

Immigrant Status, Wealth Attainment and Life Satisfaction among Married Adults in Hong Kong

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Abstract: In immigrant integrations studies, many objective measures have been examined and subjective measures have received less attention. Using Family Life Survey Data collected in Hong Kong in 2009, this paper examines the impact of immigrant status on married adults' life satisfaction in Hong Kong. The regression models show that immigrants are less satisfied with their life in Hong Kong overall. However, wealth attainment has a mediating impact on the negative influences of immigrant status on life satisfaction. Hours-of-workings seem also plays a very important mediating role. Longer duration or earlier arrival in Hong Kong could help narrow the gap of life satisfaction of immigrants and non-immigrants. The results indicate that economic achievement is the most important factor for immigrant to gain similar level of life satisfaction in the host society.

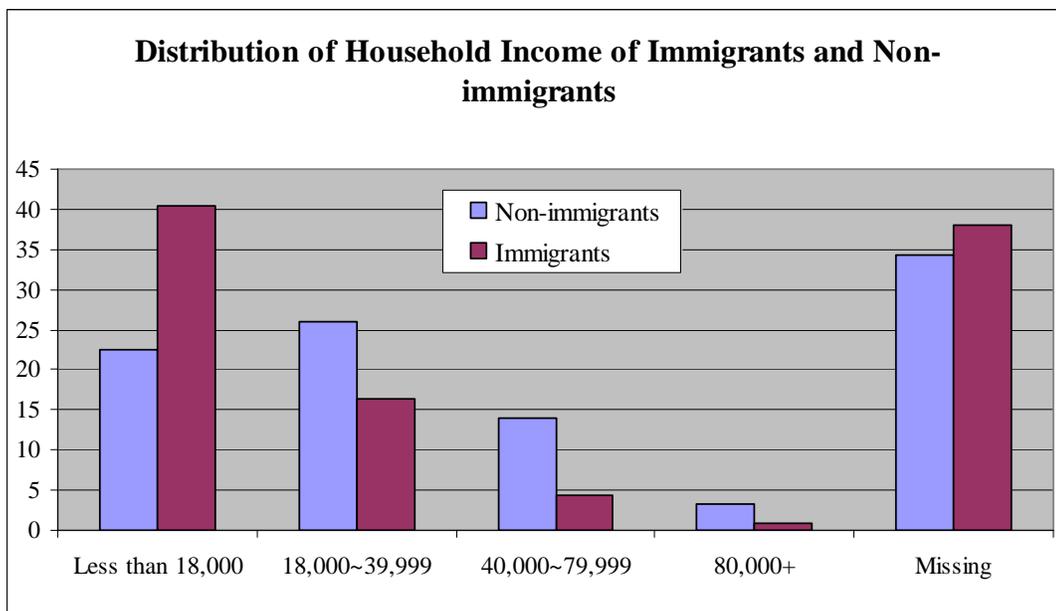
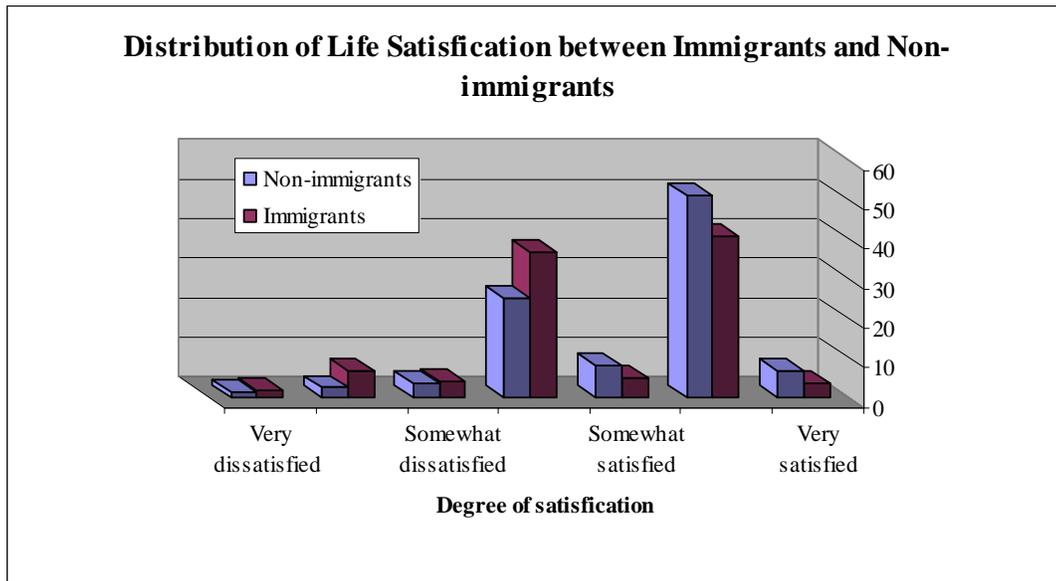
Extended Abstract:

Integration of immigrants: many objective measures have been studied. Subjective parameters have traditionally received less attention in Immigrant integrations studies. However; subjective perceptions carry considerable weight in the social-integration process of immigrants (Massey and Redstone, 2006). There are two perspectives which can be used to interpret immigrants' life satisfaction in the host society. From the process of acculturation, it argues that migration and establishment in a new place go together with sorrow, melancholy, and despair. With larger acculturation, the unhappiness associated with immigration will gradually disappear. Language, economic achievement, family life assimilation affects their overall satisfaction in the host society. If immigrants are dissatisfied with their lives in host societies, then it is because they have not achieved the complete assimilation yet. From the perspective of discrimination, it argues that some disadvantaged immigrants groups will suffer more than other immigrant groups, which indicates that immigrants' life satisfaction depends on their socioeconomic achievement in the host society. This study first examined if immigrant status has significant impact on Hong Kong married adults' life satisfaction, then it examined if socioeconomic achievement mediate the immigrant status' impact on life satisfaction. Subjective well-being of whether married adults feel satisfied with life is examined.

In Hong Kong, since the majority of immigrants are from the Guangdong province, so they speak the same dialect of Cantonese. As a result, they do not have language or large degree of culture barriers to adjust in Hong Kong Society. There research questions are asked in this paper. First, are immigrants more dissatisfied with life in Hong Kong comparing to non-immigrants? Secondly, is economic achievement a major factor to immediate immigration status impact? Third, will immigrant acculturation help to narrow or close the gap? The Data come from Hong Kong family life survey conducted in 2009 and 1177 married adults was interviewed during

this survey through a systematic sampling survey. Dependent Variable: overall life satisfaction. It has several scales from lower satisfaction to higher satisfaction. Independent variables: immigrant status, duration of migration, age at arrival, ownership of house, and household income. Control variables: age, gender, religion belief, household demography, hours of working etc.

The results show that immigrants are less satisfied with their life in Hong Kong overall. However, wealth attainment has an immediate impact on the negative influences of immigrant status on life satisfaction. Hours-of-workings seem also plays a very important mediating role. Longer duration or earlier arrival in Hong Kong could help narrow the gap of life satisfaction of immigrants and non-immigrants.



Distribution of House Ownership of Immigrants and Non-Immigrants

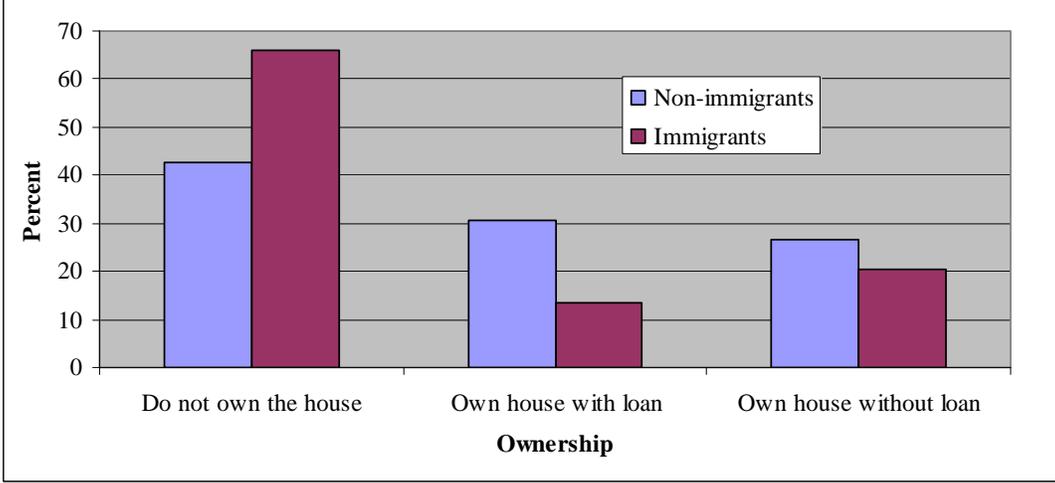


Table 1: Immigrant Status on Life Satisfaction

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Coef.	P-Value	Coef.	P-Value	Coef.	P-Value	Coef.	P-Value
Age	0.005	0.286	0.001	0.79	-0.001	0.795	0.000	0.983
Sex	-0.200	0.018	-0.180	0.031	-0.162	0.055	-0.207	0.023
Years of Education	0.045	0	0.016	0.162	0.017	0.13	0.014	0.241
Immigrant=1	-0.350	0	-0.228	0.007	-0.181	0.048	-0.151	0.11
Own house with loan		0	0.176	0.094	0.169	0.108	0.076	0.493
Own house without loan			0.413	0	0.406	0	0.406	0
18,000~39,999			0.481	0	0.449	0	0.449	0
40,000~79,999			0.689	0	0.645	0	0.646	0
80,000+			0.987	0.001	0.949	0.001	0.971	0.001
Missing			0.284	0.004	0.281	0.005	0.258	0.014
Household size				0	-0.056	0.172	-0.064	0.135
Number of Children					0.080	0.153	0.061	0.298
Spouse is immigrant					0.166	0.073	0.188	0.051
Believe religion						0	0.029	0.738
40<working hours<51							0.130	0.32
50<working hours<61							0.200	0.289
Working hours>60							-0.483	0.01
Working hours cannot apply							-0.033	0.793
Constant	4.734		4.694		4.759		4.847	0
Prob>F	0		0		0		0.000	
R Square	0.0437		0.0933		0.0977		0.1136	

Table 2: Age at Migration/Duration of Migration on Life Satisfaction

Model 1			Model 2		
Variables	Coef.	P-Value	Variables	Coef.	P-Value
Age	0.000	0.996	Age	-0.011	0.098
Sex	-0.227	0.014	Sex	-0.227	0.014
Years of Education	0.012	0.306	Years of Education	0.012	0.306
Age at migration	-0.011	0.001	Duration of migration	0.011	0.001
Own house with loan	0.056	0.613	Own house with loan	0.056	0.613
Own house without loan	0.347	0.001	Own house without loan	0.347	0.001
18,000~39,999	0.406	0.001	18,000~39,999	0.406	0.001
40,000~79,999	0.614	0	40,000~79,999	0.614	0
80,000+	0.955	0.001	80,000+	0.955	0.001
Missing	0.213	0.043	Missing	0.213	0.043
Household size	-0.067	0.115	Household size	-0.067	0.115
Number of Children	0.058	0.319	Number of Children	0.058	0.319
Spouse is immigrant	0.144	0.133	Spouse is immigrant	0.144	0.133
Believe religion	0.036	0.671	Believe religion	0.036	0.671
40<working hours<51	0.129	0.322	40<working hours<51	0.129	0.322
50<working hours<61	0.182	0.338	50<working hours<61	0.182	0.338
Working hours>60	-0.512	0.006	Working hours>60	-0.512	0.006
Working hours cannot apply	-0.022	0.861	Working hours cannot apply	-0.022	0.861
Constant	5.012	0	Constant	5.012	0
Prob>F	0.000		Prob>F	0.000	
R Square	0.120		R Square	0.120	