ACCULTURATION AND INTERCULTURAL PERCEPTIONS:

What I think, what you think, what I think you think and why it’s all important

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RESEARCH BACKGROUND

• Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis et al., 1997)

• Positive relations occur when migrant and host attitudes are concordant

• Discordant attitudes result in problematic and conflictual intercultural relations
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

• What acculturation orientations are favoured by migrants?
• What acculturation orientations are favoured by hosts?
• Do migrants have accurate perceptions of hosts’ acculturation attitudes?
• Are these acculturation attitudes and perceptions related to intercultural relations and migrants’ adaptation?
RESEARCH SETTING: NEW ZEALAND

• Immigrant country: 1 in 5 are overseas born

• Ethnic and cultural diversity

• Multicultural policies and multicultural ideology
MEASURES

• Acculturation Attitudes
  – Integration
  – Assimilation
  – Separation
  – Exclusion
  – Individualism
• Perceived discrimination ($\alpha = .87$)
• Adaptation
  – Psychological (Life Satisfaction, $\alpha = .86$)
  – Sociocultural (Sociocultural adaptation scale, $\alpha = .89$)
ACCULTURATION ATTITUDES

**Assimilation:** Immigrants should give up their culture for the sake of adopting NZ culture.

**Separation:** Immigrants should maintain their original culture as long as they do not mix it with NZ culture.

**Integration:** Immigrants should maintain their original culture while also adopting NZ culture.
ACCULTURATION ATTITUDES

**Individualism:** Whether immigrants maintain their original culture or adopt NZ culture makes no difference because each person is free to adopt the culture of his/her choice.

**Exclusion:** It doesn’t matter which culture immigrants adopt because in any case there should be less immigration to this country.
ASIAN MIGRANT SAMPLE
(n = 221)

- 98 males (45%) and 122 females (55%)
- Age: 15-86 years ($M = 38.5$, $SD = 12.5$)
- From 14 countries
- 67% South Asian (e.g., India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)
  33% Other Asian (e.g., Taiwan, Indonesia, Japan)
- First generation
- 46% NZ citizens
- English as second language- 89%
- ELP: 4.14 on 5-point scale
- 80% tertiary education
NATIONAL SAMPLE
(n = 2020)

- 877 males (43%) and 1143 females (57%)
- 70% NZ European, 5% Maori, 4% Asian, 21% Other
- 76% NZ-born
- 88% NZ citizens
- 69% employed
- 60% post-secondary and 25% tertiary education

Ward & Masgoret (2008)
KEY FINDINGS
WHAT I THINK AND
WHAT YOU THINK
ACCULTURATION ATTITUDES

\[ F_{\text{migrants}} (4, 856) = 254.14, p < .001 \]
\[ F_{\text{RNZ}} (4, 8300) = 928.54, p < .001 \]
WHAT YOU THINK AND
WHAT I THINK YOU THINK
$F_{\text{perceived NZ}} (4, 844) = 50.13, p < .001$
WHAT I THINK AND
WHAT I THINK YOU THINK
AND WHY IT MAY BE IMPORTANT
### CORRELATIONS: DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN OWN AND PERCEIVED NZ ACCULTURATION ATTITUDES

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<td>4. Integration</td>
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<td>5. Exclusion</td>
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*p < .05, **p < .01
### CORRELATIONS WITH PERCEIVED NZ ACCULTURATION ATTITUDES

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* *p< .001
SUMMARY

• While there are significant differences between the strength of endorsement of acculturation attitudes between migrants and hosts, there is considerable convergence in their preferences.

• Integration is most preferred and assimilation least preferred by both groups.
SUMMARY

• Immigrants have accurate perceptions of the rank ordering of hosts’ preferences
• Discrepancies between own and perceived hosts’ acculturation attitudes (assimilation, integration and exclusion) are associated with perceived discrimination
• Perceptions of hosts attitudes (integration and assimilation) relate to migrant adaptation
LIMITATIONS, CHALLENGES, ISSUES

• Use of difference scores
• Range and variance of socio-cultural adaptation scores
• Multi-cultural context and convergence of acculturation attitudes
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