Social identity approach

In social psychology, the distinction between *personal* and *social* identities was initially introduced in Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT; Turner et al., 1987), which are together referred to as the Social Identity Approach (SIA). This approach perceives these identities as the extremes of the interpersonal–intergroup continuum of social behaviour (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). *Personal identity* refers to subjective, individual experiences, with a focus on identity development and internal continuity (Wetherell & Mohanty, 2010), partly building on Erikson's (1968) earlier work. *Social identity* refers to group memberships (Wetherell & Mohanty, 2010) that generate in-groups and out-groups with the potential for in-group favouritism and out-group discrimination (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This perspective is rooted in Sherif's (Sherif & Sherif, 1953; Sherif, 1967) studies of realistic group conflict.

The main focus of SIA is to explain social-psychological processes associated with group membership, and how group membership influences behaviour in different contexts. One of the core insights of SIT is that it is social identity, not personal, which underpins intergroup relations (Sindic & Condor, 2014). The sense of a distinct position derived from group membership, and consequent comparison with other groups, guides behaviour. People interact as group members rather than individuals to the extent that they perceive each other as belonging to distinct communities.

Self-Categorisation Theory extends this framework by explaining identity salience through comparative and normative fit: individuals categorize themselves and others based on how well they match the prototypical image of a 'true' or 'real' group member (Turner et al., 1987). Social identities have to do with similarities and differences, and they locate us in the world in relation to others (Verkuyten, 2018). Therefore, whenever particular social categories, like ethnic origin, are salient, people assess each other and how well they fit that normative description of a category in question. In the case of second-generation immigrants, this

prototypicality can be contested due to the cultural background of parents, and therefore they can be seen as less legitimate members of the Finnish nation.

As noted at the end of chapter 2.1.2, another important aspect of social identity is the necessity of it being recognised by other group members. Social identity is a "social reality" (Verkuyten, 2018, p.79) in the sense that it becomes legitimate only if accepted by fellow in-group members. Already William James (1890) noted the importance of the recognition from the outside for the social self, defining man's "social self" as "the recognition which he gets from his mates" (p.655). For an individual to become a full member of a national community it is crucial to become recognised as one by other members of the nation. Here it is important to note the difference between *identification* (*samaistuminen*) and *identity* (*identiteetti*), which are often used interchangeably in academic literature. Identification is self-categorisation as a member of a particular group. Identity is the outcome of the identification process, which also requires recognition and endorsement of identification claims and acquired characteristics by the individual's social context. (Matuzkova, Rayevska, & Grynko, 2021).

Self-identification and recognition interact dynamically: greater recognition can strengthen identification, whereas questioning group membership—often perceived as an identity threat—can weaken it (Huynh, Devos, & Smalarz, 2011; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Solheim, 2009). According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), individuals strive for a positive self-concept and therefore prefer the groups with which they identify to be recognised and socially valued. If a particular identity is rejected, misrecognised, or devalued, this may constitute an identity threat and undermine the individual's sense of belonging to that group. Thus, the Social Identity Approach provides a conceptual foundation for analysing how societal definitions of national identity interact with personal self-identifications, and how discrepancies—such as those stemming from contested epistemic ownership—can emerge and shape experiences of belonging.

2.3 National belonging and its boundaries

2.3.1 Importance of national identity

The two social identities that receive the most attention in migration research are *ethnic* and *national*. *Ethnic identity* refers to a feeling of belonging to the ethnic minority community in the receiving society and/or the country of origin (in the case of second-generation immigrants, the country of origin of one or both parents), while *national identity* signifies a connection to the country of residence (Verkuyten et al., 2019). Although often dismissed as an insignificant final symbolic step of immigrant integration (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012), national identification has important socio-economic and well-being implications for individuals. Empirical evidence shows that it is specifically national identity that impacts labor market outcomes of migrants, with higher identified migrants being more economically integrated into society (Nekby & Rödin, 2010). National identification is also positively associated with better educational achievement (Altschul, Oyserman & Bybee, 2006). A well-supported integration perspective claims that developing a national identification alongside ethnic belonging has the most positive impact on adaptation and well-being of immigrants (Berry & Hou, 2019). On the other hand, cultural identity confusion or conflict can result in problematic outcomes, such as poor academic performance, crime and radicalisation (Verkuyten, 2018).

Beyond the individual level, national identity is widely conceptualised as a key mechanism through which social cohesion and collective functioning are maintained in culturally diverse societies. It has frequently been described as “social glue” that binds together members of a political community by providing a shared sense of belonging and mutual orientation (Wetherell, Berkeley, & Lafleche, 2007). National identity, as a superordinate identity, can unite people from different groups by emphasising their common bond and therefore extending in-group favouritism to more types of groups (Gaertner et al., 2000).

Verkuyten & Martinovic (2012) argue that a well-functioning society needs a shared sense of belonging, otherwise it will split into groups focused on their differences. In this sense, national identity is seen as the core of national unity. Unity means that members of a territorial entity assume that they form a group, when they think of collective goals and challenges they can face together (Uberoi, 2019). This sense of

unity is based on a shared way of life and shared understandings that guide organisation of life and influence what kind of meanings are assigned to each other's actions or words (Parekh, 1995). When shared understanding of meanings exists and unity is formed, it enables more communication and interaction between fellow nationals, as they feel safe and at ease with people they consider part of their in-group (Uberoi, 2019).

A shared sense of belonging is widely considered a prerequisite for national solidarity and effective democracy (Modood, 2007), as it underpins citizens' willingness to cooperate, accept shared responsibilities, and support collective institutions. Solidarity, in this context, does not imply cultural uniformity or assimilation, but rather a system of interdependence in which individuals and groups recognise one another as members of the same political community (Vasta, 2010). Such interdependence enables social relationships based on cooperation despite differences. National identity has therefore been described as a critical aspect of maintaining a successful modern political order (Fukuyama, 2018). Taken together, national identity functions as an underlying social condition that enables unity, solidarity, and a functioning democracy, making it an important aspect to explore among a growing population of second-generation immigrants.

Although national identity plays a central role in individual outcomes and societal cohesion, its development and strength are shaped by a range of factors. In particular, contextual conditions are recognised as an influential element in shaping how people relate to the country in which they live (Andreouli & Howarth, 2012). As a result, developing a strong sense of national belonging may be considerably more difficult in some contexts than in others.

2.3.2 Ethnic and civic conceptualisation of national belonging

One aspect that can constrain development of national belonging is the conceptualisation of the nation in essentially ethnic terms. Nations can be understood as *imagined communities* built upon the belief that people who constitute a nation share something in common (Anderson, 1983). However, what is considered to constitute the content of common is a choice to make (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). The boundaries of who is then considered part of the nation depend on how members conceive of it in their imagination.

A widely used framework for understanding national membership and citizenship is the distinction between *ethnic* and *civic* conceptualisation of national belonging. An ethnic orientation stresses common ancestry, culture, and descent as the prerequisites for legitimate national membership, positioning origin as the defining essence of the nation (Smith, 1986). In contrast, a civic understanding of belonging emphasises shared political values, legal citizenship, and participation in a common institutional system (Tamir, 1993). Historically, this tension can be seen in contrasts such as the German Volksgeist, which assumed a nation having a 'spirit' often associated with a common language; and Montesquieu's idea of esprit général, which claims that nationhood can transcend itself into more inclusive categorisations (Kristeva, 1993). In more contemporary terms, Chryssochoou (2009) positions these civic/ethnic dichotomy as conflicting projects in society: the civic project aiming for social cohesion, acceptance of newcomers and redistribution of resources, while the ethnic project limiting nationality to "blood criteria" and excluding people with diverse backgrounds from material and symbolic resources.

Such limiting representations are not merely abstract ideas—they shape everyday interactions and institutional practices. According to Andreouli and Howarth (2012), representations of national identity exist simultaneously in the consensual universe of everyday life and the institutional universe of public policy, mutually reinforcing each other. If these representations tend to separate social groups into "pure" nations based on ethno-cultural origin, they limit the identity positions individuals can occupy. Since identity involves both self-identification and recognition by others, ethnicity-based constructions promote exclusionary attitudes towards less prototypical members, which in turn negatively influences their opportunities to participate fully in the public sphere (Hopkins & Blackwood, 2011).

Importantly, the national identity of the majority is linked more strongly to prejudice towards immigrants in countries where ethnic representation of national belonging dominates (Pehrson, Vignoles, & Brown, 2009). In such a context, where minorities feel that they are mistreated, they are less willing to be part of the national community. Conversely, if minorities are treated as equal members of the nation, they are more likely to feel part of it. (Uberoi, 2019).

2.3.3 The Finnish context

Although ethnic and civic perspectives often coexist in the same context, one typically dominates the public narrative at any given time (Triandafyllidou & Gropas, 2022). In Europe, building on the colonial past, strong national identities and a tendency to see differences as deficiency (Kağitçibaşi, 1997), ethnicity-focused assumptions continue to inform public discourse. In many European countries, ethnic background is often emphasised as the main signifier in all societal contexts (Crul et al., 2012). Under such conditions, national and ethnic attachments are often positioned as contradictory rather than complementary. This reduces the acceptability of hyphenated identities (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006) and makes the development of a secure sense of national belonging especially challenging for native-born descendants of migrants.

Finland offers a particularly interesting context to explore national identification dynamics of people with diverse ethnic backgrounds. The country is known for its successful multicultural policies rated among the best in the world (Solano & Huddleston, 2020). However, despite these progressive policies, the legal understanding of multiculturalism and the symbolic understanding of Finnish national identity are two very different things. Even though Finland has legislation favourable to minorities, the symbolic national identity—based on a homogenous ethnic ideal—has persisted over the years, even as Finland's population has become increasingly diverse (Saukkonen, 2018). Such conditions are a fertile ground for the development of discordance, a mismatch between self-identification as a Finn and external categorisation as an immigrant, which is particularly salient for second-generation immigrants. The following chapter explores the concept of discordance in more detail.

2.4 Discordance - a clash of realities in identity negotiations

2.4.1 What is discordance

Discordance captures the incongruence between how individuals see themselves within social or cultural frameworks and how these perceptions are mirrored or recognized by others in their social context. Discordance can be experienced in relation to both ethnic and national identifications. The majority may expect

immigrants to assimilate and abandon ethnic ties, while minorities themselves may want to maintain a connection to their ethnic roots. Conversely, immigrants may strongly identify nationally, yet be perceived solely through their ethnic identity, thereby denying their claims to national belonging. Discordance can be understood as a form of identity threat, a situation where individuals feel threatened when they perceive their social identity to be undermined, devalued, or misrecognised in intergroup contexts (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Hopkins & Blackwood, 2001).

Across studies, discordance has been consistently linked to negative outcomes for individual well-being and intergroup relations. For example, discordance mediates the relationship between segregation experiences and well-being. Postmes and Branscombe (2002) examined how segregated and non-segregated environments interact with in-group identification and how segregation influences the subjective well-being of African Americans. Segregation itself did not directly predict well-being; rather, the decisive factor was the psychological experience of feeling either rejected or accepted. The authors argue that social identification is key to understanding the long-term consequences of (de)segregation on well-being. In other words, the discordance between individuals' self-identification and their perceived acceptance by others was the critical mechanism affecting well-being.

Discordance is also intertwined with experiences of discrimination. Among young ethnic repatriates from the former Soviet Union in Finland, Israel and Germany, higher perceived discordance was associated with more perceived discrimination and greater stress (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003). Similar associations have been found among second-generation immigrants: those experiencing more discrimination were more likely to perceive their cultural identities as oppositional (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2016). Interestingly, the strongest identity conflict was reported by Europe-born individuals with immigrant backgrounds who had higher national identification. Moreover, discordance has been shown to contribute to separatist attitudes. In Sindic and Reicher's (2009) study, incompatibility between ethnic and superordinate identities (Scottish and British) predicted feelings of identity undermining, understood as the inability to enact a valued identity. This form of identity threat was linked to separatist attitudes.

2.4.2 Discordance in actual or perceived attitudes

Discordance has been widely explored in acculturation research, where it relates to the concept of mutuality (Horenczyk, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Sam, & Vedder, 2015). Because mutuality concerns the attitudes of both minority and majority groups, it can result in either a harmonious match (concordance) or a conflictual mismatch (discordance), with implications for intergroup relations. The origins of the mutuality idea can be traced back to the original definition of acculturation (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936), where cultural change was acknowledged to occur in both groups in contact. Later, the role of societal climate in shaping immigrants' acculturation outcomes was formalised in Berry's acculturation model (1997).

Extending this model, Bourhis and colleagues (1997) proposed that acculturation outcomes and intergroup relations are best predicted by the relative "fit" between the acculturation orientations of majority and minority groups. In their Integrative Acculturation Model, Bourhis et al. (1997) described intergroup outcomes at three levels—consensual, problematic and conflictual—where greater discordance (i.e., non-matching acculturation attitudes) predicts more negative intergroup outcomes, such as negative stereotypes, communication problems, discrimination, and lower psychological well-being among minorities.

Both Berry and Bourhis focused on actual acculturation attitudes. In the Concordance Model of Acculturation, Piontkowski and colleagues (2002) argued that the *perceived* mismatch between minority and majority orientations might be even more important than actual attitudes. This is assessed by asking the same group both about their preferred acculturation attitudes and about what they believe the other group expects from them. In the same year, Zagefka and Brown (2002) made a similar argument that perceived mismatch matters more than actual attitudes.

2.4.3 Discordance in relation to national belonging

Importantly, acculturation research has most often examined discordance as a threat to minority identity: specifically, the pressure minorities experience to assimilate into national norms and abandon ethnic identification. However, discordance can

also be experienced as the rejection of national belonging, as shown in the intergroup relations and biculturalism literatures.

Two complementary models explain how perceived rejection shapes identification patterns. According to the Rejection–Identification model (Branscombe et al., 1999), minorities may compensate for a lack of belonging by strengthening their minority identification. In this model, rejection—understood as attributing negative experiences to prejudice—directly undermines well-being while simultaneously reinforcing ethnic group attachment. Essentially representing the other side of the same coin, the Rejection–Disidentification model (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009) posits that perceived discrimination from the majority is negatively associated with attitudes toward the majority through disidentification from the national group. When immigrants' attempts to claim a national identity are denied, they may become less willing to engage with the wider society and more likely to psychologically distance themselves from the superordinate identity, which can also lead to more negative attitudes toward the majority. Both models show that, when rejected by the majority, ethnic minorities are more likely to prioritise ethnic identification and distance themselves from the national community.

Another term for discordance is identity denial, which has been widely explored in biculturalism research. Identity denial is defined as a form of social identity threat that occurs when an individual is not recognized as a member of a group to which they belong (Huynh, 2013). Rejection of a valued identity is associated with perceiving cultural identities as less compatible, experiencing less freedom in identity choice, and reporting higher levels of depressive symptoms and stress (Albuja, Sanchez, & Gaither, 2019). For example, among visually distinguishable Asian second-generation immigrants in the United States, being stereotyped as foreign (i.e., experiencing identity denial) predicted identity conflict and lower psychological well-being (Huynh et al., 2011). For individuals who hold dual identifications, discordance may therefore manifest as a sense of conflict between ethnic and national identities (Fleischmann & Phalet, 2016), and it may also function as an antecedent of such internal conflict (Mähönen, Jasinskaja-Lahti, & Liebkind, 2011).

In summary, the literature shows that regardless of how discordance is conceptualised—whether as mismatched acculturation attitudes, oppositional identities, or, more broadly as identity threat—it is consistently associated with negative outcomes at both the personal and intergroup levels. For immigrants, experiences of rejection in its various forms are associated with lower well-being, weaker attachment to society, and often lower national identification. In this thesis, discordance is examined specifically in relation to epistemic ownership and national belonging. In the next section, I explain the concept of collective psychological ownership, its relevance for intergroup relations, and its epistemic domain.

2.5 Collective psychological ownership in intergroup relations research

2.5.1 Psychological ownership

Psychological ownership is based on the idea that ownership is a much broader concept than a purely legal construct (Pierce & Jussila, 2011). As Etzioni (1991) noted, owning is both real and symbolic: to experience possessive feelings, it is not necessary to legally own a target. For instance, it is reflected in everyday expressions such as “my family” or “my neighbourhood”. The concept of psychological ownership originates in organisational psychology, where its importance was first highlighted by Pierce, Rubenfeld, and Morgan (1991). They argued that in organisations, employees’ legal ownership of company shares does not automatically translate into increased motivation or performance unless the feeling of ownership is present—demonstrating its significance and conceptual distinction from legal ownership.

Psychological ownership builds on the psychology of possession. Etymologically, possession implies having something “under my thumb” (Rochat, 2014). Accordingly, the conceptual core of psychological ownership is a sense of control over the ownership target (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2017). This perceived control differentiates ownership feelings from identity (Nijs et al., 2021) and provides the owner with a sense of efficacy. Ownership also entails specific rights: (1) the right of usage (the owner may decide what to do with an object of ownership), (2) the right of transfer (the owner can determine its future), and (3) the right of exclusion (the

owner can regulate others' access to or use of it) (Snare, 1972). It is this last dimension, the perceived legitimate authority to regulate who belongs and who does not, that makes ownership particularly consequential for intergroup relations.

Pierce et al. (2003) theorised three routes through which psychological ownership develops : (1) gaining control over the target, (2) coming to know it intimately, and (3) investing the self into it. Through these processes, individuals often develop a sense of personal responsibility for the target and integrate it into the sense of self. According to Pierce and Jussila (2011), psychological ownership informs both our self-definition and the ways we communicate that identity to others. It reflects a relationship between an individual and a material or an immaterial object, wherein the object is perceived as intricately linked to the self (Dittmar, 1992) and becomes part of an extended self (Pierce et al., 2003). By engaging with what we feel ours and "a reflection upon their meaning" we shape, sustain and transform our identities (Dittmar, 1992). As Leon Litwinski (1947) wrote "to devote one's attention to "mine" is in fact to understand the essence of personality" (p. 240).

2.5.2 Collective psychological ownership and social identity

Importantly, psychological ownership can be experienced not only on a personal level, but also on the collective: people feeling that something belongs to "us" rather than just "me" (not 'mine' but 'ours'; Pierce & Jussila, 2011). When extended to the group level—collective psychological ownership (CPO) emerges, which becomes highly relevant for intergroup relations. In the 2010s, the perspective of collective psychological ownership was introduced into the field of intergroup relations, beginning with Martinovic and Verkuyten's (2013) work on autochthony claims, an ideology of assigning ownership and related rights to the primary occupants of a territory. Since then it has been argued that this collective dimension becomes central for intergroup relations, as it shapes how groups define their boundaries, claim authority over shared spaces and resources, and determine who qualifies as a legitimate co-owner (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2017).

Collective psychological ownership of a country is closely tied to national identity. Simply identifying with a nationality does not automatically produce ownership feelings; however, experiencing collective ownership presupposes a deep and meaningful identification with the group and the territory associated with it

(Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2017). For the formation of collective psychological ownership, the shift from the individual to the collective level of self-understanding is essential. The relevance of the Social Identity Approach (SIA), and particularly self-categorisation theory, lies in its explanation of this shift. Through self-categorisation, individuals come to see themselves as members of a national in-group, adopting shared beliefs, attitudes, and norms. This cognitive shift provides the psychological basis for extending possessive feelings from the self to the collective "we".

Building on this framework, in their study among Russian and Estonian immigrants in Finland, Brylka et al. (2015) demonstrated that immigrants, too, can develop collective psychological ownership of their country of residence. The findings demonstrated a reciprocal relationship between national identification and psychological ownership, these two mutually reinforcing each other, among both immigrants and majority with consequences for intergroup attitudes. Importantly, the authors argued that shared ownership—or co-ownership—between majority and minority groups represents a pathway through which minorities can claim legitimate belonging alongside the majority. By introducing an "ours" dimension alongside traditional "us versus them" distinctions, collective psychological ownership emerges as an influential mechanism impacting the link of national identification to intergroup attitudes and inclusion.

Viewed through a social psychological lens, ownership is not merely an individual feeling but a social–behavioural construct that exists in relation to others and is therefore also subject to acceptance or rejection (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2017). Because collective psychological ownership is closely intertwined with social identity, the validation or contestation of ownership claims can have important intergroup consequences, including for national identification. Much like social identities, which require external recognition in order to become fully legitimate, ownership claims depend on acknowledgment by relevant others—particularly majority group members who are positioned to validate or deny such claims within a given social context.

For second-generation immigrants, this relational nature of ownership is especially salient. Even when individuals feel a strong sense of ownership over the country in

which they were born and raised—both in territorial and epistemic terms—these ownership claims may be questioned or rejected if the majority does not recognise them as legitimate co-owners. In such cases, a mismatch can emerge between one's own feelings of ownership and the perceived acceptance of these feelings by the majority group. Given the close connection between ownership and identity, the rejection of ownership claims is likely to threaten not only feelings of possession, but also national identification itself. This form of discordance is particularly likely in contexts where national belonging is defined in essentialist terms, as such definitions implicitly restrict who is perceived as a legitimate co-owner of the country.

2.5.3 Beyond territorial - the epistemic dimension of CPO

Existing research has primarily focused on collective territorial ownership (CPO-T) (Martinović & Verkuyten, 2024). A less explored territory is the epistemic dimension of collective psychological ownership (CPO-E). Broadly, epistemic ownership refers to the sense that a group collectively owns knowledge, meanings, and narratives, that is the authority to define what something is, what it means, and how it should be understood (Szebeni, Elovainio, Martinović, Nijs, & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2025). This concept is grounded in social epistemology (Chaparak, 2023), which examines how knowledge and meanings are co-created within communities. While territorial CPO concerns ownership over physical spaces and borders, epistemic CPO concerns ownership over the symbolic and narrative content that gives those spaces meaning.

In the context of nations and national belonging, CPO-E specifically refers to ownership over what defines the nation: its history, values and cultural narratives. For a country, this is a highly relevant concept, since members of society are constantly shaping together the meaning of the country's history, what it means to be a national, what its core values are, and in which direction the country is moving in the future. In this sense, the epistemic dimension extends ownership into the symbolic sphere, where national narratives and shared understandings are continuously negotiated. Although highly correlated with territorial CPO, epistemic ownership has been established as a distinct dimension with different antecedents and consequences (Szebeni et al., 2025), reflecting the fact that a country is more than its physical territory.

This epistemic dimension connects to broader scholarly interest in epistemology within the social sciences (Kidd, Medina, & Pohlhaus, 2017). A well-known contribution is Miranda Fricker's (2007) work on epistemic injustice. According to Dotson (2012), epistemic injustice occurs when individuals are denied the ability to participate in knowledge production within an epistemic community, including the capacity to influence and revise shared epistemic resources. When this happens, dominant perspectives become treated as fully representative of reality, creating epistemic hierarchies that define which views are considered meaningful, whose experiences are recognised as valid, and who is regarded as a legitimate knower (Pohlhaus, 2017). In national contexts, this means majority groups may position themselves as the sole legitimate definers of national identity, history, and values, while minorities' contributions to national narratives are dismissed or ignored.

As argued by Sindic and Condor (2014), participation in political life is fundamentally about the capability to contribute to the formation of shared meanings—that is, to influence what is considered legitimate, how collective issues are defined, and which perspectives are recognised as authoritative. The negotiation of meanings in political and social spheres—such as what is legitimate, what is open to change, who constitutes the relevant "we," and along which dimensions comparisons are made—constitutes a core element of political processes. This perspective highlights the importance of attending to the epistemic dimension of belonging. Combined with the growing interest in collective psychological ownership and its interplay with national identity in intergroup relations, it provides a strong rationale for examining collective epistemic ownership and its relationship with national identification.

For second-generation immigrants in particular, this raises questions of epistemic inclusion: to what extent are they recognised as legitimate contributors to national narratives, shared understandings, and future-oriented visions of the society in which they were born and raised, and to what extent does such recognition—or its absence—shape their sense of national belonging? Even when formally included as citizens, their capacity to influence shared meanings may remain constrained, rendering their claims to full national belonging contested.

2.6 Aims, research questions and hypotheses of the study

Guided by the theoretical framework outlined above, this study examines the relationships between perceived collective ownership and national identification among second-generation immigrants in Finland. The study introduces and examines a novel form of discordance: discordance in collective psychological ownership, with a particular focus on its epistemic dimension. The conceptualisation of discordance adopted here draws on acculturation research, where discordance is understood as a perceived mismatch between one's own orientations or preferences and the perceived expectations or evaluations of the majority (Piontkowski et al., 2002; Zagefka & Brown, 2002). Accordingly, discordance is understood as the mismatch between participants' own ownership claims and their perceptions of how the Finnish majority would evaluate the same claims.

Furthermore, drawing on the Rejection–Disidentification model (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009), this study examines whether perceived discordance in collective epistemic ownership is associated with weaker national identification among second-generation immigrants in Finland. When individuals perceive that their ownership claims are rejected by the majority, they may become less willing to identify with the national community and more likely to psychologically distance themselves from it. To the best of my knowledge, this ownership-based form of discordance—particularly in the epistemic domain—has not been examined in previous research, and its investigation provides a novel link between theories of social identity, acculturation, and psychological ownership.

I first assess the direct associations between own collective epistemic ownership (own CPO-E), perceived collective epistemic ownership (perceived CPO-E), and national identification. Establishing these main effects serves as a necessary analytic step before turning to the core theoretical proposition of this study: that identity threat arises from discordance between own and perceived CPO-E and that such discordance predicts the degree of national identification. In this study, discordance is operationalised as the interaction term between own CPO-E and perceived CPO-E (i.e., how strongly one feels the majority accepts or denies their epistemic claims). Perceived collective psychological ownership is expected to moderate the relationship between own collective psychological ownership and national

identification, such that perceived ownership denial weakens—or reverses—the otherwise positive association between own ownership and national identification.

The specific research questions and hypotheses are formulated as follows:

Research question 1: What is the relationship between own collective epistemic ownership claims (own CPO-E) and perceived acceptance of own collective epistemic ownership claims (perceived CPO-E) and national identification?

Hypothesis 1: Both own CPO-E and perceived CPO-E are positively associated with national identification among second-generation immigrants in Finland.

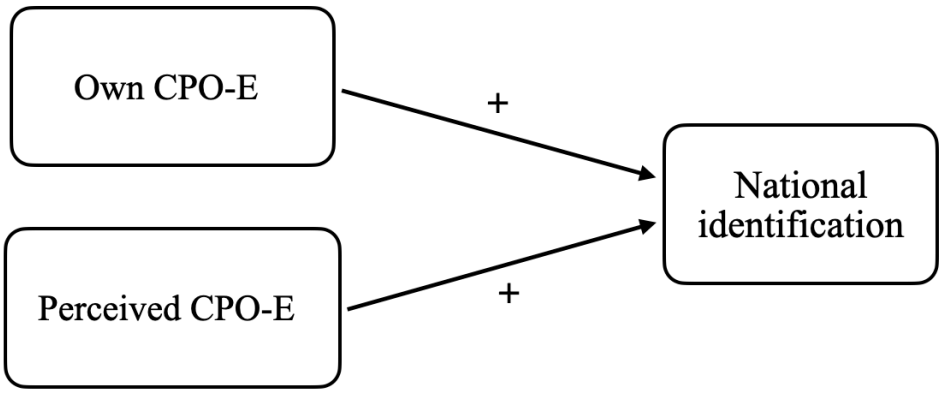

Figure 1. Visual conceptualisation of the relationship between CPO-E and national identification.

Research question 2: How does discordance in own versus perceived collective epistemic ownership relate to national identification among second-generation immigrants in Finland?

Hypothesis 2: Higher discordance in collective epistemic psychological ownership (i.e., higher discrepancy between own ownership claims and perceived acceptance of those claims) is associated with lower national identification among second-generation immigrants in Finland.

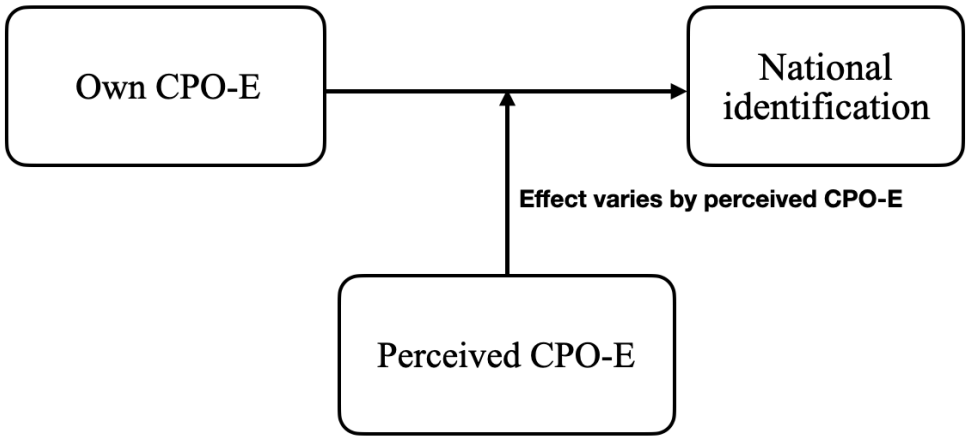

Figure 2. Visual conceptualisation of the interaction between own CPO-E and perceived CPO-E impacting national identification.

In terms of control variables, I include age, gender, educational attainment, parental background (having one versus two parents of foreign origin), perceived discrimination, and minority identification. Prior research has shown that these factors are systematically associated with national belonging among individuals with migrant backgrounds. Including these measures allows for a more rigorous test of the hypothesised relationships between collective epistemic ownership and national identification by isolating their unique contribution beyond well-established sociodemographic and identity-related influences.

Next, I describe the methodology of the study in more detail and present the results of the analyses.

3 Methods

3.1 Sample

The data was collected in Finland in spring 2024 as part of WP2 of the SRC-funded Democratic Epistemic Capacities in the Age of Algorithms (DECA) project (University of Helsinki, PI Inga Jasinskaja-Lahti). This study was approved by the University of Helsinki Ethical Review Board (88/2023). Data collection was carried out through Åbo Akademi's Gen2 panel, which includes second-generation immigrants with at least one parent born abroad. The panel consisted of 4,730 participants, of whom 2,257 completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of 47.7%. The questionnaire turned out to be quite long, with a median time of over 29 minutes, which was likely the main reason for the substantial amount of missing data. Due to the high level of missingness, participants were retained in the analytic sample only if they had completed at least 50% of the questionnaire. A total of 1,504 participants met this criterion. Participants who selected "Other/Don't want to say" for the gender question (n = 34) or did not report their gender (n = 8) were excluded due to small sample size preventing meaningful statistical analysis. The final analytic sample thus consisted of 1,462 participants.

Of these, 56.2% (n = 821) were women and 43.8% (n = 641) were men. The mean age of participants was 38.88 years (SD = 17.75 years). Participants' education was classified according to the broad International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels, with the following distribution: basic = 4.2% (n = 61), secondary = 38.6% (n = 564), tertiary = 57.3% (n = 837).

In terms of cultural background, represented by the countries of origin of participants' mothers and fathers, the sample was highly diverse. A summary of demographic characteristics is presented in Table 1. Tables with most frequent parental countries of origin can be found in Appendix 2.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the sample

Characteristic	N=1462
Age	
Mean (SD)	38.88 (17.75)
Median [Min, Max]	32.0 [18.0, 83.0]
Gender	
Nainen	821 (56.2%)
Mies	641 (43.8%)
Education Level	
Basic	61 (4.2%)
Secondary	564 (38.6%)
Tertiary	837 (57.3%)

3.2 Measures

All scales were translated from English into Finnish using back-translation procedures. A 7-point Likert scale was used for all items (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree), unless otherwise noted. Internal consistency across measures was evaluated using McDonald's omega (ω) with the psych package in RStudio (Revelle, 2025). I chose Omega instead of the widely used Cronbach's alpha, because it is a preferred reliability index for ordinal data (McNeish, 2018; Kalkbrenner, 2023). This index is also particularly relevant for assessing reliability of the measures with skewed distributions (Kalkbrenner, 2023), which was the case with the national identification measure in this study. As reported below, collective epistemic

ownership measures as well as discrimination measure indicated excellent internal consistency, while the national and minority identification measures showed good reliability.

Collective epistemic ownership and discordance

Collective epistemic ownership was measured from two perspectives. Respondents first answered the questions from their own perspective and then indicated how they believed the Finnish majority would respond to the same items. The measure included the following three statements (Szebeni et al., 2025):

1. "The story of Finland is not only a story of ethnic majority Finns, but also the story of people with diverse cultural backgrounds living in Finland."
2. "Finland's legacy not only represents ethnic majority Finns but also people who have diverse cultural backgrounds."
3. "Not only ethnic majority Finns, but also people with diverse cultural backgrounds, are able to tell the true story of Finland."

McDonald's omega for *own collective epistemic ownership* was $\omega = 0.91$, and for *perceived collective epistemic ownership* $\omega = 0.92$.

The measure of *collective epistemic ownership* was derived from a larger measure that also included the *territorial* dimension of *collective psychological ownership*. The distinctiveness of these two ownership dimensions has already been confirmed in two independent samples reported in Szebeni et al. (2025), one of which is the dataset analyzed in the present thesis. In this study, I nevertheless replicate and report the CFA of this larger measure to demonstrate familiarity with the analytic procedure required in instances with the partial use of the larger measure and to ensure transparency and methodological consistency within the current work (the results are reported in Appendix 3).

National identification

National identification was measured with three items widely used in social psychological research on immigrants' national identification (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012):

1. “I strongly feel attached to my Finnish identity.”
2. “Being Finnish is an important part of who I am.”
3. “I identify with other Finns.”
   McDonald’s omega was ω = 0.86.

Control variables

The model controlled for *perceived discrimination* and *minority identification*, both of which have previously been found to relate negatively to national identification (e.g., Mähönen et al., 2011).

Perceived discrimination from the Finnish majority was measured with four items adapted from Berry et al. (2006):

1. “In my opinion, ethnic majority Finns treat people from my ethnic/cultural group in Finland unfairly.”
2. “I think that ethnic majority Finns don’t accept people from my ethnic/cultural group in Finland.”
3. “Ethnic majority Finns have something against me because of my cultural background.”
4. “I have experienced discrimination because of my cultural background in Finland.”
   McDonald’s omega was ω = 0.92.

Minority identification was measured with the following three items (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2013):

1. “I strongly feel attached to my [e.g., Russian, Estonian, etc., based on parent’s background] identity.”
2. “Being [e.g., Russian, Estonian, etc.] in Finland is an important part of who I am.”
3. “I identify with other [e.g., Russian, Estonian, etc.] people living in Finland.”
   McDonald’s omega was ω = 0.85.

In addition, the following demographic variables were included as controls: age, gender (0 = female, 1 = male), education (1 = basic, 2 = secondary, 3 = tertiary), and parents' origin (0 = both parents born abroad, 1 = either mother or father born abroad).

3.3 Data analytic strategy

I conducted the analyses in *RStudio* (Version 2025.05.0+496; Posit, PBC) using the following packages: data cleaning and wrangling were performed using the *tidyverse* package (Wickham et al., 2019); Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted with the *lavaan* package (Version 0.6–20; Rosseel, 2012): interaction effects were examined using the *interactions* package (Long, 2019).

I first conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to examine whether own collective epistemic ownership, perceived collective epistemic ownership, and national identification constituted empirically distinct constructs, specifying a three-factor model. I chose CFA instead of Exploratory Factor Analysis because I derived the factor structure from pre-existing theoretical assumptions rather than inductively from the data (Vehkalahti & Everitt, 2019). Whereas exploratory approaches allow the data to determine the underlying latent structure, CFA enables the direct testing of a measurement model specified in advance on theoretical grounds (Byrne, 2005).

In order to test the hypotheses, I conducted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis with three blocks of variables. Regression analysis is a statistical technique used to examine relationships between an independent variable and a dependent variable, allowing researchers to assess whether and how changes in one variable are associated with changes in another across a set of observations (Thrane, 2020). More specifically, regression analysis examines patterns of covariation between variables rather than establishing causal effects.

Multiple regression extends this approach by allowing several predictor variables to be included simultaneously in the model. Hierarchical multiple regression further builds on this logic by entering predictors into the model in theoretically informed blocks chosen by the researcher (Fein, Machin, Hendry, & Gilmour, 2022). Predictors are typically entered sequentially, beginning with control variables,

followed by key predictors and interaction terms. By comparing models at each step, hierarchical regression allows for the evaluation of the additional explanatory power contributed by each block of variables beyond those entered in earlier steps.

I entered the predictors in three steps. In the first step, I included control variables: age, gender, education level, whether one or both parents had a foreign background, perceived discrimination, and minority identification. In the second step, I added *own epistemic collective psychological ownership* and *perceived epistemic collective psychological ownership* to examine their main effects on national identification. In the third and final step, I added an interaction term between *own epistemic ownership* and *perceived epistemic ownership* to test whether perceived majority ownership moderated the association between own epistemic ownership and national identification—that is, whether discordance between own and perceived epistemic ownership shaped national identification.

Finally, after identifying a significant interaction effect, I conducted a simple slopes analysis to further explore the nature of the moderation (Aiken & West, 1991). In social science research, moderated relationships exist when the association between an independent variable and a dependent variable varies as a function of a third variable, referred to as the moderator (Jaccard & Turrisi, 2003). In such cases, the interaction term establishes whether moderation is present, while simple slopes analysis facilitates interpretation by estimating the relationship between independent and dependent variables at specific values of the moderator.

Accordingly, I examined the association between own epistemic collective psychological ownership and national identification at low (−1 SD), mean, and high (+1 SD) levels of perceived epistemic collective psychological ownership. I used mean-centered predictor and moderator variables, as recommended by Robinson and Schumacker (2009), since centering reduces multicollinearity between main effects and interaction terms and thereby improves interpretability of the results.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the University of Helsinki, and data collection received approval from the University of Helsinki Ethical Review Board (88/2023). Participation posed minimal risk to participants, as

the study consisted of an anonymous online questionnaire. While topics such as discrimination and national belonging may be sensitive for some individuals, no procedures were included that could reasonably be expected to cause significant harm or distress.

Informed consent was obtained electronically by providing participants with clear and comprehensive information about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and anticipated benefits prior to participation. Participants were also informed about the research sponsor and the approximate time required to complete the questionnaire. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence.

Responses were stored securely and anonymously on encrypted university servers. Individual participants could not be identified from the data, and no contact details were linked to responses. Upon completion of the questionnaire, participants were provided with debriefing information and an email address for further questions. Participants did not receive compensation for their participation.

In reporting the findings, ethical principles of transparency, accuracy, and research integrity were upheld. The study procedures are described in sufficient detail to enable replication, and results are presented in a balanced and transparent manner, including findings that do not support the stated hypotheses.

4 Results

4.1 Confirming factorial structure

Prior to hypothesis testing, I conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to examine whether own collective epistemic ownership, perceived collective epistemic ownership, and national identification represented empirically distinct constructs. The analysis was performed in R using the *lavaan* package (Version 0.6–20; Rosseel, 2012). The model was estimated using Maximum Likelihood estimation with robust standard errors and a Satorra–Bentler scaled χ^2 statistic (MLM estimator) to account for non-normality. Model fit was evaluated using the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), following the cut-off recommendations of Hu and Bentler (1999).

The three-factor model showed mixed fit to the data, $\chi^2(24) = 291.26$, $p < .001$, CFI = .95, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .094 (90% CI [.086, .102]), and SRMR = .030. The CFI and SRMR indicated good model fit, while the TLI suggested acceptable fit. In contrast, the RMSEA exceeded conventional cut-off values, indicating less satisfactory fit according to this index. However, RMSEA is known to be sensitive to both model simplicity and large sample sizes, and to overestimate misfit in models with low degrees of freedom (df < 50) and large samples (N > 500; Chen et al., 2008; Kenny, Kaniskan, & McCoach, 2015). Given that the present model meets both conditions (df = 24, N = 1271), the RMSEA value should be interpreted with caution. In contrast, the CFI and SRMR, which are less affected by sample size, suggest that the model fits the data well (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Lai & Green, 2016).

Moreover, the three-factor model fitted the data substantially better than the one-factor model, which showed poor fit across all indices (see Appendix 4), providing further support for the empirical distinctiveness of the three constructs.

All standardized factor loadings were high and statistically significant (range = .73–.95, $p < .001$; see Table 2), indicating that the observed indicators were strong representations of their respective latent constructs. Standardized inter-factor correlations ranged from near zero to moderate in magnitude (r = .00–.41), suggesting that the factors were related but clearly distinct, with the strongest

association observed between own collective epistemic ownership and perceived collective epistemic ownership (r = .41). Taken together, these results support the discriminant validity of the three constructs and justify their treatment as separate variables in the subsequent analyses.

Table 2

Standardized Factor Loadings From the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Three-Factor Model)

Factor	Item	Loading	p
Collective epistemic ownership (own)	The story of Finland is not only a story of ethnic majority Finns, but also the story of people with diverse cultural backgrounds living in Finland.	0.92	
	Finland's legacy not only represents ethnic majority Finns but also people, who have diverse cultural backgrounds.	0.95	< .001
	Not only ethnic majority Finns, but also people with diverse cultural backgrounds, are able to tell the true story of Finland.	0.78	< .001
Collective epistemic ownership (perceived)	The story of Finland is not only a story of ethnic majority Finns, but also the story of people with diverse cultural backgrounds living in Finland.	0.92	
	Finland's legacy not only represents ethnic majority Finns but also people, who have diverse cultural backgrounds.	0.94	< .001
	Not only ethnic majority Finns, but also people with diverse cultural backgrounds, are able to tell the true story of Finland.	0.79	< .001
National identification	I strongly feel attached to my Finnish identity.	0.91	
	Being Finnish is an important part of who I am.	0.80	< .001
	I identify with other Finns.	0.73	< .001

Note. Standardized loadings are reported. The first loading of each factor was fixed to 1.00 for model identification; therefore, p-values are not available for these fixed loadings.

4.2 Descriptive statistics and correlations

Descriptive statistics and internal consistencies for the study variables are presented in Table 3. Participants reported relatively high national identification (M = 5.91, SD = 1.20). Minority identification was descriptively lower on average (M = 4.06, SD =

1.68). Perceived discrimination from the Finnish majority was moderate (M = 3.12, SD = 1.62). Mean levels of own collective epistemic ownership (M = 5.60, SD = 1.33) were numerically higher than mean levels of perceived collective epistemic ownership (M = 4.07, SD = 1.50), reflecting differing average levels across the two measures.

Correlations among study variables are presented in Table 4. Interestingly, only perceived CPO-E was positively correlated with national identification, while own CPO-E correlated positively with minority identification and perceived discrimination. Own and perceived CPO-E were positively related to each other (r = .37), reflecting a moderate level of intercorrelation. As expected, perceived discrimination was negatively correlated with national identification (r = −.28).

Table 3

Descriptive statistics and internal consistencies for study variables

Variable	Valid N	M	SD	ω
1. National identification	1,435	5.91	1.20	0.86
2. Minority identification	1,297	4.06	1.68	0.85
3. Perceived discrimination	1,458	3.12	1.62	0.92
4. CPO-E (own)	1,314	5.60	1.33	0.91
5. CPO-E (perceived)	1,304	4.07	1.50	0.92
6. Age (years)	1,462	38.88	17.75	—
7. Gender (0=female, 1=male)	1,462	0.44	—	—
8. Education (1=basic, 2=secondary, 3=tertiary)	1,462	2.53	—	—
9. Parent (0=both immigrants, 1=one immigrant)	1,457	0.91	—	—

Note. Valid *N* = number of non-missing observations per variable. *SD* is not reported for categorical variables.

Table 4

Pearson correlations among study variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. National identification	—								
2. Minority identification	-.19***	—							
3. Perceived discrimination	-.28***	.14***	—						
4. CPO-E (own)	-.01	.21***	.13***	—					
5. CPO-E (perceived)	.19***	-.03	-.25***	.37***	—				
6. Age	.16***	-.24***	-.19***	-.04	.18***	—			
7. Gender	.05	-.15***	-.15***	-.19***	.04	.07**	—		
8. Education	.06*	-.05	-.08**	.10***	.12***	.27***	-.02	—	
9. Parent	.15***	-.08**	-.11***	.08**	.07*	.17***	.00	.05*	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

4.3 Linear regression

To test the two hypotheses concerning the relationship between collective epistemic ownership and national identification among second-generation immigrants in Finland, I conducted a hierarchical regression analysis in three steps, as outlined in the Methods section. The results are presented in Table 5. Unstandardised regression coefficients are reported in Appendix 5.

Table 5

Hierarchical multiple regression predicting national identification: Standardised regression coefficients across model steps

Predictor	β (Step 1)	β (Step 2)	β (Step 3)	SE (Step 3)	95% CI (Step 3)	p (Step 3)
Age	0.05*	0.04	0.05	0.03	[-0.01, 0.10]	0.106
Gender	-0.05	-0.05	-0.05	0.05	[-0.16, 0.05]	0.321
Education	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.05	[-0.08, 0.10]	0.859
Parent background	0.35**	0.32**	0.31**	0.11	[0.10, 0.52]	0.004
Minority identification	-0.14***	-0.13***	-0.13***	0.03	[-0.19, -0.08]	< .001
Perceived discrimination	-0.25***	-0.23***	-0.22***	0.03	[-0.28, -0.17]	< .001
Own CPO-E		0.00	0.05	0.03	[-0.01, 0.12]	0.121
Perceived CPO-E		0.11***	0.10***	0.03	[0.04, 0.16]	< .001
Own × Perceived CPO-E			0.08***	0.02	[0.03, 0.13]	< .001

Note. Standard errors, confidence intervals, and p-values are reported for Step 3 (final model).
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The overall model was statistically significant, $F(9, 1262) = 22.30$, $p < .001$, and explained approximately 13% of the variance in national identification (*adjusted* $R^2 = .13$).

In the first step, the set of control variables accounted for 11% of the variance in national identification (adjusted $R^2 = .11$). Among the control variables, having one immigrant parent (as opposed to both parents having an immigrant background) was positively associated with national identification ($\beta = .35$, $p = .004$). In contrast, minority identification ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .001$) and perceived discrimination ($\beta = -.25$, p

< .001) were negatively associated with national identification. Age, gender, and education level were not significantly associated with national identification.

In the second step, own and perceived collective epistemic ownership were added to the model. Perceived collective epistemic ownership was positively associated with national identification (β = .11, $p < .001$), whereas the association between own collective epistemic ownership and national identification was not statistically significant (β = .00, $p = .12$). The inclusion of these variables resulted in a modest increase in explained variance (*adjusted* $R^2 = .12$).

In the third and final step, the interaction between own and perceived collective epistemic ownership was added to the model. The interaction term was statistically significant (β = .08, $p < .001$), indicating that the association between own epistemic ownership and national identification varied as a function of perceived epistemic ownership by the Finnish majority. With the inclusion of the interaction term, the model explained an additional portion of variance, resulting in a final adjusted R^2 of .13. Although the increase in explained variance from Step 2 to Step 3 was modest, the interaction effect was statistically significant and theoretically meaningful, suggesting that discordance between own and perceived epistemic ownership is related to national identification beyond main associations.

To further explore the nature of this interaction, I conducted a simple slopes analysis, which is reported in the following section.

4.4 Simple slopes

To interpret the significant interaction, I conducted a simple slopes analysis using mean-centered predictors to examine how the association between own collective epistemic ownership and national identification varied across levels of perceived collective epistemic ownership. Figure 3 illustrates these conditional associations, and the corresponding estimates are reported in Table 6.

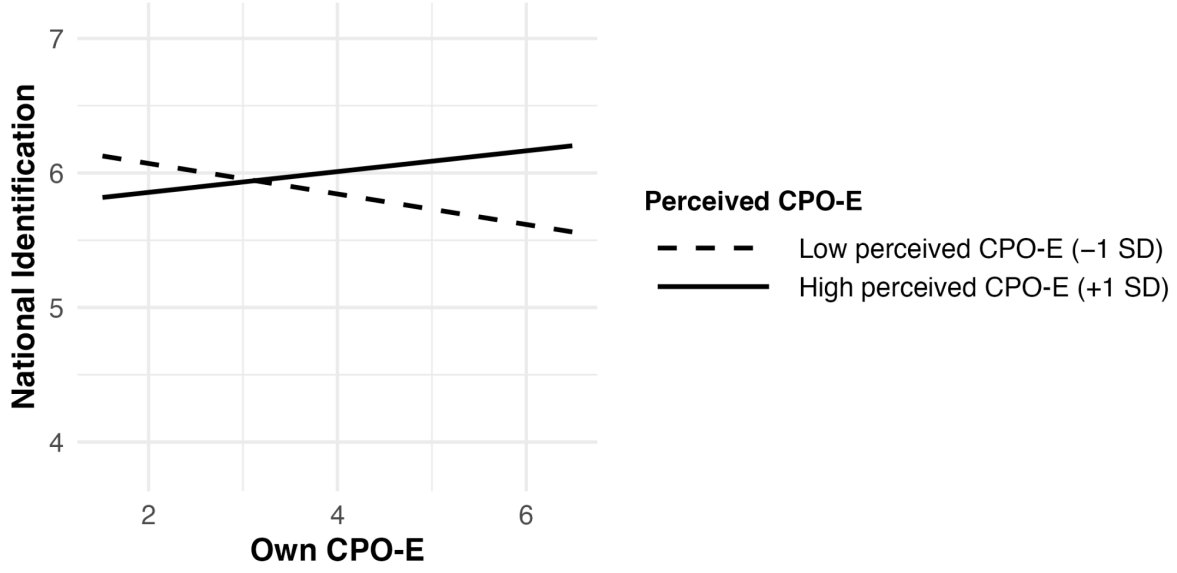

Figure 3. Simple slopes of own CPO-E predicting national identification at low and high levels of perceived CPO-E.

Table 6

Simple slopes of own CPO-E predicting national identification at different levels of perceived CPO-E

Perceived CPO-E	B	SE	t	p	95% CI
Low (−1 SD)	-0.11***	0.03	-4.14	< .001	[-0.17, -0.06]
Mean	-0.02	0.03	-0.62	0.533	[-0.08, 0.04]
High (+1 SD)	0.08	0.04	1.72	0.086	[-0.01, 0.17]

Note. Unstandardised coefficients. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.
Johnson–Neyman region: Perceived CPO-E < −0.51 or > 1.89.

When perceived CPO-E was low (−1 SD), own CPO-E was negatively associated with national identification (B = −0.11, SE = 0.03, $p < .001$). At the mean level of perceived CPO-E, the association was not statistically significant (B = −0.02, SE = 0.03, $p = .53$), suggesting that at average levels of perceived endorsement, own ownership claims appear to be neither facilitative nor detrimental to national identification. At high levels of perceived CPO-E (+1 SD), the association was positive

but not statistically significant (B = 0.08, SE = 0.04, p = .09). Confidence intervals for all slopes are reported in Table 6.

A Johnson–Neyman analysis (Preacher, Curran, & Bauer, 2006) further identified the regions in which the association between own CPO-E and national identification was statistically significant. The effect was significant when perceived CPO-E values were below −0.51 or above 1.89 (centered values). Approximately 37.6% of the sample fell below the lower Johnson–Neyman threshold (−0.51), whereas 14.7% fell above the upper threshold (1.89); the remaining participants fell within the non-significant region. The lower region corresponds to situations of discordance, in which individuals report high own epistemic ownership while perceiving low ownership endorsement by the Finnish majority. In this range, higher own epistemic ownership is associated with lower national identification. The upper region reflects cases of high perceived majority ownership, in which own epistemic ownership is positively associated with national identification.

Overall, these findings indicate that second-generation immigrants'collective epistemic ownership is related to national identification differently depending on the degree to which they perceive that majority accepts minority's ownership claims. When individuals perceive low epistemic ownership recognition by the majority, stronger own ownership claims are associated with weaker national identification. By contrast, when perceived ownership endorsement is at average levels, own ownership claims show no clear association with national identification. At high levels of perceived majority endorsement, the association between own epistemic ownership and national identification becomes positive, though this effect applies to a smaller proportion of the sample. Taken together, the results indicate that national identification among second-generation immigrants is shaped not only by perceived epistemic ownership by the majority, but also by the alignment between individuals' own ownership claims and their perceptions of majority endorsement.

5 Discussion

5.1 Overview: contested belonging and epistemic inclusion

This thesis began from the premise that national identity is a central aspect of social cohesion and that an inclusive epistemic environment—one that allows different groups to participate in and co-own national meanings and narratives—is increasingly important in diverse societies. Second-generation immigrants are a growing population in many European countries (Crul et al., 2012) and in Finland in particular (Statistics Finland, 2025), and they are becoming an increasingly important group participating in political life and shaping the future of the country. As diversity continues to rise, questions of inclusion and participation in joint national narrative building become more urgent and relevant.

This study contributes to social psychological literature by bringing together insights from acculturation research, intergroup relations, and psychological ownership. Its main contribution lies in introducing and empirically examining collective epistemic ownership as a novel construct and in analysing how both ownership claims and perceived recognition of these claims relate to national identification. Using data from second-generation immigrants in Finland, the findings demonstrate that national identification is shaped not by ownership feelings per se, but by the perceived acceptance or rejection of these ownership claims by the majority. Additionally, perceived discordance between own and majority-recognised epistemic ownership emerges as a factor undermining national identification.

5.2 Contribution to research on second-generation immigrants

Research on second-generation immigrants has consistently documented experiences of contested belonging (Barros & Albert, 2020; Ullah, 2025), identity strain (Huynh et al., 2011; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009), and the so-called “immigrant paradox” (Chun & Mobley, 2014; García Coll et al., 2012), whereby individuals born and raised in a country nonetheless experience exclusion from full national membership. Much of this literature has focused on identity negotiation, discrimination, and structural barriers to inclusion, with the strongest identity conflict present for individuals with high national identification (Fleischmann &

Phalet, 2016). However, these accounts have paid less attention to the collective psychological ownership this population may feel over their home country, and to how perceived recognition of such ownership relates to national belonging. Recognition, in this sense, extends beyond formal citizenship or legal inclusion to encompass acknowledgment as a legitimate stakeholder in shaping shared national meanings.

The present study adds to this body of work by showing that the critical issue is not whether first-generation Finns feel ownership over the country, but whether they perceive the majority as recognising them as legitimate co-owners of national narratives. Participants in this study reported relatively high national identification, suggesting that they largely see themselves as belonging to Finland. However, when strong personal claims to epistemic ownership were paired with perceptions of low majority recognition, national identification was weaker. This indicates that contested belonging among descendants of immigrants operates not only at the level of identity labels or formal membership, but also at the level of epistemic participation—who is seen as entitled to define what the nation is and represents.

5.3 Contribution to collective psychological ownership research

Most research on collective psychological ownership has focused on its territorial dimension. More recent work has begun to extend the concept to the epistemic domain, which concerns shared meanings, narratives, and interpretations of the social world (Szebeni et al., 2025). In the context of intergroup relations, this perspective highlights that a country is not defined solely by its territory, but also by a shared symbolic sphere comprising history, collective narratives, and socially constructed meanings. In culturally diverse societies, different groups must therefore negotiate not only material space, but also symbolic ownership over national meanings. A central question concerns the conditions under which individuals and groups are recognised as legitimate co-owners who are entitled to contribute to these shared understandings.

The present study extends the literature on collective psychological ownership in three important ways. First, it contributes to emerging research on epistemic collective psychological ownership by empirically examining its relationship with national identification. Second, it is among the first studies to examine

metaperceptions of ownership recognition—that is, whether individuals believe that the majority group accepts them as legitimate co-owners. In doing so, the study extends the concept of ownership from the question “Do I feel this is ours?” to “Does the majority see me as a legitimate co-owner?”. Third, the findings indicate that epistemic ownership is particularly relevant for second-generation immigrants, who may not be able to claim ancestry-based ownership but can plausibly claim participation in shaping the national story. The results demonstrate that epistemic ownership is not merely symbolic, but has tangible implications for national identification, with broader consequences for social cohesion in diverse societies.

5.4 Contribution to discordance and identity threat literature

Previous research on discordance has shown that mismatches between self-identification and external recognition constitute identity threats that undermine well-being and belonging (Branscombe et al., 1999; Fleischmann & Phalet, 2016; Huynh et al., 2011; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2003; Mähönen et al., 2011; Piontkowski et al., 2002; Postmes & Branscombe, 2002; Zagefka & Brown, 2002). This study extends the concept of discordance into the domain of psychological ownership. Rather than focusing solely on identity categories, the findings show that discordance between ownership claims and perceived recognition of those claims can also undermine national identification.

More specifically, the results indicate that high personal epistemic ownership combined with low perceived majority endorsement is associated with weaker national identification. This suggests that discordance operates not only through contested identity labels, but also through ownership-related experiences—particularly perceptions of exclusion from shared meaning-making within the national community. Epistemic discordance may be especially destabilising because epistemic ownership is inherently intangible and dependent on ongoing social validation. Consequently, it can be undermined through subtle and everyday forms of exclusion, such as having one’s perspectives dismissed or marginalised, rather than through explicit rejection alone.

5.5 Theoretical integration: Social Identity Approach and ownership

Overall, the results of the present study are consistent with the Social Identity Approach (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987) in highlighting the fundamentally relational nature of belonging. Social identities are "social realities" (Verkuyten, 2018, p.79) that require recognition by others in order to become legitimate. Accordingly, national identification depends not only on self-categorisation, but also on perceived validation by the wider community. When individuals experience discordance between their own self-understandings and how they believe these are received by others, this can be experienced as identity threat and rejection, leading them to question their place within the national community.

From this perspective, the findings illustrate how symbolic boundaries of national belonging are maintained through narrow understandings of ingroup prototypicality. Essentialist conceptions of national identity allow limited space for variation in who is perceived as a "real" group member. Even when individuals are born in the country, being seen as non-prototypical can undermine the legitimacy of their participation in defining shared national meanings, thereby weakening their sense of national belonging. This underscores the interdependent nature of majority–minority relations, as minorities' belonging is contingent not only on self-identification, but also on recognition by the majority.

The present study also contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between psychological ownership and social identity. Psychological ownership, whether personal or collective, has been theorised as closely tied to self-definition and group membership, as it reflects a meaningful relationship between the self or group and a particular target (Dittmar, 1992; Pierce & Jussila, 2011). In intergroup relations research, ownership has often been conceptualised primarily as a consequence of identification—captured in the idea that "what we are makes us owners" (Verkuyten, 2025). The present findings support a more reciprocal understanding, in which ownership also contributes to identity—"what we own makes us who we are"—as collective property also symbolises group identity (Ledgerwood, Liviatan, & Carnevale, 2007).

At the same time, unlike previous research that has documented a direct association between own ownership feelings and national identification (Brylka et al., 2015), the present findings show that own epistemic ownership alone was not associated with national identification in this sample. Instead, national identification was related to whether participants perceived their ownership claims to be recognised or rejected by the majority. This suggests that ownership, much like identity, is not merely an individual psychological state but a relational construct enacted within a social context in which ownership claims can be validated or denied, with implications for national identity.

5.6 Practical implications

The findings highlight a disconnect between strong self-identification and perceived inclusion among second-generation immigrants in Finland. While Finnish-born individuals with foreign backgrounds often identify strongly as Finnish—as reflected in their high average level of national identification reported in this study—they are frequently framed in public discourse as "immigrants." Even when individuals perceive themselves as full members of the nation, their capacity to participate as legitimate contributors to national narratives may remain constrained. From this perspective, issues of labelling and symbolic inclusion within the concept of Finnishness are not merely semantic, but shape opportunities for belonging, participation, and political agency.

The findings underscore the importance of clearly signalling epistemic inclusion, rather than focusing solely on promoting positive attitudes toward diversity. Belonging is fostered not only through tolerance, but through recognition of groups as legitimate and indispensable contributors to society (Verkuyten, 2024). When individuals perceive that their perspectives, experiences, and knowledge are valued as part of the national narrative, national belonging is more likely to be sustained.

Representation in education, media, and public discourse therefore plays a central role. Finnish history and culture have long been shaped by people with diverse backgrounds, including Swedish, Russian, Tatar, and Jewish communities, many of whom were active contributors to nation-building and civic life. Making such contributions visible can help cultivate a common ingroup identity in which diversity is understood as constitutive of Finnishness rather than external to it. In this way,

newer generations may be recognised not as perpetual newcomers, but as full members of the national community.

5.7 Limitations and future research

Several limitations of the present study should be acknowledged. First, the use of cross-sectional data limits the ability to draw causal conclusions about the relationship between collective epistemic ownership and national identification. The analyses therefore capture associations between the constructs, rather than the direction of influence. Future research using longitudinal or experimental designs would be better suited to examine the relationship between psychological ownership and national identification in more detail. Experimental manipulations of perceived majority recognition could be particularly valuable for establishing whether perceived ownership denial directly causes reduced national identification.

A second methodological limitation concerns the modest explanatory power of the models. In the final step, the model explained 13% of the variance in national identification. Although the overall model was statistically significant, the inclusion of collective epistemic ownership and its interaction increased the explained variance by only two percentage points beyond the control variables. This suggests that epistemic ownership represents only one component of a broader set of factors shaping national belonging. Future research should therefore integrate epistemic ownership into more comprehensive models that also account for structural, social, and psychological determinants of identification.

With regard to the sample, an important strength of the study is that it is representative of the Finnish second-generation population, which supports the generalisability of the findings within this group. At the same time, the sample was highly heterogeneous, encompassing individuals with diverse ethnic backgrounds and family migration histories. This heterogeneity may mask meaningful subgroup differences in experiences of belonging and exclusion. Previous research suggests that some minority groups are perceived as more welcome or valued than others (Behtoui, 2019), and that processes of belonging are shaped by factors such as racialisation and normative whiteness (Keskinen, 2018; Souto & Lappalainen, 2025). As a result, some individuals born and educated in Finland may experience their belonging as more persistently questioned than others, particularly due to visible

physical characteristics such as skin colour. Future studies should therefore examine epistemic ownership and national identification separately across different groups in order to better capture these differentiated and unequal experiences.

In terms of generalisability beyond Finland, the findings are likely shaped by the specific historical and societal context of the country, including its relatively recent immigration history and strong narratives of cultural homogeneity. While this makes Finland a theoretically informative case, the results may not generalise to contexts with longer migration histories or more heterogeneous populations, such as settler societies. Comparative research across different national contexts would help clarify how epistemic ownership operates under different conditions of diversity and nationhood.

Regarding measurement, the scales assessing collective epistemic ownership were newly developed for this study. In this dataset, internal consistency, assessed using Omega, and the results of factor analyses indicated good psychometric performance. However, given their novelty, these measures should be validated in other datasets and cultural contexts to further establish their reliability and validity.

Finally, the present study relied on quantitative methods to examine collective epistemic ownership and national identification among first-generation Finns. Qualitative approaches could provide deeper insight into how epistemic inclusion and exclusion are experienced in everyday interactions, institutions, and public discourse. Such work could explore how descendants of immigrants prefer to be labelled, how they interpret their experiences of belonging, and what sharing epistemic ownership over Finland means in their own words.

Taken together, these limitations point to the need for further research that combines methodological diversity with theoretical expansion in order to better understand how epistemic ownership contributes to belonging in increasingly diverse societies.

5.8 Concluding thoughts

This thesis set out to examine national belonging among second-generation immigrants in Finland through the lens of collective epistemic ownership. The findings show that national identification is shaped not simply by whether

individuals feel ownership over the country, but by whether they perceive these ownership claims as recognised by the majority. When strong personal claims to epistemic ownership are met with perceived rejection, national identification is weaker. Belonging, in this sense, emerges as a fundamentally relational process that depends on validation of its various dimensions by others.

These results underscore that national belonging cannot be understood solely as an individual attitude or identity choice. Rather, it is produced and negotiated through social interaction, dominant representations, and shared understandings of who is entitled to define the nation and its meanings. As the findings demonstrate, even individuals who strongly identify as Finnish may experience limits to their belonging if they perceive their epistemic ownership as questioned or denied. The findings therefore highlight the interdependent nature of minority-majority relationships, and the importance of moving beyond promoting positive attitudes towards diversity to true inclusion of diverse cultural groups as important agents in public life and acknowledging their indispensability and epistemic contributions to society.

The relevance of these issues is likely to grow in the coming years. Second-generation immigrants constitute a young and expanding population in Finland and across Europe (Frattini & Cugini, 2025). Their experiences of belonging, participation, and recognition will play an important role in shaping future patterns of social cohesion and democratic engagement. The present findings suggest that fostering belonging requires not only formal inclusion, but also opportunities to participate in the formation of shared meanings and clear signals that different groups are recognised as legitimate co-creators and co-owners of the national story. Whether second-generation individuals are positioned as perpetual outsiders or as full participants in this collective project has consequences not only for their sense of belonging, but also for the inclusiveness and resilience of the national community as a whole.

Reference list

Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Sage Publications.

Airamaa, M. (2023, November 20). *Vieraskielisten osuus kasvaa Helsingissä, mutta tutkija Pasi Saukkosen mielestä tilastot johtavat harhaan*. *Helsingin Uutiset*. https://www.helsinginuutiset.fi/paikalliset/6363166

Albuja, A. F., Sanchez, D. T., & Gaither, S. E. (2019). Identity denied: Comparing American or White identity denial and psychological health outcomes among bicultural and biracial people. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 45*(3), 416–430. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218788553

Algan, Y., Dustmann, C., Glitz, A., & Manning, A. (2010). The economic situation of first- and second-generation immigrants in France, Germany and the United Kingdom. *The Economic Journal, 120*(542), 4–30. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0297.2009.02338.x

Altschul, I., Oyserman, D., & Bybee, D. (2006). Racial-ethnic identity in mid-adolescence: Content and change as predictors of academic achievement. *Child Development, 77*(5), 1155-1169. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2006.00926.x

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso.

Andreouli, E., & Howarth, C. (2012). National identity, citizenship and immigration: Putting identity in context. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 43*(3), 361–382. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.2012.00501.x

Barros, R. R., & Albert, I. (2020). Living in-between or within? Cultural identity profiles of second-generation young adults with immigrant background. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, 20*(4), 290–305. https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2020.1832491

Behtoui, A. (2019). Constructions of self-identification: Children of immigrants in Sweden. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power, 28*(3), 341–360. https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2019.1658396

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology, 46*(1), 5–34. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.1997.tb01087.x

Berry, J. W., & Hou, F. (2019). Multiple belongings and psychological well-being among immigrants and the second generation in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science / Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement, 51*(3), 159–170.

Berry, J. W., Phinney, J. S., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. (2006). *Immigrant youth in cultural transition: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation across national contexts*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bourhis, R.-Y., Moïse, L. C., Perreault, S., & Senécal, S. (1997). Towards an Interactive Acculturation Model: A Social Psychological Approach. *International Journal of Psychology, 32*(6), 369–386. https://doi.org/10.1080/002075997400629

Branscombe, N. R., Ellemers, N., Spears, R., & Doosje, B. (1999). The context and content of social identity threat. In N. Ellemers, R. Spears, & B. Doosje (Eds.), *Social identity. Context, commitment, content*. (pp. 35–58). Blackwell Publishers.

Branscombe, N. R., Schmitt, M. T., & Harvey, R. D. (1999). Perceiving pervasive discrimination among African Americans: Implications for group identification and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77*(1), 135–149. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.77.1.135

Brylka, A., Mähönen, T. A., & Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. (2015). National identification and intergroup attitudes among members of the national majority and immigrants: Preliminary evidence for the mediational role of psychological ownership of a country. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology, 3*(1), 24–45. https://doi.org/10.5964/jspp.v3i1.275

Byrne, B. M. (2005). Factor analytic models: Viewing the structure of an assessment instrument from three perspectives. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 85*(1), 17–32. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327752jpa8501_02

Chaparak, A. (2023). Toward a new stage for the epistemology of futures studies: Exploring social epistemology. *Futures, 153*, 103237. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2023.103237

Chen, F., Curran, P. J., Bollen, K. A., Kirby, J., & Paxton, P. (2008). An empirical evaluation of the use of fixed cutoff points in RMSEA test statistic in structural equation models. *Sociological Methods & Research, 36*(4), 462–494. https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124108314720

Chimienti, M., Bloch, A., Ossipow, L., & Wihtol de Wenden, C. (2019). Second generation from refugee backgrounds in Europe. *Comparative Migration Studies, 7*, Article 40. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-019-0138-2

Chryssochoou, X. (2009). Identity projects in multicultural nation-states. In I. Jasinskaja-Lahti & T. A. Mähönen (Eds.), *Identities, intergroup relations and acculturation: The cornerstones of intercultural encounters* (pp. 81–93). Gaudeamus Helsinki University Press.

Chun, H., & Mobley, M. (2014). The "immigrant paradox" phenomenon: Assessing problem behaviors and risk factors among immigrant and native adolescents. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 35*, 339–356. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10935-014-0359-y

Crul, M., Schneider, J., & Lelie, F. (Eds.). (2012). *The European Second Generation Compared: Does the Integration Context Matter?* Amsterdam University Press.

Dittmar, H. (1992). *The social psychology of material possessions: To have is to be*. St. Martin's Press.

Dotson, K. (2012). A cautionary tale: On limiting epistemic oppression. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies, 33*(1), 24–47. https://doi.org/10.5250/fronjwomestud.33.1.0024

Drouhot, L. G., & Nee, V. (2019). Assimilation and the second generation in Europe and America: Blending and segregating social dynamics between immigrants and natives. *Annual Review of Sociology, 45*, 177–199. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073117-041335

Erikson, E. (1968). *Identity, Youth and Crisis*. New York: Norton.

Etzioni, A. (1991). The socio-economics of property. In F.W. Rudmin (Ed.), *To have possessions: A handbook on ownership and property. Special Issue, Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, 6*(6), 465-468.

Fein, E. C., Machin, T., Hendry, L., & Gilmour, J. (2022). *Statistics for research students*. University of Southern Queensland. https://usq.pressbooks.pub/statisticsforresearchstudents/

Fleischmann, F., & Phalet, K. (2016). Identity conflict or compatibility: A comparison of Muslim minorities in five European cities. *Political Psychology, 37*(4), 447–463. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12278

Frattini, T., & Cugini, G. (2025, July 30). *The labour market disparities of second-generation immigrants*. The Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR). https://cepr.org/voxeu/columns/labour-market-disparities-second-generation-immigrants

Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*. Oxford University Press.

Fukuyama, F. (2018). Why national identity matters. *Journal of Democracy, 29*(4), 5–15. https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2018.0058

Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Nier, J. A., Banker, B. S., Ward, C. M., Houlette, M., & Loux, S. (2000). The common ingroup identity model for reducing intergroup bias: Progress and challenges. In D. Capozza & R. Brown (Eds.), *Social identity processes: Trends in theory and research* (pp. 133–148). SAGE Publications. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446218617.n9

García Coll, C., Patton, F., Marks, A. K., Dimitrova, R., Yang, R., Suarez, G. A., & Patrico, A. (2012). Understanding the immigrant paradox in youth: Developments and contextual considerations. In A. Masten, K. Liebkind, & D. J. Hernandez (Eds.), *Realizing the potential of immigrant youth* (pp. 159–180). Cambridge University Press.

Giuliani, C., Tagliabue, S., & Regalia, C. (2018). Psychological well-being, multiple identities, and discrimination among first and second generation immigrant

Muslims. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 14*(1), Article e1434. https://doi.org/10.5964/ejop.v14i1.1434

Haikkola, L. (2011). Transnational and local negotiations of identity: Experiences from second-generation young people in Finland. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, *1*(3), 156–165. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48711137

Hakahuhta, A. (2019, February 22). *Perussuomalaisten vaaliohjelmassa maahanmuuttovastaisuus on pääteema*. *Yle*. https://yle.fi/a/3-10658315

Heath, A. F., Rothon, C., & Kilpi, E. (2008). The second generation in Western Europe: Education, unemployment, and occupational attainment. *Annual Review of Sociology, 34*, 211–235. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.34.040507.134728

Hopkins, N., & Blackwood, L. (2011). Everyday citizenship: Identity and recognition. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 21*(3), 215–227. https://doi.org/10.1002/casp.1088

Horenczyk, G., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. (2015). Mutuality in acculturation: Toward an integration. *Zeitschrift für Psychologie, 221*(4), 205–213. https://doi.org/10.1027/2151-2604/a000150

Hu, L.-T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling, 6*(1), 1–55. https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540118

Huynh, Q. L. (2013). Identity denial. In K. D. Keith (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of cross-cultural psychology* (pp. 682–684). Wiley-Blackwell.

Huynh, Q.-L., Devos, T., & Smalarz, L. (2011). Perpetual foreigner in one's own land: Potential implications for identity and psychological adjustment. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 30*(2). https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2011.30.2.133

Jaccard, J., & Turrisi, R. (2003). *Interaction effects in multiple regression* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

James, W. (1890). *The principles of psychology* (Vol. 1). Henry Holt and Company.

Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Liebkind, K., Horenczyk, G., & Schmitz, P. (2003). The interactive nature of acculturation: Perceived discrimination, acculturation attitudes

and stress among young ethnic repatriates in Finland, Israel and Germany. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27, 79–97. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(02)00061-5

Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Liebkind, K., & Solheim, E. (2009). To identify or not to identify? National disidentification as an alternative reaction to perceived ethnic discrimination. *Applied Psychology, 58*(1), 105–128. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2008.00384.x

Kağitçibaşi, Ç. (1997). Whither multiculturalism? *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 46*(1), 44–49. https://doi.org/10.1080/026999497378494

Kalkbrenner, M. T. (2023). Alpha, omega, and H internal consistency reliability estimates: Reviewing these options and when to use them. *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation, 14*(1), 77–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/21501378.2021.1940118

Kenny, D. A., Kaniskan, B., & McCoach, D. B. (2015). The performance of RMSEA in models with small degrees of freedom. *Sociological Methods & Research, 44*(3), 486–507. https://doi.org/10.1177/0049124114543236

Keskinen, S. (2018). The "crisis" of white hegemony, neonationalist femininities and antiracist feminism. *Women's Studies International Forum, 68*, 157–163. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2017.11.001

Kidd, I. J., Medina, J., & Pohlhaus, G., Jr. (Eds.). (2017). *The Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315212043

Kristeva, J. (1993). *Nations without nationalism* (L. S. Roudiez, Ed.; L. S. Roudiez, Trans.). Columbia University Press.

Lai, K., & Green, S. B. (2016). The problem with having two watches: Assessment of fit when RMSEA and CFI disagree. *Multivariate Behavioral Research, 51*(2–3), 220–239. https://doi.org/10.1080/00273171.2015.1134306

Ledgerwood, A., Liviatan, I., & Carnevale, P. J. (2007). Group-identity completion and the symbolic value of property. *Psychological Science, 18*(10), 873–878. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.01994.x

Litwinski, L. (1947). The psychology of “mine.” *Philosophy, 22*(83), 240–251.

Long, J. A. (2019). *interactions: Comprehensive, user-friendly toolkit for probing interactions* (Version 1.2.0) [R package]. https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=interactions

Martinovic, B., & Verkuyten, M. (2013). “We were here first, so we determine the rules of the game”: Autochthony and prejudice towards out-groups. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 43*(7), 637–647. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1980

Martinović, B., & Verkuyten, M. (2024). Collective psychological ownership as a new angle for understanding group dynamics. *European Review of Social Psychology, 35*(1), 123–161. https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2023.2231762

Matuzkova, O., Rayevska, I., & Grynko, O. (2021). Identification and identity: Differentiating the conceptual terms. *WISDOM, 1*(17), 44–52. https://doi.org/10.24234/wisdom.v17i1.414

McNeish, D. (2018). Thanks coefficient alpha, we’ll take it from here. *Psychological Methods, 23*(3), 412–433. https://doi.org/10.1037/met0000144

Modood, T. (2007). *Multiculturalism*. Polity Press.

Mähönen, T. A., Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., & Liebkind, K. (2011). Cultural discordance and the polarization of identities. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 14*(4), 505–515. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430210379006

Nekby, L., & Rödin, M. (2010). Acculturation identity and employment among second and middle generation immigrants. *Journal of Economic Psychology, 31*(1), 35–50. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2009.09.001

Nesterko, Y., & Glaesmer, H. (2019). Warum fragen wir nicht direkt nach? Eine Analyse zur subjektiven Zuschreibung des Migrationshintergrundes. [Why don’t we ask directly? An analysis of subjective self-ascription of migration background] *Psychologische Rundschau, 70*(2). https://doi.org/10.1026/0033-3042/a000399

Nijs, T., Martinovic, B., Verkuyten, M., & Sedikides, C. (2021). “This country is OURS”: The exclusionary potential of collective psychological ownership. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 60*(1), 171–195. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12386

OECD/European Commission. (2023). *Indicators of immigrant integration 2023: Settling in*. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/1d5020a6-en

Parekh, B. (1995). The concept of national identity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 21*(2), 255–268. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.1995.9976489

Pehrson, S., Vignoles, V. L., & Brown, R. (2009). National identification and anti-immigrant prejudice: Individual and contextual effects of national definitions. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 72*(1), 24–38. https://doi.org/10.1177/019027250907200104

Pierce, J. L., & Jussila, I. (2011). *Psychological ownership and the organizational context: Theory, research evidence, and application*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

Pierce, J. L., Kostova, T., & Dirks, K. T. (2003). The state of psychological ownership: Integrating and extending a century of research. *Review of General Psychology, 7*(1), 84–107. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.7.1.84

Pierce, J.L., Rubenfeld, S., & Morgan, S. (1991). 'Employee ownership: a conceptual model of process and effects.' *Academy of Management Review, 16*(1), 121-144. https://doi.org/10.2307/258609

Piontkowski, U., Florack, A., Hoelker, P., & Obdrzálek, P. (2002). Predicting acculturation attitudes of dominant and non-dominant groups. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 24*(1), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(99)00020-6

Pohlhaus, G., Jr. (2017). Varieties of epistemic injustice. In I. J. Kidd, J. Medina, & G. Pohlhaus Jr. (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of epistemic injustice* (pp. 13–26). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315212043-2

Popescu, C., & Pudelko, M. (2024). The impact of cultural identity on cultural and language bridging skills of first and second generation highly qualified migrants. *Journal of World Business*, 59(6), 1-19. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2024.101571

Postmes, T., & Branscombe, N. R. (2002). Influence of long-term racial environmental composition on subjective well-being in African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(3), 735–751. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.83.3.735

Preacher, K. J., Curran, P. J., & Bauer, D. J. (2006). Computational tools for probing interactions in multiple linear regression, multilevel modeling, and latent curve analysis. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, 31*(4), 437–448. https://doi.org/10.3102/10769986031004437

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M. J. (1936). Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist, 38*(1), 149–152. https://doi.org/10.1525/aa.1936.38.1.02a00330

Reicher, S., & Hopkins, N. (2001). *Self and nation: Categorization, contestation and mobilization*. SAGE Publications.

Revelle, W. (2025). *psych: Procedures for psychological, psychometric, and personality research* (Version 2.5.6) [R package]. https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=psych

Robinson, C., & Schumacker, R. E. (2009). Interaction effects: Centering, variance inflation factor, and interpretation issues. *Multiple Linear Regression Viewpoints, 35*(1), 6–11.

Rochat, P. (2014). *Origins of possession: Owning and sharing in development*. Cambridge University Press.

Rosseel, Y. (2012). lavaan: An R package for structural equation modeling. *Journal of Statistical Software, 48*(2), 1–36. https://doi.org/10.18637/jss.v048.i02

Saarela, M. (2022). *"Suomalaisuus on enempi tunneasia": Seuraavan sukupolven suomalaisnuorten kokemuksia yhteiskunnallisesta osallisuudesta* ["Finnishness is more a matter of feeling": Experiences of societal participation among next-generation Finnish youth] *(Master's thesis, University of Helsinki, Faculty of Social Sciences)*. HELDA – Digital Repository of the University of Helsinki. https://helda.helsinki.fi/items/332061bd-963c-48f8-a960-61963716776f

Saukkonen, P. (2018). Multiculturalism and nationalism in Finland. *Finnish Journal of Social Research, 11*, 65–73. https://doi.org/10.51815/fjsr.110781

Schneider, J., Fokkema, T., Matias, R., Stojčić, S., Ugrina, D., & Larrucea, C. (2012). Identities: Urban belonging and intercultural relations. In M. Crul, J. Schneider, & F. Lelie (Eds.), *The European second generation compared: Does the integration*

context matter? (pp. 285–340). Amsterdam University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9789048516926-009

Schwarz, B., & Pfammatter, P. (2024). The association of acculturation and well-being: Second-generation immigrants in Switzerland. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 25*, Article 77. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-024-00794-z

Sherif, M. (1967). *Group conflict and co-operation: Their social psychology*. Psychology Press / Taylor & Francis.

Sherif, M., & Sherif, C. W. (1953). *Groups in harmony and tension; an integration of studies of intergroup relations*. Harper & Brothers.

Sindic, D., & Condor, S. (2014). Social identity theory and self-categorisation theory. In P. Nesbitt-Larking, C. Kinnvall, T. Capelos, & H. Dekker (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of global political psychology* (pp. 39–54). Palgrave Macmillan UK. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-29118-9_3

Sindic, D., & Reicher, S. D. (2009). "Our way of life is worth defending": Testing a model of attitudes towards superordinate group membership through a study of Scots' attitudes towards Britain. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 39*(1), 114–129. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.503

Smith, A. D. (1986). *The ethnic origins of nations*. Blackwell.

Snare, F. (1972). The concept of property. *American Philosophical Quarterly, 9*(2), 200-206.

Solano, G., & Huddleston, T. (2020). *Migrant Integration Policy Index 2020*. Migration Policy Group. https://www.migpolgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Solano-Giacomo-Huddleston-Thomas-2020-Migrant-Integration-Policy-Index-2020.pdf

Souto, A. M., & Lappalainen, S. (2025). Normative whiteness in Finnish university education. *Critical Studies in Education, 66*(1), 91–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2024.2347276

Statistics Finland [Tilastokeskus]. (2025, April 4). *Maahanmuuttajat ja kotoutuminen*. https://stat.fi/fi/tilastot/tietoa-teemoittain/maahanmuuttajat-ja-kotoutuminen

Szebeni, Z., Elovainio, R., Martinović, B., Nijs, T., & Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. (2025). "(The story of) This country is ours!": The territorial and epistemic dimensions of collective psychological ownership among the national majority and immigrants. *Advances in Psychology, 2*, e753124. https://doi.org/10.56296/aip00035

Tajfel, H. and Turner, J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In: Austin WG and Worchel S (eds) *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Monterey, CA: Brooks- Cole, pp. 33–48.

Tamir, Y. (1993). *Liberal nationalism*. Princeton University Press.

Thrane, C. (2020). *Applied regression analysis: doing, interpreting and reporting regression* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Triandafyllidou, A., & Gropas, R. (2022). European identity – European identities. In *What is Europe?* (2nd ed., pp. 95–125). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003278375-5

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Basil Blackwell.

Uberoi, V. (2019). National identity — A multiculturalist's approach. In R. T. Ashcroft & M. Bevir (Eds.), *Multiculturalism in contemporary Britain* (1st ed., pp. 46–64). Routledge.

Ullah, A. K. M. A. (2025). Struggles for identity formation: Second-generation South Asian diaspora overseas. *South Asian Diaspora*, *17*(2), 199–214. https://doi.org/10.1080/19438192.2024.2328465

Valentine, G., Sporton, D., & Nielsen, K. B. (2009). Identities and belonging: A study of Somali refugee and asylum seekers living in the UK and Denmark. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 27*(2), 234-250. https://doi.org/10.1068/d3407

Vasta, E. (2010). The controllability of difference: Social cohesion and the new politics of solidarity. *Ethnicities*, *10*(4), 503-521. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796810378326

Vehkalahti, K., & Everitt, B. S. (2019). *Multivariate analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). CRC Press.

Verkuyten, M. (2018). *The social psychology of ethnic identity* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Verkuyten, M. (2024). "We need them, they need us": Perceived indispensability and intergroup relations. *Review of General Psychology, 28*(1), 67–80. https://doi.org/10.1177/10892680231224403

Verkuyten, M., & Martinovic, B. (2012). Immigrants' national identification: Meanings, determinants, and consequences. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 6(1), 82–112. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-2409.2011.01036.x

Verkuyten, M., & Martinovic, B. (2017). Collective psychological ownership and intergroup relations. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 12*(6), 1021–1039. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691617706514

Verkuyten, M., Wiley, S., Deaux, K., & Fleischmann, F. (2019). To be both (and more): Immigration and identity multiplicity. *Journal of Social Issues, 75*(2), 390–413. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12324

Vietze, J., Moffitt, U., Schwarzenthal, M., & Civitillo, S. (2023). Beyond 'migrant background': How to select relevant, social justice oriented, and feasible social categories in educational research. *European Journal of Psychology of Education, 38*, 389–408. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-022-00611-2

Wetherell, M., Berkeley, R., & Lafleche, M. (2007). *Identity, ethnic diversity and community cohesion*. SAGE Publications.

Wetherell, M., & Mohanty, C. T. (Eds). (2010). *The Sage handbook of identities*. SAGE Publications.

Wickham, H., Averick, M., Bryan, J., Chang, W., McGowan, L. D., François, R., … Yutani, H. (2019). *Welcome to the tidyverse. Journal of Open Source Software, 4*(43), 1686. https://doi.org/10.21105/joss.01686

Zagefka, H., & Brown, R. (2002). The relationship between acculturation strategies, relative fit and intergroup relations: Immigrant–majority relations in Germany. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 32*(2), 171–188. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.73

Appendices

Appendix 1: Background demographic trends

Table 1.1

Change in the number of people with a foreign background born in Finland since 2000

2000	14268
2001	15664
2002	17128
2003	18730
2004	20374
2005	22216
2006	24224
2007	26463
2008	28898
2009	31606
2010	34623
2011	37828
2012	41408
2013	45283
2014	**49405**
2015	53122
2016	57947
2017	62629
2018	67205
2019	71773
2020	76614
2021	81437
2022	86052
2023	90965
2024	**96336**
Lähde: Tilastokeskus, väestörakenne **(Source: Statistics Finland, population structure)**	

Appendix 2: Most frequent parental countries of origin

Table 2.1

Top-15 countries of origin (mother)

Mother Home Country	**Freq**	**Percent**
Suomi	798	54.6%
Venäjä	183	12.5%
Viro	87	6.0%
Saksa	36	2.5%
Yhdysvallat (USA)	34	2.3%
Kanada	19	1.3%
Thaimaa	19	1.3%
Yhdistynyt kuningaskunta	19	1.3%
Neuvostoliitto	17	1.2%
Filippiinit	14	1.0%
Puola	13	0.9%
Unkari	13	0.9%
Kiina	11	0.8%
Ranska	11	0.8%
Ukraina	11	0.8%

Table 2.2

Top-15 countries of origin (father)

Father Home Country	**Freq**	**Percent**
Suomi	531	36.3%
Venäjä	133	9.1%
Saksa	87	6.0%
Yhdistynyt kuningaskunta	55	3.8%
Yhdysvallat (USA)	49	3.4%
Turkki	38	2.6%
Viro	32	2.2%
Kanada	23	1.6%
Marokko	22	1.5%
Ranska	21	1.4%
Alankomaat	18	1.2%
Kreikka	16	1.1%
Intia	15	1.0%
Italia	15	1.0%
Sveitsi	15	1.0%

Appendix 3: Preliminary measurement analysis

I conducted a preliminary Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to examine whether own and perceived epistemic and territorial dimensions of collective psychological ownership represented distinct constructs. These measures were developed specifically for this data collection, and particularly the epistemic ownership dimension (CPO-E) was newly introduced as a conceptualization of ownership over national narratives and symbolic boundaries (Szebeni et al., 2025). The distinctiveness of the epistemic and territorial dimensions has already been confirmed in two independent samples reported in Szebeni et al. (2025), one of which is the dataset analyzed in the present thesis. The CFA is therefore reported here to demonstrate familiarity with the analytic procedure and to ensure transparency and methodological consistency within the current work.

I specified a four-factor model corresponding to own epistemic ownership, perceived epistemic ownership, own territorial ownership, and perceived territorial ownership. The analysis was performed in R using the *lavaan* package (Version 0.6–20; Rosseel, 2012). The model was estimated using Maximum Likelihood with robust standard errors and a Satorra–Bentler scaled χ^2 statistic (MLM estimator) to account for non-normality. Model fit was evaluated using standard indices—Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)—with threshold values recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999).

The four-factor model showed good fit to the data, $\chi^2(48) = 407.13$, $p < .001$, CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .076 (90% CI [.071, .082]), SRMR = .034. The four-factor model fitted the data clearly better than a one-factor model (see Table 3.2). Taken together, the CFI, TLI, and SRMR indicated that the model fitted the data well, while RMSEA showed an acceptable fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). All standardized factor loadings were strong and statistically significant (range = .79–.94, $p < .001$; see Table 2).

Table 3.1

Standardised factor loadings from Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Factor	Item	Loading	p
CPO-T (own)	People with diverse cultural backgrounds own Finland as much as ethnic majority Finns.	0.86	
	This country belongs also to people with different cultural backgrounds.	0.93	< .001
	Not only ethnic majority Finns, but also people with diverse cultural backgrounds, own this country.	0.93	< .001
CPO-T (perceived)	People with diverse cultural backgrounds own Finland as much as ethnic majority Finns.	0.86	
	This country belongs also to people with different cultural backgrounds.	0.93	< .001
	Not only ethnic majority Finns, but also people with diverse cultural backgrounds, own this country.	0.93	< .001
CPO-E (own)	The story of Finland is not only a story of ethnic majority Finns, but also the story of people with diverse cultural backgrounds living in Finland.	0.92	
	Finland's legacy not only represents ethnic majority Finns but also people, who have diverse cultural backgrounds.	0.94	< .001
	Not only ethnic majority Finns, but also people with diverse cultural backgrounds, are able to tell the true story of Finland.	0.79	< .001
CPO-E (perceived)	The story of Finland is not only a story of ethnic majority Finns, but also the story of people with diverse cultural backgrounds living in Finland.	0.92	
	Finland's legacy not only represents ethnic majority Finns but also people, who have diverse cultural backgrounds.	0.93	< .001
	Not only ethnic majority Finns, but also people with diverse cultural backgrounds, are able to tell the true story of Finland.	0.80	< .001

*Note***.** Standardized loadings are reported. The first loading of each factor was fixed to 1.00 for model identification; therefore, p-values are not available for these fixed loadings. The items for own and perceived ownership are identical; participants were instructed to assess each statement first from their own standpoint and then from the perspective of how they believe the ethnic Finnish majority would view the same statements.

Standardized inter-factor correlations ranged from .15 to .70, indicating that the constructs were related but empirically distinct. Perceived epistemic and territorial psychological ownership were the most strongly correlated factors (r = .70). The Fornell–Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)[1] was used to assess discriminant validity. Average variance extracted (AVE) values ranged from .78 to .82, all exceeding the squared inter-factor correlations (r^2 = .02–.49), indicating that each construct shared more variance with its own indicators than with other factors. Although the correlation between perceived territorial and perceived epistemic ownership was relatively strong (r = .70, r^2 = .49), their AVE values remained higher, supporting discriminant validity. The full matrix of latent correlations and square roots of AVE is reported in Table 3.3.

These results are consistent with those reported by Szebeni et al. (2025) and support the proposed four-dimensional structure of collective psychological ownership, distinguishing between own and perceived epistemic and territorial ownership.

Table 3.2

Robust (MLM) fit indices for four-factor vs. one-factor CFA

Model	χ^2 (df)	p	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90% CI]	SRMR
Four-factor model	407.13 (48)	< .001	0.962	0.948	0.076 [0.071, 0.082]	0.034
One-factor model	6570.27 (54)	< .001	0.312	0.159	0.306 [0.300, 0.311]	0.257

[1]Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). *Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(1), 39–50.

Table 3.3

Latent correlations and square roots of average variance extracted (AVE)

Factor	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. CPO-T oma	**0.91**	0.32	0.64	0.15
2. CPO-T kanta	0.32	**0.91**	0.23	0.70
3. CEO-T oma	0.64	0.23	**0.88**	0.41
4. CEO-T kanta	0.15	0.70	0.41	**0.89**

Note. Diagonal elements in Table X represent the square roots of average variance extracted (AVE), whereas off-diagonal elements represent latent factor correlations. For all constructs, the square root of AVE exceeded the corresponding inter-factor correlations, supporting discriminant validity according to the Fornell–Larcker criterion.

Appendix 4: Comparison of three-factor and one-factor models

Table 4.1

Robust (MLM) fit indices for three-factor vs. one-factor CFA

Model	χ^2 (df)	p	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90% CI]	SRMR
Three-factor model	291.26 (24)	< .001	0.952	0.928	0.094 [0.086, 0.102]	0.030
One-factor model	3,426.52 (27)	< .001	0.386	0.182	0.315 [0.307, 0.322]	0.248

Appendix 5: Unstandardised regression coefficients

Table 5.1

Hierarchical multiple regression predicting national identification: Unstandardised coefficients across model steps

Predictor	B (Step 1)	B (Step 2)	B (Step 3)	SE (Step 3)	95% CI (Step 3)	p (Step 3)
Age	0.004*	0.003	0.003	0.002	[-0.001, 0.007]	0.106
Gender	-0.061	-0.064	-0.064	0.064	[-0.190, 0.062]	0.321
Education	0.040	0.009	0.010	0.057	[-0.101, 0.121]	0.859
Parent background	0.416**	0.386**	0.371**	0.129	[0.118, 0.624]	0.004
Minority identification	-0.099***	-0.096***	-0.095***	0.020	[-0.133, -0.056]	< .001
Perceived discrimination	-0.187***	-0.171***	-0.164***	0.021	[-0.204, -0.123]	< .001
Own CPO-E		0.004	0.046	0.030	[-0.012, 0.105]	0.121
Perceived CPO-E		0.091***	0.081***	0.024	[0.033, 0.128]	< .001
Own × Perceived CPO-E			0.049***	0.015	[0.020, 0.078]	< .001

Note. Adjusted R^2 values for Steps 1–3 were .11, .12, and .13, respectively. Standard errors, confidence intervals, and p-values are reported for Step 3 (final model).
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.