
Chapter

1

Acculturation and Social Cohesion: Emerging Issues for Asian Immigrants in New Zealand¹

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ABSTRACT

One in five persons resident in New Zealand is overseas-born, and China and India have been amongst the largest contributors to recent immigration flows. With immigration rising and cultural diversity increasing, maintaining a socially cohesive society has become an important issue for New Zealand. This chapter synthesizes complementary approaches to the study of Asian immigration in New Zealand and interprets the research

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findings within Jenson's (1998) framework for the assessment of social cohesion. Incorporating the views of both immigrants and recipient nationals, belonging and recognition are examined in conjunction with psychological research on acculturation attitudes, preferences, and expectations. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the benefits of social cohesion for attracting and retaining skilled immigrants.

Migration is a worldwide phenomenon. Currently there are over 200 million people who live outside their countries of origin (United Nations Population Division, 2006). This number has been steadily climbing and is expected to rise further over the next decade.

These trends are mirrored in New Zealand where both the extent of cultural diversity and the proportion of overseas-born people are rapidly increasing. Although European (67.6%) and Maori (14.6%) remained the two largest ethnic groups in the 2006 census, the proportion of Asian peoples (9.2%) grew faster than all other groups and for the first time surpassed the Pacific population (6.9%) in New Zealand. Furthermore, Asians are projected to increase to 11.1% in 2011 and 14.5% by 2021. The majority of Asians currently in New Zealand are overseas-born (79%), entered New Zealand under the skilled and business immigration streams, and identified ethnically as Chinese (41.6%), Indian (29.5%) or Korean (8.7%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2007).

In addition, the proportion of overseas-born residents increased from 19.5% in 2001 to 22.9% in 2006, and New Zealand currently has the fourth highest percentage of overseas-born people in the Organization for Economic Development (OECD), after Luxembourg (33%), Australia (24%), and Switzerland (24%) (OECD, 2006). The most common overseas birthplaces (in descending order) are now: England, the People's Republic of China, Australia, Samoa, India, South Africa, Fiji, Scotland, and the Republic of Korea; however, in the last 10 years there have been comparable proportions of immigrants from the People's Republic of China (14.4%) and England (14.1%) (Statistics New Zealand, 2007). With changing demographics, New Zealand, like other contemporary societies, is facing questions about

how to manage immigration flows and to identify the risks and benefits of increasing cultural diversity within its borders.

Within this context, a major concern has arisen over the issue of social cohesion. Jenson (1998) initially identified belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition, and legitimacy as the core elements of a socially cohesive society, and Spoonley *et al.* (2005) extended their work to formulate a framework for the assessment of social cohesion that has been adopted by the New Zealand government (Ministry of Social Development, 2008). As articulated by Spoonley *et al.* (2005, p. 103), when “ethnically and culturally diverse communities and individuals experience a sense of belonging and their contribution is recognised, celebrated and valued,” and “all people in New Zealand are able to participate in all aspects of New Zealand life,” a socially cohesive society will be achieved.

This chapter adopts a psychological perspective on social cohesion, in particular the recognition and belonging dimensions as outlined in the Ministry of Social Development’s (2008) *Diverse Communities: Exploring the Migrant and Refugee Experience in New Zealand*. Against a backdrop of national research on immigration, it presents key findings of interlinked studies of Asian immigrants and New Zealand nationals. In doing so, the chapter offers a novel perspective on identity, belonging, and the cultural politics of everyday encounters.

SOCIAL COHESION AND RECOGNITION

“Recognition as a domain of social cohesion means that people value diversity, accept and respect differences, including the different opinions and values of the many cultures that make up New Zealand, and encourage protection from discrimination and harassment” (Ministry of Social Development, 2008, p. 100). Factors that have been identified as indicators of recognition are: (1) attitudes and discrimination; (2) representation in national and local government and other bodies; and (3) first language retention and the prevalence of immigrant media. This chapter concentrates on the first of these three factors and examines findings from four New Zealand studies: (1) a large national survey ($n = 2020$) on attitudes toward immigrants, immigration,

Table 1: Sample Characteristics.

Sample size	1	2	3	4
	2020	51 Technology recruitment agencies	435 ²	220 ³
Sampling frame	Random	Population	Convenience	Convenience
Ethnic composition	70% NZE 5% Maori 4% Asian 1% Pacific 20% other	—	33% Chinese 43% Korean 24% Indian	39% Indian 20% Pakistani 14% Chinese 14% Filipino 10% Other Asian
Age range	18–65+	—	12–19	15–86
Gender (% female)	57	—	55	55
NZ born (%)	76	—	17	0
NZ citizen (%)	89	—	56	48
English first language (%)	91	—	—	12

and multiculturalism (Ward and Masgoret, 2008); (2) a field experiment on immigrant entry into the labor force (Ward and Masgoret, 2007); (3) a survey of Asian youth ($n = 435$) as part of the New Zealand component of the International Comparative Study of Ethno-cultural Youth (Berry *et al.*, 2006; Ward, 2007a); and (4) a recent survey ($n = 220$) of first generation Asian immigrants (Ward *et al.*, 2008). The characteristics of the samples in each of these studies are summarized in Table 1.

Indicators of social cohesion were broadly examined in Ward and Masgoret's (2008) study of New Zealanders' attitudes towards immigrants, immigration, and multiculturalism. Their national survey

² Only data from Chinese, Korean, and Indian youth are reported here. The total ICSEY sample was 1585, which included immigrants ($n = 935$), New Zealand European ($n = 396$), and Maori ($n = 114$) youth.

³ Only the responses from Asian immigrants are reported here. The larger sample included 317 first-generation immigrants (Ward *et al.*, under review).

revealed that New Zealanders strongly endorse a multicultural ideology, that is, an ideology that supports the “maintenance of heritage cultures and identities and the full and equitable participation of all ethnocultural groups in the life of the larger society” (Berry, this volume; Berry *et al.*, 1977). Eighty-nine per cent agree that it is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different races, religions, and cultures. This was significantly greater than the 85% agreement found in Australia (Dunn, 2003). It also exceeded the 36–75% agreement found in European Union countries (Eurobarometer, 2000). Support for multiculturalism was further evidenced by 80% agreement with the statement that it is important to accept a wide variety of cultures in New Zealand and majority support for government policy on the numbers (53%) and the sources (61%) of immigrants.

On the whole, attitudes toward immigrants are positive. For example, 81% acknowledge that immigrants have made a valuable contribution to New Zealand, and 82% agree that immigrants have qualities that they admire. Perceptions of threat, known to predict negative attitudes and discriminatory behavior, are low to moderate (Esses *et al.*, 1998; Ward and Masgoret, 2006). Only one in four agree that immigrants take jobs away from New Zealanders and increase the level of crime while one in five believe that allowing immigrant cultures to thrive weakens New Zealand culture.

The overall pattern of findings suggests that immigrants in New Zealand are, to a large extent, achieving the recognition required in a socially cohesive society where diversity is valued and accepted. However, attitudes toward immigrants in general are different from attitudes toward specific groups. Immigrants from Asia, specifically Indians and Chinese, are perceived less favorably than immigrants from Australia, Great Britain, and South Africa. They are evaluated similarly to Pacific immigrants and are viewed more favorably than those from Africa (Ward and Masgoret, 2008). Although the absolute value of favorability ratings for immigrants from India and China is still positive, as Fig. 1 shows, it is significantly less positive than the generic rating for “immigrants”.

Variations in responses to specific immigrant groups were also found in a 2004 National Business Review poll where 45% thought

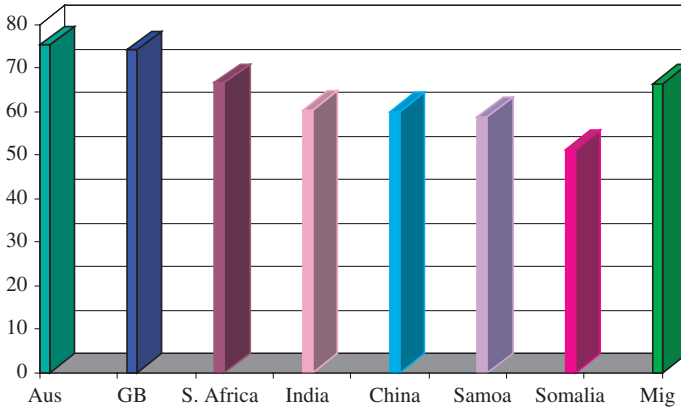


Figure 1: New Zealanders' perceptions of immigrant groups.

Note: The scale is 0–100 where 100 represents more favorable perceptions.

there were too many immigrants from Asia, 39% believed there were too many from the Pacific and 39% agreed that there were too many immigrants from the Middle East (Ministry of Social Development, 2008). These findings are in line with international studies, which demonstrate that “acceptability indices” for immigrants are largely a function of cultural distance (Ward *et al.*, 2001). As an example, a similar Australian study showed that 43% recommended the acceptance of fewer immigrants from Asia and 50% supported decreasing immigration from the Middle East, compared to 19% and 22% who endorsed the reduction of immigrants from Great Britain and Southern Europe, respectively (Ho *et al.*, 1994).

To date, two important discrepancies have been identified in immigrant research on attitudes and discrimination in New Zealand. The first is the gap between attitudes toward immigrants in general and attitudes toward Asian immigrants in particular. The second is the disparity between New Zealanders' multicultural principles and their everyday practices. This was illustrated in Ward and Masgoret's (2007) study of immigrant entry to the labor market.

The research involved a field experiment where unsolicited resumes were sent to recruitment agencies in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch from either a New Zealand-born or China-born

candidate in the technology sector. Ethnicity and migration status differed, but personal information such as age and marital status, educational qualifications and work experience were identical, with the exception that the former candidate undertook education and initial employment in New Zealand and the latter in China. In addition, their letters of introduction presented the same information, specifying that the candidate wished to relocate to New Zealand from a current position in the Middle East.

The study revealed that candidates' ethnicity and immigrant status did not affect the likelihood that they would be told that there were no jobs currently available and that they would be put on file. However, the New Zealand-born candidate was significantly more likely to be engaged for further contact by the agencies and the China-born candidate significantly more likely to have contact terminated. The differential responses were discussed in terms of the factors that have been identified as barriers to immigrant entry into the labor force, particularly English language proficiency and the unreceptiveness of employers to overseas qualifications and experience (Watts and Trlin, 1999, 2000; Henderson *et al.*, 2001). The former was ruled out as a causal factor in this case as the written English was identical in the two versions of the resume and the accompanying information. The latter, in contrast, was elaborated in terms of "discounting", where the skills of overseas trained employees are devalued compared to locally trained employees, even if the quality of their skills is equivalent or better (Esses *et al.*, 2003). Above and beyond issues of language proficiency and discounting, however, discrimination was implicated in the results of the study.

Similar trends have been reported in New Zealand studies of probable selection (Coates and Carr, 2005) and simulated short-listing (Wilson *et al.*, 2005) where both non-European ethnicity and immigrant status disadvantaged job candidates. Selection biases, such as these, are important contributors to immigrant under-employment, the general economic disparities between nationals and immigrants, and the even greater differences between nationals and immigrants from non-traditional sources, such as India and China (Zodgekar, 2005). Selection bias also presents an obstacle to the long-range goal of social cohesion.

New Zealanders recognize and acknowledge that immigrants face many challenges to successful integration. In a 2004 Human Rights Commission survey, 78% of the respondents believed that Asians are subjected to some or a great deal of discrimination — more than any other identified group (Ministry of Social Development, 2004). There were similar expectations for new immigrants (72%) and refugees (70%).

More interesting are the actual experiences of discrimination as perceived and described by immigrants themselves. A survey by the New Zealand Immigration Service (2004) indicated that one in five immigrants reported the experience of discrimination, that this occurred most frequently in work-related areas and that Asians were more likely to report discrimination than immigrants from other regions. Our research, a survey of 220 first-generation immigrants and the ICSEY project including 435 Korean, Chinese, and Indian adolescents, further elaborates the Asian experience. Table 2 presents

Table 2: Perceived Discrimination.

Item	% Agreement			
	Asian adults (<i>n</i> = 220)	Korean youth (<i>n</i> = 188)	Chinese youth (<i>n</i> = 145)	Indian youth (<i>n</i> = 102)
I have been teased or insulted because of my ethnic background	20.0	50.0	54.6	50.0
I have been threatened or attacked because of my ethnic background	16.4	30.0	18.2	12.0
I do not feel accepted by New Zealanders	15.5	24.2	10.2	11.3
I feel like New Zealanders have something against me	12.6	21.1	15.2	12.3

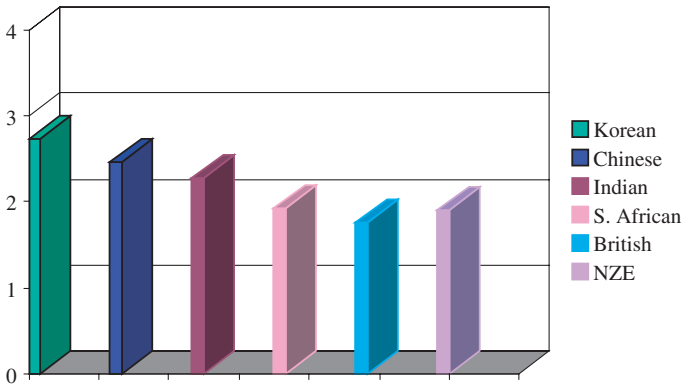


Figure 2: Perceived discrimination: immigrant and national youth.

Note: The scale is 1–5 where 5 represents greater perceived discrimination.

the breakup of responses, 20–55% of Asian immigrants have been teased or insulted because of their ethnic background and 12–30% have been threatened or attacked. Amongst the youth Korean immigrants reported more discrimination than the Chinese and Indians, but all Asian groups reported more discrimination than a comparative sample of New Zealand European youth (Ward, 2007a). They also reported more discrimination than British and South African immigrants (Fig. 2). The adolescent study further explored the most common sources of discrimination, revealing that peers were more frequently seen as responsible for unfair treatment than teachers or other adults.

Research has further shown that the influence of perceived discrimination on immigrants' adaptation is uniformly negative. Perceived discrimination is a strong predictor of symptoms of psychological distress, lower life satisfaction, and greater identity conflict. In adolescent immigrants, perceived discrimination is also associated with poorer school adjustment and more behavioral problems (Ward and Lin, 2005; Ward, 2007a; Lin, 2008). This is consistent with the international literature, which has linked discrimination to a range of negative outcomes, including increased stress, lowered self and group

esteem, impaired health, antisocial behaviors, such as drug use and delinquency, poorer work adjustment, and lower job satisfaction (Ward *et al.*, 2001).

SOCIAL COHESION AND BELONGING

“Belonging as a domain of social cohesion means having a sense of being part of the wider community; accepting people’s identity and individuality, while also recognizing that people can belong to and identify with many groups” (Ministry of Social Development, 2008, p. 34). Three factors have been identified as indicators of belonging: (1) attachment to identities; (2) satisfaction with life in New Zealand; and (3) intention to stay in New Zealand. Here, both attachment to identities and life satisfaction are examined in connection with the adult and adolescent immigrant studies.

The assessment of both ethnic and national identities was a key component of the 13-nation International Comparative Study of Ethno-cultural Youth. Figure 3 presents the mean identity scores for Chinese, Indian, and Korean youth, controlled for gender, age, and generational status. As can be seen from Fig. 3, ethnic and national identities are both strong although ethnic identity is consistently stronger. There are no significant differences in ethnic identity across the groups; however, Indian youth have the strongest national identity, followed by Chinese and Korean, with each of these significantly different from the other. The adult data follow a similar pattern. Ethnic identity is stronger than national identity although both are moderately strong.⁴ In the main, these findings are consistent with

⁴ Ethnic and national identity were assessed in the ICESY project by a modified version of the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure by Phinney (1992) and a related instrument by Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997). Both measures tap affirmation (pride) and belonging. All mean scores for national and ethnic identities were above the scalar median of 3 on a 5-point scale. For Asian adults, the Acculturation Index was used to measure co-national and host national identity in terms of similarity (Ward and Kennedy, 1994; Ward and Rana-Deuba, 1999). The instrument uses a 7-point scale and both ethnic ($M = 5.09$) and national ($M = 4.01$) identity were above the scalar median of 4.

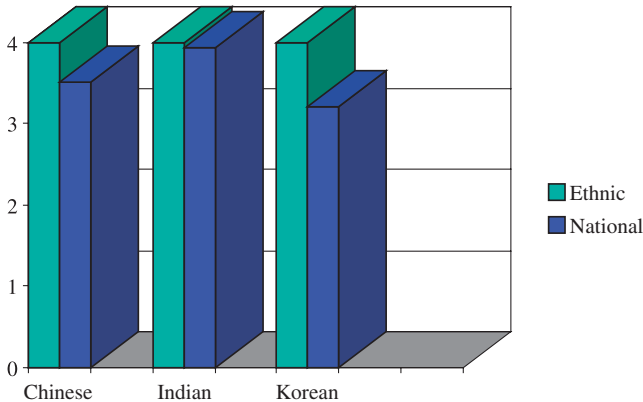


Figure 3: National and ethnic identity in Asian youth.

Note: The scale is 1–5 where 5 represents stronger identity.

the international literature on immigrant identities (Ward, 1999; Berry *et al.*, 2006).

In addition to the strength of ethnic and national identity, the relationship between them is an important indicator of belonging. This is known to vary across immigrant groups and national settings (Hutnik, 1991; Phinney *et al.*, 1997). Data from the ICSEY project revealed that the correlations between national and ethnic identity ranged from -0.28 in Germany to 0.32 in New Zealand.⁵ Furthermore, the relationship was generally positive in settler societies, such as Canada, the United States, and New Zealand, but negative in former colonial societies, such as France and the Netherlands, and in recent receiving societies, such as Norway and Sweden. This suggests that social, historical, and political context affects the options that immigrants have, permitting them to maintain multiple identities and integrate into the wider society in some instances and forcing them to choose between national and ethnic identities and, consequently, assimilation or separation in others. In Asian adolescents in New Zealand the two identities are positively related ($r = 0.11$, $p < 0.03$). This suggests that New Zealand's multicultural policies and

⁵ In Berry *et al.* (2006) only Chinese and Pacific data were included from New Zealand.

practices create an environment where integration may be achieved (see Berry, this volume).

Attachment to multiple identities is not only an important indicator of belonging, but it is also a significant predictor of immigrant adaptation and well-being. Strong ethnic and national identities predict greater life satisfaction in Asian youth. For adults, stronger national and ethnic identities predict better general health. In addition, a stronger national identity is linked to greater life satisfaction. These results are in accordance with the international literature that demonstrates: (1) a positive association between ethnic identity, self-esteem, and psychological well-being (Phinney *et al.*, 1997); (2) a relationship between national identity and immigrant adaptation (Shalom and Horenczyk, 2004); and (3) that the most adaptive outcomes for immigrants occur under conditions of strong ethnic *and* national identities (Phinney *et al.*, 2001).

Adolescent and adult studies also show that immigrants are relatively satisfied with life in New Zealand. The mean scores for Chinese (3.40), Indian (3.71), and Korean (3.44) youth are all above the “gold standard” ($M = 3.31$) suggested by Cummings (1995) for the measure of life satisfaction used in our research (Diener *et al.*, 1985). The mean for Asian adults (3.29) approximates the standard, and findings indicate that the majority agree that they are satisfied with their lives (54%) and that they have gotten what they want in life (59%). Overall, then, research with adolescents and adults indicate that Asian immigrants identify with both their ethnic culture and the national society and that they are generally satisfied with life in New Zealand.

BELONGINGNESS AND RECOGNITION: ACCULTURATION ATTITUDES AND EXPECTATIONS

A core component of psychological studies of immigration is research on acculturation attitudes and expectations. This arises from work by Berry (1974, 1980, 1984) who has identified two key questions arising from immigration and intercultural contact: (1) is it important for immigrants to maintain their original cultural heritage? and (2) is it important for them to engage in intercultural contact with other

groups, including members of the dominant society? If the answers to these questions are dichotomized as yes-no responses, four acculturation orientations (also called attitudes, strategies, preferences, orientations, modes, and expectations) can be identified. If both cultural maintenance and contact are important, an integrated orientation results; if neither is important, marginalization occurs. Assimilation arises when only contact is valued while separation results when only cultural maintenance is of concern (see Berry, this volume).

Berry's approach to acculturation incorporates both the perspective of immigrants (how they do and how they would like to manage issues of identity and engagement) and members of the receiving society (how they would like to see immigrants manage these issues). Consequently, the conceptual and empirical framework brings together aspects of both belonging (immigrant identities and participation) and recognition (acceptance of diversity and difference in the wider society).

While the perspectives of both immigrants and recipient nationals are important in understanding the acculturation process, the two viewpoints do not always converge (Bourhis *et al.*, 1997). There is widespread international evidence that immigrants prefer integration (Berry *et al.*, 1989; Ward, 1999; Ward and Leong, 2006), but the responses of recipient nationals are more variable. Germans prefer assimilation (Zick *et al.*, 2001); Israelis prefer integration (Horenczyk, 1996) and the Dutch are equally likely to endorse integration and assimilation (Van Oudenhoven *et al.*, 1998). The responses of majority members are also likely to vary depending on the characteristics of the immigrant group. Montreuil and Bourhis' (2001) Canadian research reported that integration was favored for immigrants from France but separation (segregation) was preferred for immigrants from Haiti. There is little research in New Zealand about acculturation attitudes towards specific groups, the exception being Leong's (2005) work on attitudes toward Chinese immigrants. Sampling Maori and New Zealand Europeans from the New Zealand electoral rolls, he found that integration was preferred (74%) with only small proportions endorsing assimilation (12%) and separation (10%). This is similar to the results of the national survey on general

Table 3: Adult Acculturation Attitudes and Preferences: % of Agreement.⁶

Item	Asian immigrants	Nationals: Actual	Nationals: Perceived
Integration	81	82	68
Separation	28	28	29
Assimilation	2	21	21

attitudes toward immigrants where integration was endorsed more strongly than separation or assimilation (Ward and Masgoret, 2008).

Of key interest, then, is the concordance or discordance between the acculturation preferences of migrants and the expectations that members of the receiving society have for them (Table 3). Our research shows that there is a convergence of attitudes in some domains, particularly in the strong preference for integration. The national survey on attitudes toward immigrants revealed that 82% of the respondents endorsed integration. This is not significantly different from the responses of Asian immigrants where 81% likewise agreed that immigrants should maintain their original culture while also adopting New Zealand culture. In addition, there was large agreement about separation: 28% of the both groups agreed that immigrants should maintain their original culture as long as they do not mix it with New Zealand culture. The major point of divergence, however, was found in attitudes toward assimilation. One in five New Zealanders (21%) endorsed the view that immigrants should give up their original culture for the sake of adopting New Zealand culture; however, only 2% of the Asian immigrants agreed with this proposition.

A similar pattern of results was found in the youth samples. There was strong convergence across New Zealand European, Maori, Chinese, Indian, and Korean youth that integration is the preferred strategy for immigrants. Only a minority agreed with the principles of separation and assimilation (Table 4). It does appear, however, that immigrant youth are less inclined toward separation and more tolerant of assimilation than their adult counterparts. There may be various

⁶ These responses are derived from single item measures; the survey tapped individualism and exclusion (Bourhis *et al.*, 1997) rather than marginalization (Berry, 1984).

Table 4: Youth Acculturation Attitudes and Preferences: % of Agreement.⁷

Item	NZE (<i>n</i> = 396)	Maori (<i>n</i> = 114)	Korean (<i>n</i> = 188)	Chinese (<i>n</i> = 145)	Indian (<i>n</i> = 102)
Integration	63.5	52.8	59.0	76.3	74.7
Separation	8.8	23.4	11.3	10.4	12.1
Assimilation	18.8	18.2	15.0	18.9	16.0
Marginalization	12.1	15.3	7.6	14.2	9.0

reasons for this difference. First, 17% of the Asian youth sample was New Zealand-born, and generational analyses have shown that later generations are more accepting of assimilation (Ward, 2007b; Ward and Viliamu, 2008). Second, age differences may contribute to the apparent discrepancies as developmental studies have shown that adolescents are more influenced by peer groups (Pugh and Hart, 1999). Consequently, a sense of belonging and the need to “fit in” may be heightened for young people, leading to a stronger inclination to be like members of the majority group. Third, the different ethnic composition of the two samples may affect the outcomes. Despite some variation, however, the convergence of results is an important finding. All groups prefer integration, and there is strong evidence that Asian immigrants who integrate experience better psychological and sociocultural adaptation, including greater life satisfaction (Ward, 2007a; Ward *et al.*, 2008).

The social psychology of intergroup relations tells us that it is not only important what groups actually think of each other, but also what each group thinks the other thinks of them. Therefore, it is also instructive to know if immigrants accurately perceive New Zealanders’ attitudes. The findings summarized in Table 3 demonstrate that immigrants have accurate perceptions of New Zealanders’ views with respect to assimilation and separation; however, fewer immigrants believe New Zealanders endorse integration (68%) than they actually do (82%). A number of authors have argued that discrepancies in

⁷ These responses are derived from single items pertaining to retention and adoption of heritage and national cultural traditions.

acculturation preferences can lead to negative outcomes for both immigrants and members of the receiving society (Bourhis *et al.*, 1997; Navas *et al.*, 2007). For example, research with ethnic repatriates in Finland, Germany, and Israel linked discordant acculturation preferences to greater perceived discrimination and increased psychological distress (Jasinskaja-Lahti *et al.*, 2003). Our research demonstrated that the greater the discrepancy between immigrants' endorsement of assimilation and their perception of New Zealanders' support for assimilation, the lower their life satisfaction ($r = -0.27$, $p < 0.001$; Ward *et al.*, 2008).

Finally, the research shows that despite integration emerging as both the ideal and most adaptive acculturation strategy, it is not uniformly achieved (Table 5). Assessing real and ideal acculturation strategies, findings revealed that 61% of the Asian immigrants could be classified as integrated, but that 78% perceived this as the ideal option. The gap between real and ideal was due largely to 28% of the immigrants being categorized as separated, but only 13% of them favoring this as the ideal strategy. International researchers have noted that separation is more likely to occur under conditions of greater perceived discrimination (Barry and Grilo, 2003; Ying *et al.*, 2000), and in this study, as in the ICSEY project (Berry *et al.*, 2006), separated immigrants perceived greater discrimination than those who were integrated. Discrimination as a causal factor in the choice and realization of acculturation preferences should be systematically investigated in future research.

Table 5: Asian Immigrants' Real and Ideal Acculturation Strategies.⁸

Item	Real	Ideal
Integration	61	78
Separation	28	13
Assimilation	5	7
Marginalization	5	3

⁸ Categories were derived from the co-national and host national subscales of the Acculturation Index.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summary, New Zealand-based research shows that attitudes toward immigrants are largely favorable and that there is widespread support of multiculturalism. Nevertheless, Asian immigrants are perceived less favorably than immigrants from some other regions, particularly those that share a common heritage, culture, and language. In addition, there is a gap between New Zealanders' multicultural principles and their everyday practices. Despite the value placed on cultural diversity, research has demonstrated that Asian immigrants are disadvantaged by discrimination, particularly with respect to entry into the workforce.

From the immigrant perspective, Asian newcomers retain a strong ethnic identity but are also oriented toward the larger national society. They express a strong preference for integration and strongly reject assimilation as an acculturation option. Despite this ideal, however, integration is not always achieved. Some immigrants remain separated and disengaged from the larger society, possibly due to the pressures of discrimination.

The attitudes and preferences of Asian immigrants and recipient nationals in New Zealand converge to a large extent, but this is not always recognized. Both prefer integration, where immigrants retain their traditional culture and participate in the wider society, and the extent of this preference is virtually identical across the two groups. Unfortunately, Asian immigrants perceive that New Zealanders are less supportive of integration than is actually the case. Concordance likewise occurs for separation; this is supported only by a minority in both groups, and New Zealanders' attitudes in this domain are accurately perceived by immigrants. The major point of divergence is in the area of assimilation, which is endorsed more frequently by New Zealanders and recognized as such by Asian immigrants. Although less than a quarter of New Zealanders agree with the principles of assimilation, it appears that assimilationist pressures have negative psychological consequences for immigrants.

Social cohesion is a broad concept and is not bound by ethnic and cultural parameters. Nevertheless, it is important to consider social

cohesion in relation to immigration and settlement outcomes. If social cohesion can be achieved and maintained, New Zealand will have a competitive edge in attracting and retaining skilled immigrants and will benefit from their economic, social, and cultural contributions. If not, the country will lose valuable talent or face the challenge of dealing with the consequences of social inequality and impediments to integration — economic hardship, social difficulties, psychological distress, health problems, and other negative outcomes (Trlin *et al.*, 1999; Aye and Guerin, 2001; Ho, 2001; Ip, 2003).

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