Life satisfaction and Realized Expectations (Using the Reali Scale) among English-speaking Immigrants

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Disclosure Slide

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Learning Objectives:
1.   Describe the nature of acculturation among immigrants.
2.   Distinguish the acculturation differences arising by being an immigrant due to economic stress versus due to diaspora/cultural connection?
3.   Formulate explanations for life satisfaction's relationship to health and realized expectations.

Conflict of Interest:
All authors claim no conflict of interest.

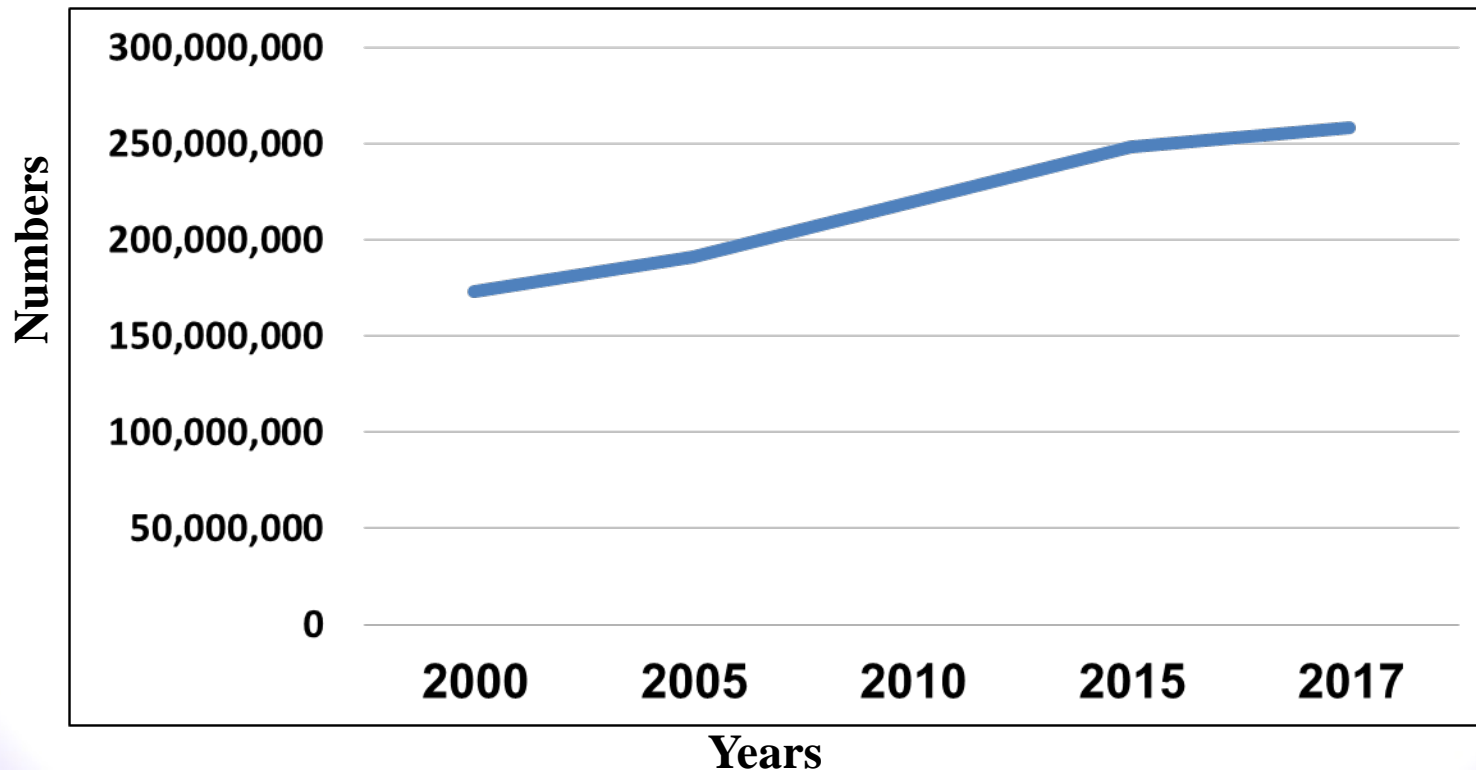|	
Cheryl Zlotnick RN DrPH	**No conflict of interest**
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Suzanne Suckerman	No conflict of interest

Migrating Individuals

According to the UN, 258 million individuals migrated to another country in 2017. This estimate includes: Refugees/Asylum Seekers, Migrant Workers, and Immigrants.

Numbers of Individuals Migrating to Another Country by Year

Immigrants & Life Satisfaction

1. Life satisfaction for immigrants

2. Measurement
   - population
   - individual measures

Life Satisfaction & Immigrants – What's Known

Demographic Factors -

- Country of origin
- Family accompaniment
- Years in the country
- Socioeconomic status
- Health status

Acculturation -

- Language acquisition
- Identity formation including the new host country

Life Satisfaction & Immigrants – What's Not Known

1. **Realized/met expectations** was linked to life satisfaction in a single study on Finnish diaspora immigrants (Mahonen et al., 2013). No other studies were found in the peer-reviewed literature on this link. Is this a one-time finding?

2. **Country of Origin**
   - Several studies have noted that country of origin influences acculturation variables. However, we do not know if the immigrants' native language is the same and the immigrant countries are different, do levels of acculturation variables (language acquisition, having realized/met expectations, and self-identification with host country) differ by country or are they similar?

   - Moreover, does country of origin confound the link among the acculturation variables.

Study Hypothesis

Life satisfaction is associated with acculturation (i.e., language acquisition, having realized/met expectations, and self-identification with host country) for English-speaking immigrants regardless of country of origin after adjusting for demographic characteristics, reason for immigration and family support.

Methods

Study Design

- Cross-sectional Design
- Internet sites
- A lottery prize of a 500-shekel (~ $137) gift-certificate (identifying data placed in another database)
- Ethics Committee approval

Sample

- English-speaking immigrants in Israel
- 950 questionnaires begun, 729 completed (77%)
- Canada (n=40), South Africa (n=66), UK (n=132), USA (n=403), other countries e.g., Australia, New Zealand, Ireland (n=88)
- Final sample with only Canada, South Africa, UK, USA respondents (n=641)

Methods (continued)

Instrument – 3 page, 51-item online questionnaire

1. Demographic variables (e.g., birthdate, gender, marital status, country of birth, date of immigration, monthly income, reasons for immigration)

2. Family support (e.g., immigrated with family, family already in Israel)

3. Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Cronbach α=0.90)

4. Acculturation
   - Immigrants' Language Ability (ILA) scale (Cronbach α=0.95)
   - Self-identity (free text)
   - Realized Expectations (REALI) (Cronbach α=0.77)

Results – Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics by Country	🇨🇦 (n=40)	🇿🇦 (n=66)	🇬🇧 (n=132)	🇺🇸 (n=403)
	% (M, SD)	% (M, SD)	% (M, SD)	% (M, SD)
Gender - Female	72.5	77.3	69.7	76.4
Age (Years)	(55.7, 14.3)	(55.5, 14.6)	(55.7, 14.5)	(52.7, 15.6)
College ****	85.0	54.6	65.9	85.6
Income$\leq$$2192**	35.9	61.0	37.7	34.7
Immigrated (Years)**	(19.2, 15.7)	(17.1, 15.8)	(20.5, 14.9)	(15.2, 14.2)
Excellent/Good Health*	84.4	73.6	73.2	83.9

Legend: * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, **** $p<0.0001$

Results –
Life Satisfaction and Acculturation Variables

Acculturation and Life Satisfaction Variables by Country	🇨🇦 (n=40) % (M, SD)	🇿🇦 (n=66) % (M, SD)	🇬🇧 (n=132) % (M, SD)	🇺🇸 (n=403) % (M, SD)
Dual Country****	30.0	22.7	34.1	49.1
Language Ability (ILA)** (0 lowest -12 highest)	(5.8, 3.5)	(3.6, 3.3)	(5.2, 3.9)	(5.4, 3.8)
Realized Expectations (REALI)**** (0 lowest -12 highest)	(7.6, 2.5)	(5.5, 2.8)	(6.3, 2.5)	(7.0, 2.4)
Life Satisfaction*** (5 lowest -35 highest)	(22.5, 7.1)	(19.9, 7.6)	(23.3, 7.0)	(24.3, 6.1)

Legend: * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$, **** $p<0.0001$

Multivariate Results

General Linear Models with Estimates and 95% Confidence Intervals (95% CI) Predicting Life Satisfaction

Variables	Estimate (95% CI)
Health Status (Reference Group: <u>Not</u> Excellent/Good)	3.21 (1.79, 4.63)****
Realized expectations	0.64 (0.40, 0.88)****
Model Fit	
R-Square	18%
F-Value: Value, degrees of freedom	5.16, 19****

Legend: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001, **** p<0.0001

Conclusions

- Having realized expectations (and good health) contributes to life satisfaction among diaspora immigrants. It may be that preparation for struggles and having "realistic" expectations reduces disappointment.

- Hebrew language was not associated with life satisfaction. Perhaps English-speakers do not have as much of a need for Hebrew as French- or Russian-speakers.

- Years in Israel and family support were not connected to life satisfaction…reasons???

Limitations

- English-speaking immigrants who were non-online computer users or were non-users of English-speaking websites would not be among our participants.

- Many surveys were not completed due to questions perceived as insensitive or invasive.

- Study contained smaller samples of immigrants from South Africa and Canada.

- One measurement… cross-sectional study and all responses are self-report.

- One sample…are the participants to this study a unique group or do they represent English-speaking immigrants in Israel? Or Diaspora immigrants in other countries?

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Thanks!

شكراً

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감사합니다

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