

Post-migration identity reconstruction: Patterns and policy implications from the experience of Korean Australians

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Abstract

In response to and as part of a proactive discursive strategy for addressing increased public concern about social cohesion and national security, current policy narratives of Australia require immigrants to accelerate the process of change or loss of original ethnic identity. This study was conceived and designed to seek answers about the actual identity strategy of migrants and the determinants of integrative identity development. This study used Korean Australians' experience to provide insights about the dynamic process of identity change of migrants. This research identified that active adoption of a new identity was not a dominant identify strategy, and the extent of inclusive experience with the host society was a significant predictor of identity integration. The findings suggested that the current top-down approach through discursive coercion should be replaced with the promotion of transnational identity. The provision of inclusive policy supports based on the concept of community cohesion for progressive transition of identity was proposed as an effective identity reconstruction strategy.

Keywords: identity integration, multiculturalism, social inclusion, social cohesion, Korean Australians

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1. Background

Migration presents challenges for both the host country and the migrants. As noted, the host country can fear that immigration is a threat to social cohesion and national identity. From the migrant's perspective, immigration necessarily involves negotiation and compromise between the ethnic and cultural identity of the country of origin and the destination country. The current policy environment of multiculturalism in Australia requires immigrants to accelerate this process of change or loss of original ethnic identity and the concept of self. For instance, recently proposed changes in Australian immigration policy aims to reinforce the immigrants' commitment to Australian values and language tradition through the new criteria for Australian citizenship that includes a new residence requirement, a new process determining the applicant's integration into the community, and changes to Citizenship test (Reilly, 2017).

The importance of instilling Australian values in the mind-set of immigrants has been overtly represented in policy narratives as presented below and it is easy to locate such narratives in contemporary policy commentary:

"Everyone has got to be on team Australia. Everyone has got to put this country, its interests, its values and its people first, and you don't migrate to this country unless you want to join our team". (Tony Abbott, former Prime Minister: 2013 - 2015) (Cox, 2014)

"Membership of the Australian family is a privilege and should be afforded to those who support our values, respect our laws and want to work hard by integrating and contributing to an even better Australia". (Malcolm Turnbull, former Prime Minister: 2015 - 2018) (Dziedzic & Belot, 2017)

The current policy environment may cause discomfort among broader multicultural communities and increases anxiety for people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds about manifesting their ethnic and cultural identities. For example, migrants have been pointed out as a culprit of overcrowded cities and house prices, and government failure to manage population growth (Markus, 2018; Wright, 2019). In particular, many Muslim Australians, as well as some other minority groups, have been subjected to heightened acts of prejudice, and vilification and violence (Australian Human

Rights Commission, 2003). In this unwelcome and excluding environment for migrants, it is possible that identity reconstruction imposed by the immigration policy can have adverse effects on the integrative identity development and social inclusion of immigrants. A major concern is that the request for identity reconstruction by the Australian government has not accompanied relevant supporting policies or programs. Thus, it is questionable whether this policy trend is supported by an evidence-based understanding of immigrants' experience of identity change. It is also contestable if and to what extent these top-down initiatives can facilitate the process of immigrants' identity shift.

2. Literature review

1) A historical overview of Australian migration policy: resurgence of assimilation

Since the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, Australia has undergone transformative changes in immigration policy. Australia has witnessed a general shift away from restrictive and selective immigration policy that favours Britain and European immigrants. Australia's recognition of racial and cultural diversity was solidified in the early 1970s, when Australia officially abandoned the "White Australia" policy and adopted a programme of multiculturalism. Diverse policy interventions were introduced to promote multiculturalism as part of Australia's national identity until the mid-1990s (Tavan, 2006).

Australia's changes to immigration policy have been aligned with the dominant policy discourses. Until the 1950s, when the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was replaced by the *Migration Act 1958*, immigrants were required to become "assimilated" by abandoning their cultural, linguistic and religious pasts (Jupp, 2007b). By the 1960s, the Australian Government recognised that it was possible for immigrants to become successfully "integrated" without losing their past identity. During the "multiculturalism" era after the abolishment of the White Australia policy, there was a broader acceptance of diverse cultural and national identities.

Paradoxically, as Australia's multiculturalism policy has expanded, multiculturalism in Australia has increasingly become the target of criticism, modification and repeal. In fact,

negative stereotypes of immigrants have been still persistent (Bailey, 1995). Public perceptions about migrants have increased in negativity over time, and Australians recorded a high level of prejudicial attitudes towards migrants such as disliking, hatred, and hostility (Schweitzer, Perkoulidis, Krome, Ludlow, & Ryan, 2005). The Australian media has played a significant role in disseminating negative representation of the migrants, depicting them as 'threats' to employment, social cohesion, and the Australian way of life (Cooper, Olejniczak, Lenette, & Smedley, 2017). The general public tended to rely on the media's dominant negative framing of migrants, and a recent national survey revealed majority negative sentiment favouring a reduction in immigration (Markus, 2018). Immigrants have been viewed as not integrating well, and not making sufficient effort to become as Australian as possible (Castles, Vasta, & Ozkul, 2012). The persistence of hostility towards immigration and multiculturalism has made Australians "susceptible to assimilationist and exclusivist notions" (Jupp, 2007a, p. 209).

Researchers have demonstrated that the ideological assumptions of White Australia have remained a constituent element of Australian culture (Ang, 2003; Markus, 2003). Australia's "cultural anxiety" (Ang, 2003), that is, the public sense of threat to traditional Australian values and identity, has never disappeared in Australia, and contemporary anti-Muslim sentiment or "Islamophobia" has led to an increase in public concern about social cohesion and national security (Castles et al., 2012).

Given that these policy discourses are pervasive, the current Australian immigration-policy situation can be described as a 'return to assimilation policy'. Diverse social, economic, political, and global forces were seen to be involved in this turn of policy context. The decline of support for multiculturalism in Australia politics coincided with the conservative party's coming into power around mid-1990s. A rise in Hansonism, a political rhetoric of Pauline Hanson of One Nation Party, defined the increase in Asian immigrants as 'Asian invasion', which has evoked public concern of separatism (Maley, 2010). Key international events following the September 2001 terrorist attacks in America played a role in shaping public attitudes towards ethnic and cultural diversity and towards parts of the Australian population. In the aftermath of these events, the Australian government immigration policy was framed in the context of prevailing security concerns about the threat of terrorism (Koleth, 2010).

It should be noted that there are differences between the re-emerging assimilation policies and their predecessors of more than half-century ago. First, the current policy discourse largely targets Muslim migrants, while past discourse and policy were largely based on a fear of Asian migrants (Dunn, Klocker, & Salabay, 2007). Unlike past immigration discourses, the current discourses place greater emphasis on values and identity than on language and cultural practice. Cultural homogeneity and a “coherent and shared identity” (Elder, 2007, p. 23) are increasingly pursued by the Australian Government. Another noteworthy difference is that the current dominant policy idea aiming for a monolithic national identity does not attract a great deal of debate or critical appraisal, when the significance and controversy that the issue of national identity carries remains unchanged. In fact, there has been no policy statement on multiculturalism at the national level in Australia since 2003 (Koleth, 2010).

2) Concept of identity reconstruction

Identity reconstruction refers to the ‘process that essentially involves a subtle balancing act of deep rooted ethnic values and cultures with new and different norms, cultures and interests of the host country where the migrant’s resettlement takes place’ (Oppong, 2013, p. 164). Identity reconstruction may involve a change within or negation of self, and thus is a different concept from cultural adaptation, which is defined as ‘the process by which individuals who strive to (re)establish and maintain a relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationship with the new or changing environment’ (Y. Y. Kim, 2019, p. 3), and does not necessarily rebuild or reform the self.

A notable observation from the literature review conducted for this study was that most research in relation to immigration in Australia has been dedicated to constructing ‘Australianness’ from the perspective of the host country. That is, the research questions in the Australian immigration literature have generally sought answers to the question of ‘what it means to be Australian’ (Elder, 2007; Jones, 1997; Phillips & Smith, 2000). The main themes in the literature echoed the understanding the social, cultural and political aspects of Australianness, exploring the key features that shaped Australian cultural values and life style. The process where migrants’ ethnic identity interacts with that of the host

county has been largely missing in the existing literature.

Acknowledging that identity change is a mutual process between the host country and the immigrant, the research commitment to this research area in Australia appears to be asymmetrical. The validity of the arguments for assimilation has not been sufficiently questioned in the literature, and the negative public stereotype that immigrants do not make sufficient effort 'to become as Australian as possible' (Castles et al., 2012, p. 15) needs to be empirically tested. As was indicated above, there is a lack of research on immigrants' identity change. Little is known about the strategies immigrants use to cope with the societal demand for the change of identity that would fit better dominant values of the Australian society. In addition, no evidence has been found for the effectiveness of placing pressure on immigrants' identity reconstruction.

Immigrants are not viewed as homogeneous, and they are assumed to implement diverse strategies to effect an identity shift. One of the most cited conceptualisation of migrants' identity strategy is John Berry's bi-dimensional model. Berry (2001) used two identity dimensions to categorise four different strategies taken by immigrants: integration, marginalisation, assimilation and separation. When individuals declare a positive orientation in both their heritage and new identities, they are categorised as adopting the 'integration' strategy. When they feel attached to neither identity, they are categorised as adopting the 'marginalisation' strategy. When one identity is strongly emphasised over the other, they are categorised as adopting either the 'assimilation' (strong emphasis on the new identity) or 'separation' strategy (strong emphasis on the ethnic identity).

Berry's insightful conceptualisation has attracted wide discussions, debates and applications. The fourfold paradigm has been increasingly under criticism by an argument that it is a rudimentary categorisation lacking utility and explanatory power (Rudmin, 2003). One of the critical weaknesses of the model was that it fails to explain the reasons and variations by individuals and groups. Statistical verification of the validity followed, and there was a suggestion that the fourfold scales was inconsistent with other cognitive measures (Fox, Merz, Solórzano, & Roesch, 2013; van de Vijver, Helms-Lorenz, & Feltzer, 1999). Despite its insufficient scientific rigour, the theoretical insights have been recognised. The terminology has moved into common usage and has been adopted by

other prominent scholars (Phinney, Horenczyk, & Vedder, 2001; Ward, 1997).

3) Determinants of identity reconstruction

Migrants' ethnic identity has been one of the principal topics of migration studies. Scholars have agreed that migrants' original identity is challenged and negotiated by the experience of migration (Bhugra & Becker, 2005; Jaspal & Breakwell, 2014; Ting-Toomey, 2017). All immigrants do not take the same paths to identity reconstruction, and how immigrants frame their identity depends on personal and contextual factors (Castles et al., 2012). The process of identity change has been viewed as conditioned by various micro and macro factors, which include the person's own cultural background, social capital, age, level of education, reason for the migration (voluntary or forced), cultural and social distance between the person's society of origin and the host society, the size and strength of the ethnic community in the host country, and the person's psychological factors such as identity flexibility and the readiness to negotiate the origin identity (Seweryn, 2007).

One of the notable observation was that there has been lack of empirical support for these statements. While migrants' ethnic identity has been widely used even in empirical studies, it has been, in most cases, employed as a factor for settlement and acculturation (Lee, 2013; Ward & Geeraert, 2016). This indicates that migrant original identity has been mostly treated as an unchangeable characteristic of an individual. This viewpoint is presumed to result in the lack of exploration of the original identity as a dependent variable.

One of the few studies that explored determinants of the post-migration identity change was found by Jones (1997)'s. This study explored the expectations of Australian citizens about what constitutes Australianness, finding factors such as 'being born in Australia', 'having Australian citizenship', 'having lived in Australia for most of one's life', 'being able to speak English', and "being a Christian' as elements of being considered Australian. Despite its significance, the variables were not extracted by the perception or experience of migrants but of local Australians. There was an empirical qualitative study by Kim (2017) that identified post-migration identity strategy. But, no further exploration of what makes a difference in the identity strategy in this study.

3. Research methods

1) Research aims and questions

Surprisingly, there has been little research on post-migration identity change in Australia. A great number of studies have been dedicated to explore migrants' settlement process and their acculturation issues (Abbas, Sitharthan, Hough, & Hossain, 2018; Colic-Peisker & Walker, 2003; Dandy, Ziaian, & Moylan, 2018), but there has been paucity of literature on the migrants' identity reconstruction.

Based on Berry's theoretical model of identity change, this study firstly aimed to examine the different identity strategies adopted by Korean immigrants in Australia. This aim led to the following research question: *What identity strategies do immigrants with multicultural backgrounds develop (in other words, to what extent is migrant' ethnic identity compatible with the dominant identity of the host country)?*

The second aim of the research was to explore the factors that influence the process of identity change of immigrants. A question arising here is whether immigrants have the same notions of being Australian. This question relates to the factors that influence their identity integration. The second research question is as follows: *Who is more ready to become Australian (to put it another way, what are the determinants of identity integration)?*

2) Participants

The research used the case of Korean Australians. With culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Korean Australians are part of the policy objects for identity integration. The population of Korean Australians by the country of origin is just over 100,000 (0.4%) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018), which means they constitute a minority ethnic group. It is admitted that Korean Australians do not represent the diverse communities in Australia and different ethnic groups may take different pathways to identity development and social inclusion. However, using the Korean Australian case has advantages in that they are more likely to be exposed to interactions with the dominant culture of Australia or other cultures, compare with some other larger ethnic groups that

may have established their own cultural enclaves and thus the social interaction may be confined within their own communities.

A survey was conducted with Australian residents with a Korean background between August 2015 and February 2016. Age and residence requirements were applied to the selection of respondents: participants had to be adults aged 18 years older and be residing in Australia for 12 months or more. This process systematically excluded non-migrant Koreans or short-term stayers such as tourists and temporary family visitors. 210 persons in total from New South Wales, Queensland, and Western Australia participated in this study through a purposive sampling method. In consideration of the language background of the participants, the survey was conducted in Korean.

[Table 1] Sample characteristics

Variable	Value labels	Frequency	Percentage	Notes
Gender	Male	79	37.6	
	Female	131	62.4	
Age	20 and under	21	10.0	Mean age: 40.0 years old
	30 - 39	78	37.1	
	40 - 49	89	42.4	
	50 and over	20	9.5	
	No answer	2	1.0	
Visa status	Australian citizen	98	46.7	Others: Business / work visa, Students, Guardians
	Permanent resident	84	40.0	
	Others	27	12.9	
	No answer	1	0.5	
Length of residence	5 years and under	30	14.3	Mean length of residence: 11.7 years
	6 - 10 years	86	41.0	
	11 - 15 years	42	20.3	
	20 years and over	49	23.3	
	No answer	3	1.4	

[Table 1] presents the demographic profiles of the survey participants. Females (62.4%) accounted for the greater proportion of the sample. The majority of the participants were in the age group of 30 - 39 (37.1%) and 40 - 49 (42.4%), with the average age of 40.0 years. The sampling process that excluded temporary residents led to a high proportion of long-term resident participants. More than two in five (43.6%) of the participants were

living in Australian for longer than a decade, with the mean length of residence being 11.7 years. Australian citizens (46.7%) and permanent residents (40.0%) comprised the majority of the participants. The reason that Australia citizens were included in this study was related to the fact that obtaining citizenship would not necessarily mean the identity shift. That being a citizen of a state does not necessarily equal 'belonging' to such state. In fact, individuals and groups with multicultural backgrounds are usually not considered as belonging to a host country's community (Ellermann, 2019). The meaning of legal status to the sense of belonging was one of the key explorations of this study.

3) Measurements of self-identity

Identity is a complicated concept, and there is no consensus about how to define or measure identity (Abdelal, Herrera, Iain, & Martin, 2001). This study adopted a broad definition of national identity, which conceptualises identity as a sense of self related to belonging to or having membership to a specific group (Phinney & Ong, 2007). In consideration of the migration context, this study measured self-perception of national identity through the construct of 'the feeling of being associated with a national group' (McAllister, 1997, p. 5).

The principal question measuring the perceived national identity of the study participants was framed as follows: "How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about how you see yourself?" The respondents were asked to rate their identity status on a Likert-type five-point scale for the following two statements: 1) I see myself as an Australian; 2) I see myself as a Korean. The variables were coded from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) so that higher scores represented higher levels of the construct.

4) Analysis model and variables

To answer the first research question, respondents were categorised into four groups based on their responses. For example, if a respondent chose 4 or 5 in both Australian and Korean identities, then the respondent was categorised into the 'integration' group. In

contrast, if the responses were 1 or 2 in both statements, then the respondent was categorised into the ‘marginalisation’ group. If a respondent chose 4 or 5 in Australian identity and 1 or 2 in Korean identity, then the respondent was categorised into the ‘assimilated’ group, and the opposite responses meant the respondent was categorised into the ‘separation’ group. Those who chose 3 (neither agree nor disagree; the middle point) for both statements were classified into the ‘in-transition’ group. When a respondent had a clear indication in one statement and chose the middle point in another statement, the grouping process placed priority on the response with a clear indication. For example, a response with a middle in Australian identity and high Korean identity was categorised as ‘separation’. A response with a low Australian identity and an uncertain Korean identity was categorised in the ‘marginalisation’ group.

[Table 2] Coding scheme for categorisation (based on 5 point scale)

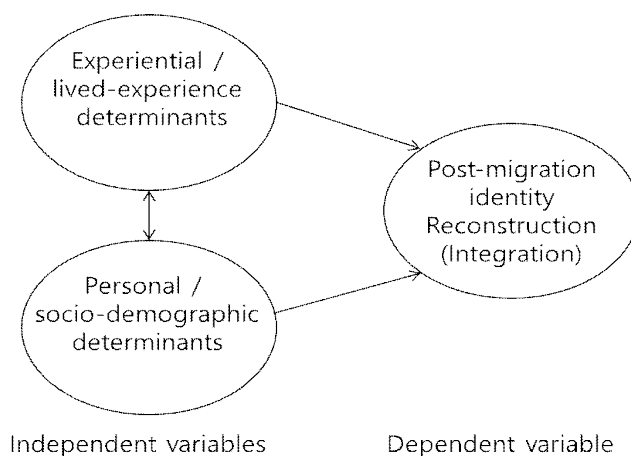
Identity reconstruction strategy	Coding scheme
Marginalisation	Low (≤ 2) in Australian identity & Low (≤ 2) in Korean identity
Separation	Low (≤ 2) in Australian identity & High (≥ 4) in Korean identity
Integration	High (≥ 4) in Australian identity & High (≥ 4) in Korean identity
Assimilation	High (≥ 4) in Australian identity & Low (≤ 2) in Korean identity
In transition	Middle (3) in both identities

To address the second research question, the dependent variable was recoded into two categories. ‘Integration’ category remained same and all other categories were reclassified into ‘non-integration’ (‘non-integration’: 0, ‘integration’: 1). The reason that ‘integration’ was viewed as a desirable type of identity strategy, because migrants would be able to maintain their original identity as a member of their ethnic community and to participate in daily interactions with other groups as an integral part of the larger society (Berry, 2001). Identity integration is viewed as a type of identity reconstruction. A logistic regression model was employed for two categorical outcomes.

This research set up two sets of independent variables depending on their nature: . The first set was composed of the following personal or social-demographic variables: gender, age, education, income, religion, citizenship status, English proficiency, and length of residence. Previous empirical studies on the topic of ‘what it means to be Australian’

(Clark, 2007; Jones, 1997) were the principal sources of these background variables.

[Figure 1] Analysis model



The second set of variables represented situational or experiential determinants (Gracia & Herrero, 2004). To construct this set, a framework of social inclusion was used. Social inclusion is a concept involving multiple dimensions, encompassing social, economic, cultural and political participation as its key elements (Australian Social Inclusion Board, 2010). This research asked respondents to rate their level of engagement in each area of social inclusion on a five-point scale. For example, respondents were given options from 1 (not at all integrated) to 5 (very integrated) to the question of ‘overall, to what extent, do you feel economically (socially, politically, and culturally) engaged in Australian society?’ These variables were, as reflective of lived experience, designed to measure the degree of sense of involvement or inclusion in the host society.

The reason that this research distinguished experiential variables from socio-demographic variables is based on a theoretical assumption that identity change might be dependent on the person’s perceived distance from the host society (Barth, 1998). That is, the extent of interaction, which was conceptualised as the level of inclusion/exclusion, was assumed to be a potential predictor of identity reconstruction. While the socio-demographic variables represent relatively static characteristics of the person, the experiential variables represent lived experience of positive/negative interaction.

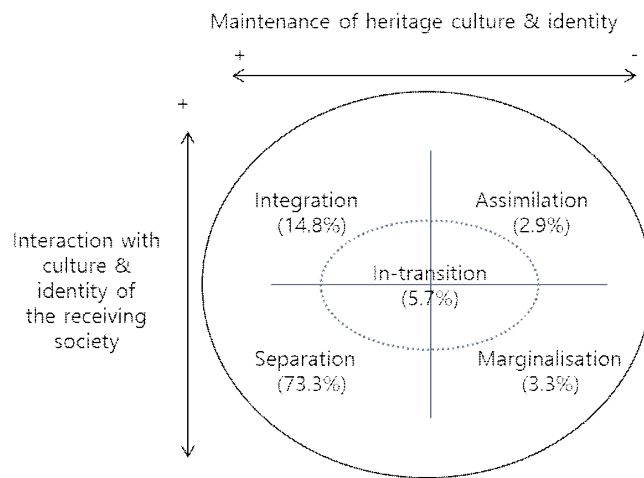
4. Results

1) Post-migration identity strategy

The categorisation of perceived identity revealed that ‘separation’ was the dominant strategy, with most (73.3%) respondents perceiving themselves as Korean rather than Australian. This indicates that the Korean Australians who participated in this study generally place stronger emphasis on maintaining the identity of the origin country than on acquiring the new identity of the host country. A high degree of ethnic pride of the respondents was identified in other measures of this research. For example, most of respondents agreed to the statement ‘Being Korean is an important part of who I am’ (48.7% agree; 33.3% strongly agree).

The second largest category was ‘integration’, where both the original and new identity were asserted. 14.8% respondents perceived themselves to be both Korean and Australian. This outcome suggested that the Korean Australian respondents were not entirely resistant to the acceptance of a new identity. This outcome is consistent with the theoretical assumption of the co-existence of multiple self-identities among migrants in a transitional situation (Horowitz, 1975).

[Figure 2] Identity strategies of Korean Australians (%)



While the adoption of the new identity was a noteworthy observation, the research did not identify many respondents who reported pursuing an 'assimilation' strategy. Only 2.9% of the participants were classified into this category. This contrasts with the expectation of contemporary Australian policy narratives that seek assimilation. Likewise, very few (3.3%) participants reported adopting a 'marginalisation' strategy. This low rate of marginalisation was encouraging because respondents in this category could be viewed as being excluded from both cultures.

A worth mentioning finding was the existence of respondents who did not clearly position themselves. The 'in-transition' category included respondents who selected the middle point on both scales. It should be noted that 'in-transition' reflects different responses from marginalisation. The marginalised identity can be defined as showing little interest in either maintaining the ethnic identity or in creating identification with the culture of the host country (Berry, 2001), whereas the in-transition identity indicates that they are at a developmental stage of identity change. This means it is possible for the respondents in the in-transition category to move towards integration or assimilation providing they are assumed to continue to interact with Australian cultural and social practices.

2) Determinants of identity integration

While it can be expected that that immigrants will gradually develop the identity of the host country, this research assumes that identity reconstruction is entirely dependent on the life-course experience and personal characteristics of immigrants, rather than simply on the natural course of exposure and adaptation. For example, experiences of exclusion or discrimination can hinder an identity shift despite a large degree of exposure to the society of the host country. Although this study identified 'separation' as a dominant identity strategy among Korean Australians, it was expected that there would be individual variations in the extent of identity reconstruction with diverse factors being involved to make differences. In the examination of the factors influencing the post-migration identity reconstruction, this study first tested the effects of the experiential variables of social inclusion, followed by the effects of the personal, social and demographic variables.

Table 3 presents the coding of each variable.

[Table 3] Independent variables and the coding scheme

Variables		Coding	Notes
Experience of social inclusion	Economic engagement	1: Not at all 2: Little 3: Neither / nor 4. Somewhat 5. Very	Respondents' perceived level of engagement
	Social engagement		
	Political engagement		
	Cultural engagement		
Social & demographic	Gender	1: Male, 2: Female	
	Age	-	Age at the time of the survey
	Education	1: Primary to 5: Postgraduate	
	Household income	1: Bottom to 10: Top	Respondents' perceived relative position on a 10 point scale
	Religion	1: Non-Christian 2: Christian	
	Visa status	1: Shorter term visa 2: Permanent resident 3: Australian citizen	
	English proficiency	1: Not at all to 5: Very well	Respondents' perceived level of English command
	Length of residence	1: 5 years and under 2: 6 - 10 years 3: 11- 15 years 4: 20 years and over	

Prior to the application of the regression model, the correlations between the degree of involvement in the elements of social inclusion and the sense of being Australian were investigated. As Table 4 demonstrates, Pearson's correlations identified that there were statistically significant positive relationships between all the variables included in the analysis. This indicates that the individual's development of identity integration is positively associated with economic, social, political and cultural engagement in the host country. 'Social' and 'cultural' engagement had relatively stronger correlation with identity integration, while the correlations with 'economic' and 'political' were relatively less strong.

[Table 4] Correlations between senses of involvement and self-identity as an Australian

	Economic engagement	Social engagement	Political engagement	Cultural engagement	Identity integration
Economic engagement	1				
Social engagement	.611**	1			
Political engagement	.439**	.502**	1		
Cultural engagement	.545**	.618**	.439**	1	
Identity integration	.283**	.365**	.230**	.325**	1

** : $p < 0.01$ (2 tailed).

Despite the significant correlations, the collinearity between the independent variables was not identified, with all correlation coefficients being less than 0.7. The absence of collinearity was confirmed by the collinearity diagnostics performed as part of the multiple regression process. All the “tolerance” values, which identified multiple correlations of each variable in relation to the other independent variables, were less than 0.10. The above statistics satisfied the prerequisite assumptions of the regression analysis.

The assessment of the unique contribution of each experiential variable to identity integration demonstrated that owning both identities was dependent on social engagement only. Engagement in other spheres were not statistically significant. According to Table 5, the unique contribution of political and economic engagements was notably small in the unstandardised (B) and standardised (β) terms. This indicates that economic settlement and political activities do not necessarily lead to the development of integrated identity.

[Table 5] Experiential variables of social inclusion on identity integration

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Economic engagement	.280	.348	.651	1	.420	1.324
Social engagement	.864	.387	4.977	1	.026	2.373
Political engagement	.180	.267	.455	1	.500	1.197
Cultural engagement	.592	.386	2.344	1	.126	1.807
Constant	-7.872	1.363	33.347	1	.000	.000

The above two outcomes suggest a hierarchy in the power of explanation of the experiential variables. All of the inclusive experience contribute to developing integrated identity, but economic and political engagements are not are not sufficient for identity

integration. Social engagement was found to be most important predictor for developing identity integration. To sum up, the process of identity reconstruction for integration required development of social interaction with the broader local community.

In the following analysis, social and demographic variables were tested. The variables found to make a significant contribution to the development of identity integration were visa status and English proficiency. All other personal demographic variables such as gender, age, education, income, Christianity, and the length of residence had no statistical significance. The most contributive social and demographic variable was visa status ($\text{Exp}(B) = 9.841$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.008$). This was not surprising given that visa status affects almost all aspects of the lives of immigrants, for example, rights and access to services (Nickerson, Steel, Bryant, Brooks, & Silove, 2011). In the Australian context, citizenship means possession of full political rights. Restriction in rights and access to services can lead to a sense of exclusion (Cass, Shove, & Urry, 2005), which can hinder identity integration. This outcome indicates that having Australian citizenship enables full participation in society, and thus increases a sense of belonging without compromising migrants' ethnic identity.

[Table 6] Socio-demographic variables on identity integration

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Gender	-.286	.610	.220	1	.639	.751
Age	-.049	.046	1.146	1	.284	.952
Education	.396	.372	1.138	1	.286	1.486
Household income	.000	.000	.056	1	.813	1.000
Religion_Christianity	1.157	1.006	1.321	1	.250	3.179
Visa status	2.191	.828	6.999	1	.008	8.941
English proficiency	.887	.400	4.912	1	.027	2.428
Length of residence	.002	.004	.266	1	.606	1.002
Constant	-12.115	4.100	8.732	1	.003	.000

Another meaningful social and demographic variable was English proficiency ($\text{Exp}(B) = 2.428$, $\text{Sig.} = 0.027$). The importance of language ability for social integration has been widely discussed in research and policy papers (McDermott & Odhiambo, 2010; Vivian Rivera, 2016; Walters, Phythian, & Anisef, 2007). This is because 'language barriers have

often impinged on the capacity of individuals to access services, gain employment and communicate with the host communities' (McDermott & Odhiambo, 2010, p. 113). The respondents with higher language proficiency were more likely have higher level of Australian identity. This outcome confirms that language ability is one of the facilitators of identity integration.

A noteworthy observation was insignificant contributions of Christianity and the length of residence. Earlier literature found that being a Christian was viewed as an element of being considered Australian (Jones, 1997). However, this was not the case of Korean Australians. Insignificance of the length of residence was counter-intuitive because some studies have concluded that the duration of residence is positively associated with the psychological wellbeing of immigrants and the establishment of social-support networks, which could enhance social involvement (Keene, Bader, & Ailshire, 2013; Mui & Kang, 2006). This outcome suggests that residence alone does not lead to positive identity reconstruction but instead can potentially impede the development of a positive construction of identity of the host country.

5. Discussion and implications

1) Identity strategy

The case of Korean Australians demonstrated that acceptance of the new identity of the host country does not necessarily occur with immigration itself. Most of the Korean Australian respondents were choosing to maintain their ethnic identity, and few chose to assimilate with the new identity. These findings contradict the expectations and demands of the current assimilationist perspective expressed in the Australian policy discourses. A noteworthy identity strategy taken by Korean Australians was dual identity strategy, where they were developing an Australian identity without relinquishing their ethnic identity. This clearly indicates that identity reconstruction among immigrants occurs in a transitional manner rather than in a transformative manner. That is, migrants tend to maintain their original ethnic identity, based on which they choose (not) to adopt new

identity progressively. A sudden identity shift was not identified with Korean Australians.

This finding suggests that an effective strategy for identity integration should be to encourage immigrants to have multiple identities rather than monolithic identity. Coercive political narratives based on a lack of understanding of this transitional process will result in increased community anxiety. As was presented by the correlation analysis (Table 4), inclusive experience is closely associated with identity integration. As Barnhizer (2013) warned, failure to embrace a multicultural approach could even promote political radicalisation of immigrants. This is consistent with the statement that attitudes are typically more resistant to change and are usually last to adjust (Bhugra & Becker, 2005), which indicates that identity reconstruction 'follows' the positive experiences rather than leading the inclusion. Thus, a rigorous research-based policy was suggested to guide a more effective approach to identity policy for immigrants.

This study also suggests that it is necessary for the Australian Government to adopt the concept of a flexible, transnational and cosmopolitan identity in the immigration policy. A new identity constructed in this manner is different from the traditional view of identity, which expects allegiance and loyalty from all members of society (Frey, 2003). The idea of transnational identity transcends notions of particularistic and national identity, and is premised on the 'sense of belonging to humanity' (Castles et al., 2012, p. 23).

2) Predictors of identity reconstruction

In terms of the second research question about the predictors of identity reconstruction, this study provided an insightful finding that engagement in diverse areas of society was a prerequisite for the development of a new identity. The correlation analysis revealed that political involvement and identification with cultural values and way of life were more relevant than economic and social participation. The irrelevance of economic engagement to the development of new identity was confirmed by the regression model, which found that the level of income was one of the least contributive variables to the level of self-identification as an Australian.

The principal significant predictors of post-migration identity change were visa status and language proficiency. The relevance of visa status was explained in two ways. First,

having full citizenship enables full access to services and civil rights. This is particularly true in Australia because the right to vote is reserved only for Australian citizens. Second, the study found that citizenship holders more readily recognised themselves as having developed the identity of the host country than those with other types of visas. This result suggests that citizenship holders have already developed a high level of sense of belonging, and the decision to seek citizenship occurred after consideration of whether to become a full citizen of the host country (Piccolo, 2013).

While visa status defines institutional entitlement for essential rights and services, language proficiency is viewed as more associated with the ability to engage in diverse aspects of life. While language ability was found to be a significant factor for identity integration, it was also found that it could be a significant obstacle for identity development for immigrants from linguistically diverse backgrounds. Lack of language proficiency has been identified as restricting the capacity for social and economic integration (Human Services New South Wales, 2010). This finding demonstrates the necessity for the encouragement and the provision of continuous language education for an extended period beyond the current English program provided for a limited period.

One of the important findings of this study was insignificance of the duration of residence in relation to identity reconstruction. While it could be easily assumed that the accumulation of interaction with the host society would facilitate the acculturation process and the sense of belonging to the host society, this pattern was not identified in this study. No causality between the length of residence and identity integration indicated that residence itself was not a sufficient condition for identity change, but was merely a necessary condition for such change. This means that identity change is not achieved through the residence alone. In other words, the quality rather than the quantity of interaction is most important for identity integration. This finding suggested that migration can also function as a life event that could lead migrants to consolidate their ethnic identity. This raises the importance of the nature of social interaction in promoting identity integration. For example, experiences of frustration or exclusion could marginalise immigrants and discourage them from building a cohesive and integrative identity in the host country.

3) Policy suggestions

Based on the above findings, this study advises that the current coercive policy narratives of the Australian Government that seem to blame immigrants for a lack of effort in becoming Australian reflect the lack of rigorous research on the process of identity change of immigrants. This study provides evidence that identity integration can be better achieved through fostering than through forcing. The provision of systematic supports for a positive experience of social inclusion and the sense of being included in the society would facilitate a positive construction of identity for immigrants.

The findings of this study informed a strategic approach to inclusive supports for migrants. As social engagement was identified as the most significant factor for constructive identity reconstruction of migrants, a priority was given to the development of policies and measures for community cohesion as part of community capacity building. Social cohesion refers to positive social relationships, and it is the bond or 'glue' that binds people (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2015). Narrowing the distance between migrants and the host society is the key to the integrative identity development. Usually migrants' social network is limited to their ethnic community at the onset of settlement, and expanding the network beyond the ethnic boundary should be the key to building an inclusive community (Ryan, 2010).

Inclusive community is where migrants feel confident not only that they belong but that they can mix and interact with others (Pierson, 2010). Cantle (2008) suggested that community cohesion program should be promoted in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods. For example, community cohesion programs at a policy level may create cross-cultural employment opportunities in public sector work, create residential areas mixed ethnicity, and encourage schools that are dominated by one-culture for mixed intakes. At a practice level, migrants' community cohesion can be enhanced by allocating case managers and mentors that come from the relevant immigrant community. Mentors from the same or a similar background can liaise between the newly arrived immigrant population and their surrounding communities, as well as bridge cultural and linguistic gaps (Vivian Rivera, 2017).

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요약

이민자 정체성 재구성: 호주 한인들의 경험에 기초한 패턴과 정책적 함의

정용문*

이민 유입이 사회 응집력과 국가 안전에 가져올 수 있는 잠재적 불안요인에 대한 사전 대응적 담론 전략으로 호주의 이민 정책은 이민자들에게 기존의 정체성에 대한 상실 혹은 새로운 정체성으로의 전이를 가속화할 것을 요구하고 있다. 본 연구는 호주 한인들의 경험을 이용하여, 이민자들이 실제로 채택하고 있는 정체성 전략은 무엇인지, 그리고 통합적인 정체성 발달에 영향을 미치는 요인은 무엇인지를 밝혀 내고자 구상, 설계되었다. 본 연구는 새로운 정체성의 적극적 수용은 지배적인 정체성 전략이 아니며, 이민사회와의 포용적인 경험의 정도가 정체성 통합의 주요한 예측 요인이 됨을 확인하였다. 분석 결과는 현재 호주 정부가 취하고 있는 억압적 담론을 통한 하향식 접근방식보다는 초국적(transnational) 정체성 권장과 포용적(inclusive) 정책 지원 확대가 이민자들의 정체성 재구성을 촉진시키는 효과적인 대안임을 제시하고 있다. 구체적으로 사회응집력(social cohesion) 개념에 기초한 정책과 프로그램을 이민자 통합 정체성 형성을 위한 실천방안으로 제시하고 있다.

주요어: 이민자, 정체성 통합, 다문화주의, 사회통합, 호주 한인, 사회응집력

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