

„A laugh a day keeps the failure away“: How do self-enhancing humor and community embeddedness promote subjective career success of dual-earner migrant couples?

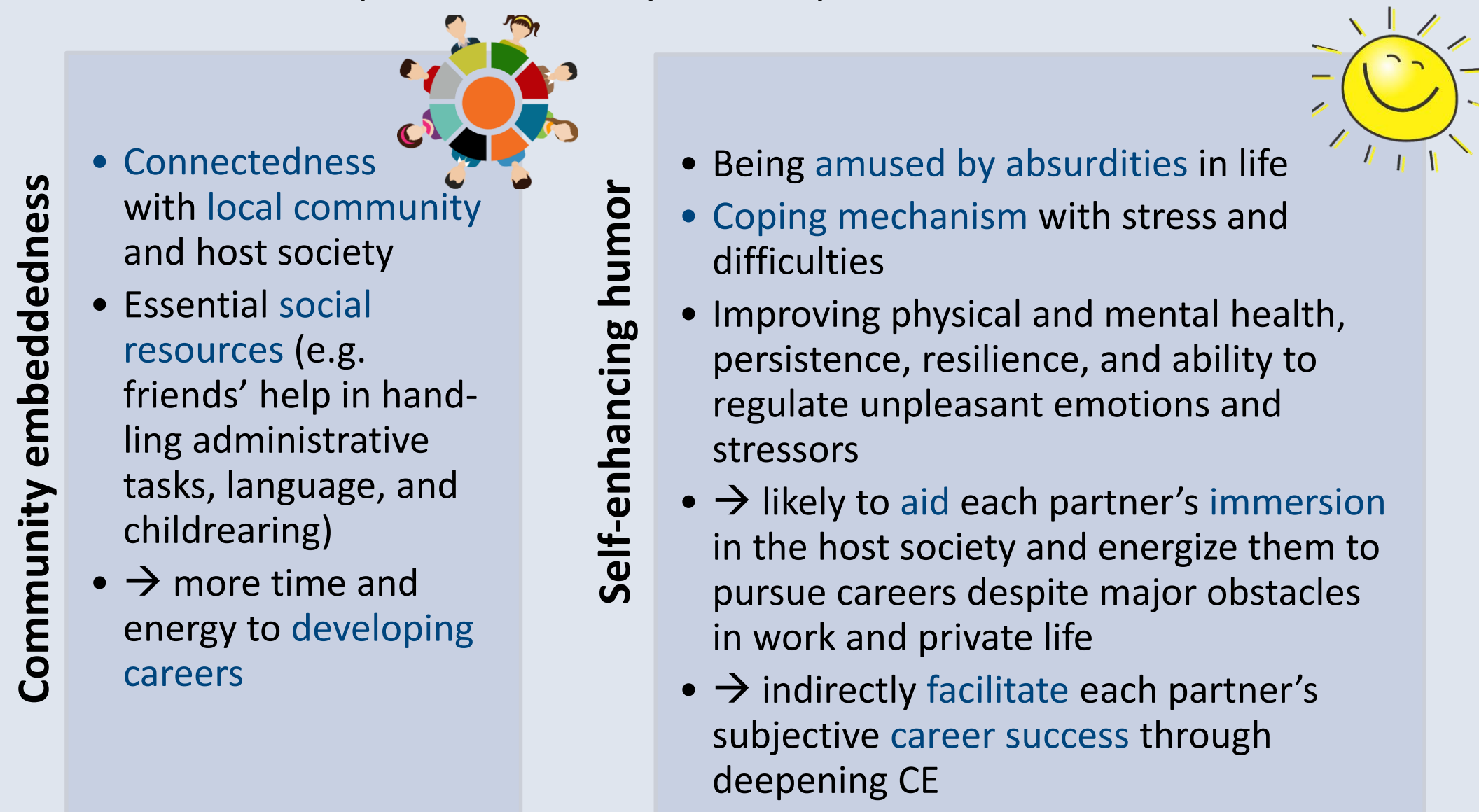
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Introduction

Career success of **dual-earner migrant couples (DEMCs)** is particularly challenging compared to that of domestic ones. After relocation, at least one of the partners - especially **women** - often suffer career interruptions, demotion in occupational status or eventual career relinquishment. Solutions for their struggles, however, are lacking due to insufficient evidence about the **resources** for their subjective career success (i.e. perceived satisfaction with one's career achievements).

In this light, we aim to explore the role of **self-enhancing humor (SEH)**¹ and host country **community embeddedness (CE)**² in subjective career success of both partners in a dyadic way.



- Positive and playful interactions with humorous partners allow individuals to automatically mimic their partner's hilarious facial expressions and feel the same amusement feelings (i.e. emotional contagion). Hence a **partner's SEH** potentially benefits **the other partner's CE** and **subjective career success**, in the same way it impacts each individual, regardless who possesses this trait.
- The **crossover effects** of humor on career success possibly **are stronger for women than men**, because women are more likely to 'catch' their partner's emotions (i.e. they are more susceptible to emotional contagion)³.

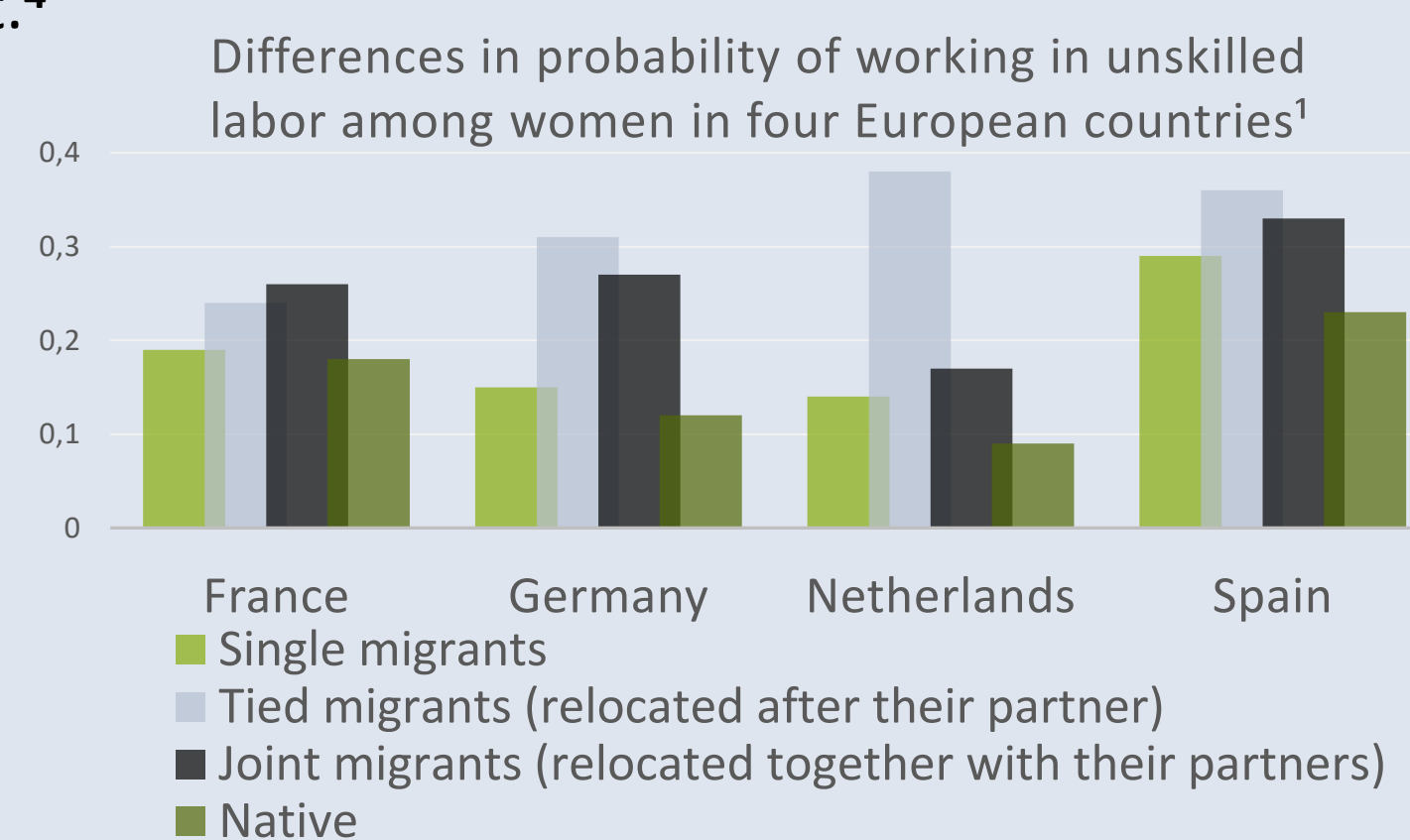
Methods

- Data: longitudinal, 2 waves, 1 year time-lag
- Sample: 109 cohabiting heterosexual DEMCs in 14 European countries
- Analysis: Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) with SEM

1. Ballarino, G., & Panichella, N. (2018). The occupational integration of migrant women in Western European labour markets. *Acta Sociologica*, 61(2), 126-142.
 2. Martin, R., et al. (2003). Individual differences in uses of humor and their relation to psychological well-being: Development of the Humor Styles Questionnaire. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 37(1), 48-75.
 3. Mitchell, T. R., et al. (2001). Why people stay: Using job embeddedness to predict voluntary turnover. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(6), 1102-1121.
 4. Doherty, R. W., Orimoto, L., Singelis, T. M., Hatfield, E., & Hebb, J. (1995). Emotional contagion: Gender and occupational differences. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 19(3), 355-371.

Gender-sensitive Components

- **Obstacles** to DEMCs' **career success**, e.g. exceeding home demands (e.g. childrearing), and lack of support (e.g. nearby family, parental benefits), typically **burden women more than men** due to remained traditional gender roles in present time.
- **Women's careers** become even more arduous in the **migration context**.⁴



- However, **being women is also advantageous** thanks to emotional contagion susceptibility: **playful and amusing partners** benefitted migrants' career success, especially women.
- Supporting **women's CE**: foster activities of international **women associations** and the **youth and family department**; consultancy on family settlement, relationships, administrative tasks, parental benefits, and childrearing
- Nurturing **humor of migrant women**: psychological coaching, humor habit training in social integration policies and HRM practices.

Results

- SEH promoted each DEMC partner's subjective career success through facilitating their CE.
- A partner's SEH positively influenced the other partner's CE and subjective career success.
- **Men's humor** fostered CE of their female partner, which in turn increased the **women's subjective career success**.

