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A Grounded Theory of Korean Immigrants' Experiences of Re-Establishing Everyday Activities in New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

This study explored how immigrants locate themselves in a new culture through analyzing 25 Korean immigrants' everyday activities in New Zealand. The findings suggest that they opted to either behave in Korean ways or to take up behaviors reflective of the receiving society, based on their level of control over activities disrupted by immigration. The findings supplement the concept of acculturation, explaining how 21st-century immigrants who retain transnational status engage in the acculturation process within a globalized context.

Immigration is the most noticeable aspect of social mobility (McKinnon, 1996), as millions of people cross international borders each year. By the 2010s, immigrants comprised 11% of the French population, 12% of the German population, 15.9% of the Swedish population, 20% of the Canadian population, and 25% of the New Zealand population; and their numbers are expected to keep rising (United Nations, 2013). This demographic shift impacts the livelihoods of the whole population in those countries, with the success of immigrants becoming vital to societal harmony. Many countries face the challenge of finding ways of helping immigrant populations to live together with local people and negotiate multiple identities.

That concern coexists with widely replicated findings that immigrant populations are exposed to acculturative stresses and social isolation (Deutscher, 2004), which has been found to be a hindrance in building an inclusive society. Building an inclusive society with immigrant populations is a mutual process (Berry, 2001); that is to say, alongside the individual immigrant's effort to make the host society their home, it is equally important that the receiving society ensures their right to full participation within that society (Wilson-Forsberg, 2015).

This can be possible if all citizens understand and interact with each other regardless of their ethnic origin and immigrant status. To that end, members of

the receiving society should better acknowledge immigrants' experiences whilst they encounter the specific circumstances of a new country.

This article begins by examining the acculturation model, which is the dominant concept in understanding immigrants' experiences, followed by highlighting its shortcomings within the current globalized context. Next, the study's theoretical grounding in an occupational perspective is discussed, with a belief that this perspective is useful in understanding immigrants' experiences within a globalized context. The methodology and methods with which data were gathered and analyzed are then described, before presenting the study findings, "A process of regaining control."

Acculturation model

In an attempt to understand immigrants' experiences, the concept of acculturation has undoubtedly become a core construct in immigration studies (Trimble, 2002). Given that immigration by definition involves people leaving one social unit and entering another, Berry (2001) described acculturation as a process of adaptation that entails contact between two cultural groups.

In line with this idea, acculturation is considered to be a selective process available to immigrants while they seek long-term resettlement in which they employ one of four possible strategies—namely, assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration (Berry, 1994)—to adapt to new value systems and transform personality traits. Each strategy in this fourfold preference explains the succession of steps by which individuals become part of a new culture whilst maintaining their cultural identity (Berry, 1997).

As such, the focus of acculturation is on how individuals who have grown up in one cultural context manage to adapt to new contexts through interaction with members of the receiving culture—that is to say, how the acculturating individual answers questions including cultural maintenance and contact and participation (Berry, 1994). However, despite the inevitable variations in acculturation preference, depending on a variety of factors (Wilson-Forsberg, 2015), acculturation is often thought to be a unidirectional course of cultural change that eventually results in full assimilation (Trimble, 2002). For example, Deutscher (2004) attested, "Assimilation is inevitable when dominant and minority groups cohabit" (p. 450).

As a result, the term *assimilation* largely dominates studies of acculturating individuals, "whereby immigrants change their behavior and attitudes toward those of the host society" (Rogler, Cortes, & Malgady, 1991, p. 585). Accordingly, the frequent practice is for acculturation to be treated as a set of deviant variations from one's own form of cultural life, attending to the psychological changes of the acculturating individuals and its resultant acculturative stresses including anxiety, depression, and identity confusion (Berry, 1994, 1997, 2001).

The authors argue that in today's globalized world it is problematic to view immigrants as objects who will eventually conform to the behavioral standards of

the host society. In this increasingly borderless world, immigration is no longer a permanent one-way movement (Ho, 2015) and as a result, "assimilation may never occur" (Trimble, 2002, p. 7). Instead, contemporary immigrants deliberately choose a strategy of transnational mobility to continue their lives. They maintain a strong attachment to their homeland regardless of the length of their stay in a new country, living "in a state of ambivalence both 'here' and 'there'" (Wilson-Forsberg, 2015, p. 485). This leads to the fact that immigrants' experiences became more multifaceted and concurrently cannot be explained by a single theory.

In response to this, the authors of this paper suggest a new analytic lens, the occupational perspective, to investigate the possibilities available to individual immigrants whilst they settle in a new country. Adopting an occupational perspective that attends to people's activities has the potential to provide insight into the acculturation process by revealing how immigrants reconfigure their everyday activities to adapt to socioenvironmental changes.

Adopting an occupational perspective on immigration studies

In this theoretical framework, occupation is not narrowly interpreted as employment; rather it encapsulates "what people do minute by minute, hour by hour, … year by year" (Wilcock, 2001, p. 412). Accordingly, occupation embraces all activities that people do on their own or collectively (Njelesani, Tang, Jonsson, & Polatajko, 2014). In other words, occupation in this study includes all activities that people perform on a daily basis to sustain their own lives and to develop communities.

The rationale for using an occupational perspective in immigration studies is that immigration is a process of adaptation (Berry, 2001), so it is necessary to question what these adaptational tasks are in order to understand immigrants' experiences. A critical component is the everyday activities that immigrants engage in (Nayar, Hocking, & Giddings, 2012), given that immigrants negotiate integration through participation in those activities (Suto, 2013). This assumption justifies the selection of an occupational perspective, defined as "a way of thinking about human doing" (Njelesani et al., 2014, p. 233), to understand how immigrants adapt to a new country.

That perspective is endorsed by occupational science, which is grounded in the notion that people are most true to their humanity when they engage in activities (Yerxa, Clark, Jackson, Pierce, & Zemke, 1990). Based on this belief, occupational scientists study the form, function, and meaning of activities, which can be grouped into three domains: self-care, productivity, and leisure (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015).

Activities in self-care encompass an array of things that people do, from personal care to community living. It can be any activity necessary for the maintenance of self within the environment, such as preparing meals, dressing, banking, and even shopping—activities related to looking after oneself (Wilcock & Hocking,

2015). Given that immigrants adjust their behavioral repertoire to be more appropriate to their new setting (Rogler et al., 1991), it is anticipated that they modify self-care activities, to secure a place for themselves.

Activities in productivity relate to things that are a generative and integrative force in people's lives, with the way that people express themselves being tied to what they do for a living (Whiteford, 2010). Activities in this area are pivotal means of becoming a part of society by improving memberships (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015). Of particular note, activity in productivity is known as "the main gateway into a new society" (Wilson-Forsberg, 2015, p. 469), assisting immigrants in learning new cultural norms and establishing networks in the receiving society. Conversely, the inability to find a job can result in social isolation (Ho, 2015).

Activities in leisure include those clearly distinguished by an absence of constraint. Participation in leisure activities is a key component of people's occupational repertoire as it often provides a suspension of reality, leading to increased life satisfaction (Primeau, 2003). With respect to immigrants' lives, leisure participation is crucial for easing the burden of their stressful daily lives and enables them to eventually feel comfortable in their lifestyles whilst improving social relationships (Suto, 2013).

Furthermore, it is assumed that through engaging in activities in the self-care, productivity, and leisure domains, people determine their being, "their essential nature" (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015, p. 180). The activities that people engage in on a daily basis greatly define who they are; that is to say, people's sense of self is generated from their history of occupational participation (Yerxa et al., 1990). Their respective experiences of everyday activities differentiate people from one another and later determine their becoming, as "it is through doing that people become what they have the potential to be" (Wilcock, 2001, p. 413).

People perform activities for survival, and as such being occupied connects them to social and cultural environments and determines who they are. This knowledge makes it possible to hypothesize that everyday activities are mediating devices with which people adapt to their environments (Whiteford, 2010), leading to the conclusion that using activity as a unit of analysis can provide insights into the process of immigration by examining what immigrants actually do to adapt to a new culture.

Based on the aforementioned review, the occupational perspective provides the theoretical underpinnings of this study, and with this perspective, this study examines how South Korean immigrants (hereafter Korean) re-establish everyday activities and assign meanings to their experiences in a New Zealand context.

Korean immigrants in New Zealand

The 2013 Census revealed that approximately 30,200 Koreans resided in New Zealand. They were 0.6% of the total population of 4,471,000 and the fourth largest Asian ethnic group in New Zealand society (Statistics New Zealand (SNZ), 2013).

Their numbers had rapidly increased over the previous three decades, after the New Zealand government opened the door to people from Asian countries in the late 1980s (McKinnon, 1996).

By 2013, Korean numbers were almost 70 times larger than they had been in 1986 when only about 500 Koreans lived throughout New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). These statistics explain the fact that 89% of Koreans are first-generation immigrants who are monolingual (Ho, 2015), have a strong attachment to their own culture (Chang, Morris, & Vokes, 2006), and retain a spectator's status in the host community (Epstein, 2006).

Several scholars have explored issues in relation to Koreans' employment, cultural and psychological challenges, and their crises of identity in the New Zealand context (Chang et al., 2006; Epstein, 2006; Ho, 2015; McKinnon, 1996). Their studies revealed that many Koreans experienced a degree of acculturative stress, ranging from language barriers to disrupted support networks (Chang et al., 2006), compounded by the unwelcoming attitude of the receiving society (McKinnon, 1996). Many of them were un/underemployed, partly because of a lack of recognition of foreign credentials and experiences (Ho, 2015), and this further restrained the Korean immigrants' participation in society and increased the risk of depression (Epstein, 2006).

However, there is a paucity of literature specifically addressing the everyday activities in which Koreans engage to adapt to New Zealand society and what meaning they attach to those activities. The aim of this study was to shed light on how Koreans reconstruct their lives through participating in activities in the new country.

Method

The data for this study were collected by employing grounded theory. A grounded theory methodology assumes that people's actions are determined by their interpretation of situations, positioning people as actor and self-director (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This is congruent with the occupational perspective in that people have an innate drive to decide their actions through their internal cognition (Yerxa et al., 1990). Accordingly, the analytic focus of this study was the action carried out by participants based on their interpretation of situations.

In particular, this study utilized Straussian grounded theory, which posits that people are social creatures (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Straussian grounded theorists attest that people's actions are always interwoven with socioenvironmental structures as the wide range of contextual conditions determine their action/interaction (Corbin, 2009); thus it is advised that minimizing structural conditions may short-circuit the full explanation of the phenomenon (Strauss, 1987). By analyzing actions within contexts, the embodied nature of performing the activities that make up immigrants' everyday lives can be better understood.

In relation to this, the first author, as a social worker, investigated the societal context in which participants performed activities, whilst the second author, who has an occupational science background, examined the function of activities, to explore how participants engaged in activities and what meaning they attached to those activities in the new country. Ethical approval was granted by Auckland University of Technology Ethics Commitee in 2011.

Participants

From July 2011 to February 2013, 25 Koreans were recruited. All of them had immigrated to New Zealand through a point-based system, which required a high level of work experience and qualifications. They lived in one of three cities within the North Island of New Zealand; a metropolitan city (Auckland), a provincial city with a developing ethnic community (Hamilton), and a provincial city with a small ethnic population (Rotorua). It was anticipated that the variation in conditions of these three cities would maximize the opportunity to hear participants' experiences in the New Zealand context.

To qualify for the study, participants had to meet the inclusion criteria of having immigrated to New Zealand after 2000, being age 30 years or over, and having lived in New Zealand for at least 2 years. The study excluded people under the age of 30, assuming that they were minors or had accompanied family members when they came to New Zealand. Participants' ages ranged from 32 to 58 years; 10 participants

Table 1. Participants' Characteristics

Pseudonyms	Gender	Age	No. of Children	Year of Arrival
Kevin	Male	47	2	2001
Jenny	Female	44	2	2001
Tom	Male	42	1	2004
Sue	Female	43	1	2004
Joy	Female	55	2	2000
Mike	Male	40	2	2000
Aaron	Male	41	2	2002
Lucia	Female	32	1	2010
Bob	Male	34	1	2006
Judy	Female	45	0	2008
Kerry	Female	38	2	2003
Anne	Female	38	2	2008
Jill	Female	50	3	2003
Simon	Male	58	0	2007
Antony	Male	57	2	2002
Carl	Male	42	2	2006
Asma	Female	44	2	2000
Ruth	Female	44	2	2006
Marie	Female	40	2	2002
Gary	Male	49	2	2002
Donna	Female	40	2	2000
Sandra	Female	42	2	2006
Hanna	Female	37	2	2002
Clara	Female	57	0	2004
Jacob	Male	42	2	2001

were male. Their demographic characteristics are explicated in Table 1. Interviews were conducted in Korean by the first author, whose first language is Korean.

Initially, two male and two female participants were recruited using purposive sampling, whereby the first author used expertise in selecting participants who may represent Koreans' characteristics in New Zealand. Following analysis of their interviews, the individuals to be recruited in the next interview were based on theoretical relevance (Corbin, 2009).

From the first day of data gathering, the first author analyzed the collected data and gradually developed concepts, with questions about those concepts determining the next round of data collection; in other words, recruiting participants in this study was responsive to data analysis. This circular process of data gathering and analysis continued until theoretical saturation was reached, with all major concepts well defined and explained (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

Semistructured interviews were the main source of data, probing for more information and clarification of answers. The first author used indicative questions to set the direction of the interview such as, "Can you tell me about your daily activities?' In addition, open-ended questions were used to inspire participants to tell their story as they saw it, experienced it, and interpreted it. Each interview lasted 60 to 90 minutes, was digitally audio-taped and translated verbatim. These written texts were used for analysis.

Given that a range of data can yield different views from which to understand the studied world (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), the first author conducted participant observations, memoirs, and memoing to obtain different viewpoints. Five participant observations, a total of 7 hours, were conducted at both the individual and community level, locating the first author right where the action actually occurred, whilst memoirs were helpful in gaining an insider's impression. Grounded theory analysis is a thinking process (Strauss, 1987) during which researchers frequently stop coding and write a memo of their ideas, then, return to the field to gather more data based on their memos (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In this way, ideas that arise as a result of the analytic process are grounded in the data (Stanley & Cheek, 2003). Memoing was used in this study to preserve emerging ideas and hypotheses about the data as the analysis proceeded.

Analysis

Data analysis, which was initially undertaken in Korean (van Nes, Abma, Jonsson, & Deeg, 2010), followed Corbin and Strauss's (2008) three phases of coding—open-coding, axial-coding, and selective-coding—where data were fractured and concepts were developed and then integrated to form a theory. In open-coding, the interview transcripts were examined line by line and then sentence by sentence, to develop initial codes, followed by constant comparison of similarities and differences. These codes described participants' action/interaction within structural conditions explaining the how and why regarding which participants interpret and handle situations (Corbin &

Strauss, 2008). Through this coding process, the authors obtained lists of categories that later provided the basis for more abstract interpretations of data.

Axial-coding happened by comparing categories derived from open-coding. As relationships between categories were recognized, some categories were subsumed under more abstract categories. At this phase of coding, the analytic tool of "the conditional/consequential matrix" was used to understand the circumstances that surround events and discover influential relationships among the categories. This is part of a process to delineate concepts, such as when, where, why, and how those concepts are likely to occur (Corbin, 2009).

Selective-coding was the final phase, in which the authors confirmed a core category that pulled together all other categories developed in axial-coding. Using the strategy of writing a storyline, all hypotheses were continuously checked and modified against incoming data as necessary to verify the core category. This process continued until the core category was able to tell an analytic story that had coherence by linking all categories meaningfully together (Strauss, 1987).

Throughout this three-phase coding process, which involved the conceptual abstraction of data and its reintegration as theory, frequent reference back to the Korean data was used as a conscious strategy to guard against distortion of meanings arising from discussing the codes and categories in English (van Nes et al., 2010). The resultant theory of "a process of regaining control" explains much of the variation in the data and is sufficiently abstract to include all the significant categories. Illustrative participant quotes were translated into English by a professional translator for write up and checked using a process of back translation.

Trustworthiness of the study

To ensure that the analysis represent participants' reality fairly, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria were used; *credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability*. Credibility was attained using three types of strategies including prolonged engagement, member checking, and peer debriefing; thus, participants' realities are accurately seen in the interpretations brought forth by the researcher. To increase transferability, multiple sources of data were collected and sufficient details of structural contexts were explored, leading to the findings of the study justifiably being applied to other settings. Through attending a grounded theory group at Auckland University of Technology, experienced grounded theorists regularly checked whether the first author's inferences were consistent in various situations. This collaborative work helped to achieve dependability, in which changing conditions could be discerned and understanding of the setting could be continually refined.

To increase confirmability, on-going analysis was discussed by the authors to ensure that the first author's interpretation was logical. Participants were also

contacted to verify rendering of the study findings, whilst a self-reflexive stance was continuously applied, resulting in an accurate reflection of the participants' reality.

Findings of the study

The analysis of participants' stories has revealed that despite their different circumstances, participants experienced similar levels of acculturative stress, associated with disrupted support networks, insufficient preparation, language barriers, difficulty with securing a job, and an unwelcoming social reception. This experience led to participants confronting circumstances that made realizing the anticipated benefits of immigration unforeseeable.

Having been uprooted from their familiar routines, participants had to reconfigure their everyday activities to continue their lives by retaining their previous skills or acquiring new skills to perform activities. They navigated within the two world perspectives to regain control over their disrupted activities, entitled "a process of regaining control." This process proceeds in a circular fashion in different structural contexts until participants arrive at the point where they can function autonomously again.

"A process of regaining control" has relevance for and is applicable to all participants' stories in a general sense. It is a basic social process in which participants engage over time, depicting their ongoing actions in response to the situations in a new country. Pseudonyms were used to protect the participants' identity.

Salient conditions

A number of conditions at the micro- and macro- levels served to influence the way in which participants engaged in a process of regaining control. Seven conditions appeared significant including "minimum expectations for a new life," "sugar coated world," "language barriers," "ethnocentric attitude," "existing networks," "Korean enclave," and "Confucianism." Despite their different settlement paths, participants' journeys of regaining control over their lives seemed to be exacerbated or impeded by these prominent conditions. In other words, the process of regaining control not only was determined by the participants' capacity to manage situations but also intensely influenced according to destination characteristics.

The first condition that impacted their settlement paths was "minimum expectations for a new life." Before coming to New Zealand, many participants reported that they lived in drudgery, despite being well qualified and having high-level jobs that were recognized in New Zealand's points-based immigration system. According to Tom, "*My life was repetitive … Every-day was the same and it was monotonous.*" Other participants reported being fed up with excessive working hours. Mike reported, "*You have to be loyal to work … There was no personal life.*" These factors led participants to chose immigration due to a strong desire to have a less stressful lifestyle. "Minimum expectations for a new life" encapsulated participants'

expectation such as having a "leisurely lifestyle," "more time with family," and "less working hours." "*My godfather suggested … New Zealand is just a small country I can live quietly and less stressfully*" (Kevin).

While participants dreamed of a high quality of life, the positive reputation of New Zealand seemed to be attractive. Participants recalled that New Zealand was often portrayed as a promising country. Gary reported being "*advised by immigration advisors of a lot of opportunities here, mainly successful and optimistic*" and according to Jenny, "*All information about New Zealand included images as a good country where people can live peacefully and safely.*" The concept of a "sugar coated world" contributed to participants' regarding New Zealand as a country wherein a good quality of life would be easily obtained, with the prospect of the good education that the country offered their off-spring. According to Jill, "*we considered our children's education and quality of lifestyle and concluded that New Zealand is the best place to live for us.*"

As a result of the sugar coated portrayal of New Zealand as pure, safe, and peaceful, participants typically left their home country with a great sense of optimism whilst lacking plans about how they would live in New Zealand: "*I came here without any specific plan*" (Kevin). In some cases, it involved just a few months of planning; Anne reported, "*We made the decision to immigrate in May and arrived in New Zealand in November.*" As a consequence, some participants were insufficiently informed prior to immigration to New Zealand; according to one participant, "*I didn't even know where New Zealand was … I searched for the necessary information for 2 weeks before I came here.*"

It is, therefore, logical that participants were in a vulnerable position when it came to behavior reflective of New Zealand society. What participants of this study did not consider seriously was that immigration involved a complicated process of adjustment to a new culture, influenced by a number of interrelated factors such as language, support networks, and the nature of the social reception. The reality participants encountered was very different from their optimistic expectations: "*Everything was different from what I had expected. I didn't know where to start*" (Ruth).

The "language barrier" was pointed out as the first major challenge faced by participants in New Zealand. Participants experienced constraints concerning expressing themselves ("*I couldn't complain … because I couldn't speak English*" [Sue]); performing social roles: ("*Some Korean children didn't go to parent teacher interviews as their school didn't ask their parents to come due to language barriers*" [Lucia]), looking for a job ("*Who would hire me unless I spoke English like native speakers*" [Bob]). Participants' social isolation also increased as relations with neighbors were often restrained. According to Simon, "*because of language barriers, I couldn't have any opportunity to meet local people.*"

"Ethnocentric attitude" referred to New Zealanders' prejudiced attitudes toward different cultures, often misunderstanding how ethnic people might behave based on assumptions derived from their own perceptions. There was less tolerance and understanding toward different cultures in New Zealand, limiting participants' control over many aspects of their lives such as preparing meals. Carl reported,

"My children don't take Korean food to school for lunch … They said their friends don't like it because it is smelly." Jenny also voiced how her parenting skills were misjudged by the school.

> The teacher told my daughter that she did not understand me. She said to my daughter "I don't understand your mum." She asked my daughter "Are all Asian mums like your mum?" She told my daughter that it is ok to have a boyfriend here. She said that "Your mum was wrong, your mum needs to change." (Jenny)

This ideology, in many circumstances, has been used as a justification for New Zealanders' underestimating participants' foreign credentials and experiences. In many cases, participants' previous skills were not transferable and, thus, some participants had to retrain themselves (*"My nursing certificate wasn't recognized in New Zealand. Here, I have to prepare for the IELTS score or study again"* [Kerry]) or had to devalue their qualification (*"I am a care-giver. I know it's much lower compared to my nursing qualification. But my nursing qualification wasn't recognised here"* [Judy]).

The reality that participants encountered in New Zealand was that they had to reconfigure everyday activities with language barriers whilst facing local people's ethnocentric attitudes, compounded by their lack of preparation for transition. In this sense, having "existing networks," including family and friends who were already residing in New Zealand, was vital when participants sought help in gaining familiarity with activities reflective of New Zealand society. These connections eased participants' acculturative stresses as participants could rely on their mutual and constant assistance (*"During those early days, I rang my friend whenever I was in trouble"* [Asma]).

The "Korean enclave" was a place where the participants' Korean-ness was visible and audible. In this study, participants revealed that they strongly maintained nostalgic notions of culture, particularly at the beginning of their settlement and, as a result, primarily associated with ethnic resources. By visiting the Korean enclave, participants were able to continue activities with their previous knowledge (*"I used my previous knowledge when I went shopping … I only bought products that I already knew in Korea"* [Kerry]).

For many participants, ethnic attachment was a starting point for continuing their lives and later helped them to find alternative ways of engaging in activities reflective of New Zealand society (*"Many community programmes were available at Korean churches such as free English classes or other settlement support"* [Joy]). By interacting with the "Korean enclave," participants were in a better position to make their own choices in an unfamiliar environment (*"Korean church is the place to get useful information such as where I can apply for a job or where I can find a good school for my children"* [Carl]).

"Confucianism" explained participants' belief in the centrality of family. This cultural value seemed to prioritize many participants' everyday activities (*"Men's jobs are typically making money for their family and women's jobs are looking after*

the family" [Donna]), with the result that an overall sense of frustration often ensued in relation to fulfilling their culturally shaped roles. Because of the internal/external conditions noted above, according to Aaron, "*I did whatever I could to make money such as delivery or washing dishes because I had to support my family.*" This situation was accompanied by devaluation of self and feelings of regret ("*I came here for a better lifestyle, but the reality is that I have to endure a lower quality of life*" [Judy]). The prospect of returning to their life's previous path seemed to be the only solution ("*We planned to go back to Korea because many things differed from what we imagined*" [Sue]).

In the meantime, because of the philosophies of "Confucianism," many participants decided to stay in New Zealand although they struggled with the transition ("*The reason we decide to stay was because of my son … He really loves New Zealand*" [Anne]). A feeling of sacrifice was evident because participants subordinated their individual needs to the interests of their children's well-being. Tom reported,"*I like to support my son in whatever he wants to do. I believe that is our duty as parents.*"

These seven prominent conditions were almost always connected to each other, as one condition often led to another, and then to another, like links in a chain. Rather than directly relating to participants' situations, these micro- and macro-conditions formed the structural contexts of "enacting Korean ways" and "enacting New Zealand ways" in which participants had to navigate the two world perspectives to retain control over their lives. The former referred to a context in which participants behaved in Korean ways, whereas the latter was defined as an attitude of learning the new world perspective in relation to their involvement in the host community.

The core process: A process of regaining control

A process of "regaining control" represented the participants' ongoing actions to find the best way to perform activities in response to situations in a new country. In this process, participants brought together all available elements of being Korean and being a resident in New Zealand, leading to the fact that they had to achieve a balance between two cultures, Korean and New Zealand, to continue their lives in the domestic and societal spheres.

Behaving in Korean ways

Immigrating from one culture to another presented an immediate challenge to participants' cultural traditions. Challenges occurred on a daily basis in both home and community. Participants often found engaging in activities, which were critical to continue life, was beyond their control as they were unable to figure out the appropriateness of specific activities within particular settings in New Zealand ("*When I turned the TV on, I didn't understand a single word that people said on the programmes*" [Clara]). This has resulted in some participants consciously

deciding to behave in Korean ways (*"I mostly stayed home, watching Korean TV and reading Korean books"* [Hanna]).

In this respect, the old world perspective dominated their sense of internal and external continuity, strongly influencing the way in which they performed every-day activities. For example, to retain internal continuity, participants employed their familiar skills such as preserving Korean foods, watching Korean TV programs, and listening to Korean music whilst frequently associating with conationals to maintain external continuity. (*"I often met up with other Koreans to hangout … I also watched a lot of Korean videos at home"* [Sue]).

For participants who did not possess sufficient local knowledge and skills, behaving in Korean ways seemed to be the only option to continue a life in a new country. For example, for participants with language barriers, seeking a job within the Korean community was crucial (*"I had worked for a Korean company for about 3 years"* [Jacob]). Parents remained connected with their own ethnic group to deal with problems with their children's school (*"When I didn't understand the school letters, I often knocked on other Koreans' doors"* [Ant]).

In many cases, however, participants reported that they used a strategy of behaving in Korean ways as a stepping stone to becoming familiar with their new surroundings (*"I learnt how to make Kimchi here from one of our Korean neighbors … They gave me a lot of useful information"* [Marie]). This experience helped some participants to gradually gain mastery in their new community. As such, behaving in Korean ways was a starting point for many participants in learning how to be reflective of New Zealand society (*"One of my Korean friends suggested this course would promise a job. That was why I enrolled in this course for the future job"* [Aaron]).

In the meantime, behaving in Korean ways also meant that participants firmly retained their traditional ties. Some participants preferred to preserve their traditions despite their lengthy stay in New Zealand (*"I am a Korean father to my daughters … I don't need to change this"* [Jacob]), while adhering to the traditional diet (*"I have Korean style dishes every day"* [Carl]) and interacting only with other Koreans (*"I met a lot of other Koreans. We drank, played golf and went fishing together"* [Ant]). This lifestyle partly contributed to some of the participants having "bystander attitudes" in New Zealand (*"I am a visitor here"* [Aaron]) and wanting to pass on Korean-ness to their children (*"Although my children live here, they are Korean … They have to remember that"* [Marie]).

Being a resident in New Zealand

As time went by, some participants approached the host society and as a result, they were exposed to New Zealand norms and values. In this study, participants identified the host society as a destination at which they desired to arrive, endeavoring to commit to a process of regaining control. It was a place where they had to share a populated environment with local people and hoped to be involved with them and eventually accepted by them.

In this study, participants often employed a strategy of being a resident in New Zealand when they experienced difficulties in behaving in Korean ways. For example, as having Korean-style food was sometimes challenging with regard to its availability, cost, or freshness, some participants began to modify their menus to a Kiwi style ("*When we want to eat 'Samgyeopsal' (Korean style pork belly) … We buy a portion of pork belly from a local shop and slice it to make it similar to the Korean style*" [Asma]). Ant explained how Koreans simplified their meals to reflect their status of being residents in New Zealand ("*Because of its cost and availability, we make meals simple … It is interesting that most Koreans have similar very simple menus at their homes in my city because of this situation*" [Ant]).

Securing employment was one of the difficult challenges because of their limited language skills. In response, some participants engaged in unskilled employments ("*My husband works as a delivery driver*" [Anne]) whilst some participants set up a business ("*I bought my cleaning business*" [Carl]) with a high risk of failure. Clara explained how she witnessed other Koreans taking risks by jumping into the business sector without proper knowledge: "*People started their business because they couldn't get a job. But they didn't have any experience in managing a business. This meant they often wasted their money or just lived with minimum profits.*"

At this time, some participants began to seek alternatives available within their community with which they could prepare for a job, particularly within the education sector. They believed that study would help them to get a job in the future and facilitate living a satisfactory life in a new country. Again, Clara disclosed why she chose study as an alternative way to secure her future, "*If we study, there is no risk of wasting money. You know, study helps us to improve English, gain knowledge and get a qualification.*"

Parents who felt powerless in parenting ("*There was nothing I could do for my children*" [Joy]) used whatever they felt capable of, from their newly established networks, to cover their limitations: "*When my children brought a letter which I couldn't understand, I often asked my work colleagues*" (Asma). Although participants found parenting challenging because of language barriers ("*When my children asked me regarding their homework, I couldn't help*" [Jenny]), participants demonstrated their willingness to continue this activity as it was traditionally valued. They actively sought means to overcome challenges: "*When school looked for volunteers, I felt nervous … But I wanted to do it for my children. This was why I participated in helping at the library which didn't require fluent English*" (Donna).

Another example of being a resident in New Zealand was found in a process of rebuilding networks in the community. Given the fact that immigration was associated with losing their own networks ("*In Korea, I had lots of friends … But here, I had lost the entire network* [Mike]), participants made a concerted effort to get to know local people and rebuild networks: "*I visited my neighbour almost every day to get to know her*" (Lucia). In particular, they targeted people they found affable to approach: "*From my own experience, it is much easier to build a friendship with seniors as they are friendly*" (Anne).

To be a resident in New Zealand, it is vital to understand what behaviors and performances are appropriate within particular settings. To do so, participants made an effort to interact with local people (*"I often share my food with my neighbor"* [Jill]), enroll in a training course (*"The biggest difference after completing my course, was that I became more knowledgeable of what was going on here"* [Kevin]), engage in employment (*"When I worked … I learnt how other people live here"* [Sandra]), and be a volunteer (*"I voluntarily picked up rubbish at my children"s school event to meet other parents"* [Mike]).

Through this experience, participants were ready to embrace different behaviors that fit into New Zealand society. This involved not only knowing where they were physically situated but also having a comprehensive understanding of the new culture by directly engaging with the outside world. With increased knowledge of their present situations, participants were able to make their own way toward controling their lives as they enhanced their ability to assess their choice and to make informed decisions in their current environment: "*I can organise my schedule now as I can see what will happen tomorrow"* (Kevin).

At this time, some participants began to compare New Zealand perspectives to the ones they inherited in Korea. Jacob shared how embracing New Zealand perspectives assisted him to accept second-hand products, *"My golf clubs are mostly second-hand. I don't care as long as I can play with them."* As Jacob disclosed, some participants reached a point at which they came to behave in a way that was reflective of their new country. For them, being a resident in New Zealand meant that participants had an appreciation of the new culture (*"Many Kiwis have a humble mind, just helping others in need as long as they can. I want to be like them"* [Clara]) and were ready to accept New Zealand as their home country (*"Nowadays, I feel New Zealand is my home"* [Sue]).

As noted above, a process of regaining control required a cognitive effort to find the best way to perform activities through navigating the two world perspectives. Participants incorporated every possible element from both worlds, of being both a Korean immigrant and a New Zealand resident, into daily activities that they needed or wanted to perform. Each behavioral pattern exists in an intricate and delicate relationship with the others. Indeed, focusing upon one aspect in isolation is problematic and not advisable in order to adequately understand the process of regaining control.

Discussion

This study reveals that immigration is closely associated with a loss of control over immigrants' lives in a new country. In response, 21st-century immigrants navigate the old and new world perspectives selecting the one they expect to obtain the best possible outcomes with regard to regaining control over their disrupted everyday activities. This conclusion is congruent with a belief that "a sense of control is an

essential life skill for persons to be able to deal with everyday challenges" (Chaze & Robson, 2014, p. 161).

The assumption that a sense of control is a pivotal contributor to quality of life has been extensively presented (Chaze & Robson, 2014; Lachman & Prenda Firth, 2004; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Astin, 1996). Their findings strongly support the importance of control in humans' lives in that "a person's sense of control can have pronounced effects on morbidity and mortality" (Shapiro et al., 1996, p. 1215).

In this regard, the last set of related, but distinct, constructs focuses on the question of why people seek a sense of control and why these perceptions should have such a pervasive impact on the immigration process. One explanation holds that the sense of control provides the motivation to take action even in the face of great adversity (Lachman & Prenda Firth, 2004). This justifies the idea that one indicator of successful adaptation may be the ability to select domains of functioning in which it is possible to maximize one's ability to control outcomes.

Implication for acculturation model

In now revisiting the concept of acculturation, it is apparent that the various situational factors, in particular those associated with globalization in which many immigrants maintain transnational status (Ho, 2015), must be included. Within the context of globalization, it is almost impossible for ethnic immigrants to be totally disconnected from the origin of their culture. Instead, they easily and frequently communicate with their old world via diverse technologies, and thus, adapting to a new culture becomes less of a necessity (*"I use an 070 internet telephone. It is a local number in Korea. I can talk to my family almost every second day"* [Ruth]).

In the reality of the 21st century, acculturation is no longer a product of mere interaction between immigrants and the receiving country. For participants in this study, immigration seemed to be borderless in that their interaction with the host community became more optional as they felt less immediate pressure to adapt to the receiving society. This means researchers in immigration studies have to reconsider the concept of acculturation, which largely emphasizes the aspect of cultural maintenance (Berry, 1994, 1997, 2001).

Given that participants settling in New Zealand exercise choices over their everyday activities by evaluating their ability, through traversing the two world perspectives, it is possible to hypothesize that contemporary immigrants engage in the acculturation process, based on their level of perceived control. Within this framework, the acculturation process can be explained as a selective process available to immigrants, based on their assessment of their capacities to handle the situation.

> Here in New Zealand, I have to choose between being a Korean or a New Zealander several times a day. When I go home, I am a Korean father to my children, a Korean

husband to my wife. … But, when I go to work, I have to be a Kiwi and behave just like them. (Mike)

This strategic selection of life domains in itself may be a clear manifestation of one's ability to take control over the immigration process. This example evidently supports the assertion that a level of perceived control over the immigration process is associated with acculturation preferences of assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration (Wilson-Forsberg, 2015).

For example, a high sense of mastery enhances immigrants' ability to maintain cultural integrity and to become an integral part of a larger societal framework. Participants disclosed how their sense of control in their lives contributed to having behavioral patterns reflective of the host society—a stage of integration based on Berry's acculturation model.

> I used to be a kindergarten teacher in Korea. I would like to bring the Korean education system here … I believe my experience in Korea would benefit children here. This is why I chose to study teaching at Uni. (Asma)

Asma's perspective outlined above is in accordance with a belief that integration is associated with minimal stress levels, with regard to maintaining control over their lives, and is also mutually transforming not only the immigrant culture but also the host culture (Berry, 2001; Deutscher, 2004).

In contrast, those participants who had a helpless orientation and failed to see a contingency between their actions and outcomes were less active in taking actions reflective of the new society. Instead, they chose to be separated by placing value on holding onto their original culture, whilst at the same time wishing to avoid interaction with others—a stage of separation (Berry, 1994).

> Even though my uncle had lived here for 10 years, he couldn't speak English. I once asked him why he couldn't speak English. He said … there were not many opportunities for him to meet Kiwis. (Aaron)

In many cases, participants evaluate the merits and demerits of each world and select the one world perspective to retain control over their lives. This is congruent with what Nayar et al. (2012) attested, as long as immigrants are able to choose activities in accordance with their knowledge and values, they have the ability to maintain their well-being. This finding suggests that the acculturation process should be reconsidered as a pathway of "regaining control" in situations, which are often problematic as a result of the merging of two cultural systems.

Limitations

As grounded theory is associated with the interpretive paradigm and acknowledges that researchers cannot completely separate themselves from their findings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), one of the limitations is that potential misinterpretation may exist in the study. To avoid this, the authors maintained a self-reflective

stance. In addition, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were employed to find variations based on theoretical grounds. This effort allowed the reconstructions of the participants' stories to be accurate and fair.

The age of the participants in this study ranged from 32 to 58 years old and, as evidenced by their having enough points to be eligible to immigrate to New Zealand, all were highly qualified and held down high-level jobs in Korea. By eliminating adolescent and senior Korean immigrants from the sample population, the findings of this study lack explanatory power specifically with regard to those populations. Recruiting participants from three cities in the North Island of New Zealand means that the findings may not fully explicate stories of Korean immigrants who resided outside of these locations. Examining the theory of regaining control across a range of ages, locations, ethnic groups, more diverse educational and vocational backgrounds, and longer residence times in New Zealand are other research avenues to be pursued.

The interviews were only conducted in Korean although being available in either English or Korean. Participants preferred to tell their stories in Korean. Considerable attention was given to translating what participants wished to express by cautiously selecting their words in English. However, it is predictable that this study is limited by the fact that subtle differences in expressions inevitably exist between Korean and English.

Conclusion

The study findings offered in this paper explain that Korean immigrants engaged in a process of regaining control over their lives by traversing the two world perspectives, "Korean" and "New Zealand." To perform everyday activities in the best way, participants opted to either behave in Korean ways or hold an attitude of learning about the New Zealand perspective. This finding suggests that the acculturation process in the globalized context should be re-considered as a pathway toward regaining control over their disrupted activities in a new country. Bringing an occupational perspective to immigration studies will supplement the concept of acculturation to reflect a globalized world where immigrants are able to hold transnational status and will provide a route forward to developing useful interventions about what immigrants need to perform their activities to enhance their participation in civic society.

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