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**Psycho-social correlates of employment amongst skilled newcomers to  
New Zealand**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
of  
Masters of Arts  
In  
Psychology  
At Massey University, Albany  
New Zealand.**

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2004**

## **Abstract**

This socially relevant research focused on immigrants and refugees who have arrived in New Zealand in the last five years and investigated the affect, behaviours and cognitions associated with trying to find work that matched their qualifications. While there has been a lot of research on immigrants and refugees from various perspectives, not much has focused specifically on the psycho-social correlates of under-employment that skilled newcomers to New Zealand face, in trying to find work that matches their existing qualifications. This research investigated how a) behaviours used pre-interview, b) behaviours used at interview, c) cognitive flexibility, d) acculturation style adopted by the newcomer to New Zealand, e) acculturation 'fit' between the acculturation styles of the newcomer and the employment community predicted (i) how close the newcomer came to finding a job that matched their qualifications and subsequent (ii) employment related emotional well-being. A sample of 70 newcomers (66% migrants, 17% refugees) filled in a questionnaire on these issues. Pre-interview behaviours, "here's what I can do for you" behaviours at interviews, cognitive flexibility and adapting to New Zealand culture all significantly predict how close the newcomer will come to finding jobs that match their qualifications and this in turn predicts employment related emotional well-being. Research of this kind may be used eventually to inform immigration policy and, more importantly, to assist immigrants with finding employment that matches their qualifications.

## Acknowledgements

Many people have helped to bring this project and research to completion. Firstly, many thanks to Stuart Carr, who ably supervised this project and gave continued direction and encouragement to me during the process. To Richard Fletcher who willingly gave his time to help me negotiate the mazes of structural equation modelling, path analysis and factor analysis. To Steve Atkins for his modification of the model and the questionnaire and continued support. To Don Munro whose significant input into the questionnaire made the resulting questionnaire a more efficient instrument.

My research was cleared by the Massey University Regional Human Ethics Committee, Albany Campus Protocol MUAHEC 02/052, which gave permission for this study to be conducted and also for Massey University students to be included in the sample.

To all the participants who shared their stories with me during the course of this research, I wish you well in finding jobs, and hope my research has helped you in your quest to find work.

Many thanks to Anne and Jenni who helped in the rating of the critical incident data.

Finally to Margi, Maysoon, Tilly and Tuxedo whose support and encouragement have made such a difference and have put up with Karen in strange moods! Thank you so much.

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