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Psychology of Diversity: Managing Acculturation and Multiculturalism in Plural Societies

Abstract

This chapter begins with an outline of some ways in which individuals and societies (both dominant and non-dominant) seek to live together in culturally-plural societies (Berry, 2005), with a focus on the concepts of acculturation and multiculturalism. Acculturation, at individual and cultural levels, are also discussed and an acculturation framework referred to as Multidimensional Individual Difference of Acculturation (MIDA) is outline (Safdar, Lay, & Struthers). The MIDA model rests on a number of core cultural and psychological factors that influence adaptation of immigrants. The chapter, further, outlines intercultural strategies and patterns of intercultural relations. Some of the acculturation concepts and issues are then illustrated by recent work with immigrant youth (Berry, Phinney, Sam& Vedder, 2006). Conclusions about how to best manage cultural diversity in plural societies are proposed.

Introduction

All contemporary societies are now culturally plural; no society is made up of people having one culture, one language, and one identity (Sam & Berry, 2006). The prediction made over a century ago by Quincy Adams (1911) that "The whole continent of North America appears to be destined by Divine Providence to be peopled by one nation, speaking one language, professing one general system of religious and political principles, and accustomed to one general tenor of social usages and customs" (cited by Lens, 1974, p. 3), has not come to pass in North America, nor in any other part of the world. This is because contact between cultures is a creative and reactive process, generating new customs and values, and stimulating resistance, rather than simply leading to cultural domination and homogenization.

This chapter begins with an outline of some ways in which individuals and societies (both dominant and non-dominant) seek to live together in such culturally-plural societies (Berry, 2005), with a focus on the concepts of acculturation and multiculturalism. Some of these

concepts and issues will then be illustrated by recent work with immigrant youth (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006). Some conclusions about how to best manage cultural diversity will then be proposed.

Acculturation: Cultural and Individual

Acculturation is the process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between cultural groups and their individual members (Redfield, Linton & Herskovits, 1936). Such contact and change occurs during colonization, military invasion, migration and sojourning (such as tourism, international study and overseas posting); it continues after initial contact in culturally-plural societies, where ethnocultural communities maintain features of their heritage cultures. The adaptations that groups and individuals make to living in culture-contact settings take place over time; occasionally this process is stressful, but often it results in some form of mutual accommodation (understood as the changes that groups and individuals in both groups make in order to live together in relative harmony). Following an initial period of work with colonized peoples, recent acculturation research has focused on how immigrants (both voluntary and involuntary) changed following their entry and settlement into receiving societies. Most recently, research has examined how ethnocultural groups and individuals relate to each other, and change, as a result of their attempts to live together in culturally plural societies (see Sam & Berry, 2006 for an overview of this literature). Nowadays, all peoples in contact are important, as globalization results in ever-increasing trading and political relations: indigenous national populations experience neo-colonization, new waves of immigrants, sojourners (especially guest workers), and refugees flow from these economic and political changes, and large ethnocultural populations become established in most countries.

Graves (1967), introduced the concept of psychological acculturation, which refers to changes in an individual who is a participant in a culture contact situation, being influenced both by the external (usually dominant) culture, and by the changing culture (usually non-dominant) of which the individual is a member. There are two reasons for keeping the cultural and psychological levels distinct. The first is that in cross-cultural psychology, we view individual human behaviour as interacting with the cultural context within which it occurs; hence separate conceptions and measurements are required at the two levels (Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen, 2002). The second reason is that not every individual enters into, participates in, or changes in the same way during their acculturation; there are vast individual differences in psychological acculturation, even among individuals who have the

same cultural origin and who live in the same acculturative arena (Sam & Berry, 2006).

A framework that outlines and links cultural and psychological acculturation, and identifies the two (or more) groups in contact (Berry, 2003) provided a map of those phenomena which, we believe, need to be conceptualized and measured during acculturation research. At the cultural level we need to understand key features of the two original cultural groups prior to their major contact. It is also important to understand the nature of their contact relationships, and the resulting dynamic cultural changes in both groups and in the ethnocultural groups that emerge during the process of acculturation. The gathering of this information requires extensive ethnographic, community-level work. These cultural changes can be minor or substantial, and range from being easily accomplished through to being a source of major cultural disruption.

At the individual level, we need to consider the psychological changes that individuals in all groups undergo, and their eventual adaptation to their new situations. Identifying these changes requires sampling a population and studying individuals who are variably involved in the process of acculturation. These changes can be a set of rather easily accomplished behavioural shifts (e.g., in ways of speaking, dressing, and eating) or they can be more problematic, producing acculturative stress (Berry 1976; Berry, Kim, Minde & Mok, 1997), evidence of which is manifest as uncertainty, anxiety, and depression. Adaptations can be primarily internal or *psychological* (e.g., sense of well-being, or self-esteem) or *sociocultural* (linking the individual to others in the new society as manifested for example in competence in the activities of daily intercultural living; Ward, 1996).

One example of an acculturation framework, proposed by Safdar and colleagues (Safdar, 2002; Safdar, Lay, & Struthers, 2003) is a model referred to as Multidimensional Individual Difference of Acculturation (MIDA). This model incorporates the core variables that influence adaptation of immigrants and is based on the assumptions that (1) many immigrants strive to maintain their heritage culture (i.e., in-group contact), (2) to participate in the new culture (i.e., out-group contact), and (3) to maintain psychological and physical stability in the face of acculturation-specific and other sources of stress. According to Safdar et al. (2003) these three outcome variables are concerned with what immigrants do and with the state of their psychological

and physical health and are measures of both psychological and socio-cultural adaptation. The MIDA model also incorporates immigrants' acculturation strategies (see below) , psycho-social resources, co-national connectedness, and hassles (both acculturation-specific and non-specific) as predictors of adaptations.

The MIDA model rests on a number of theoretical approaches within social psychology, including social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), the five-stage model of inter-group relations (Taylor & McKirnan, 1984), acculturation attitudes (Berry, 1980), positive psychological functioning (Ryff & Singer, 1996), and hassles and psychological distress (DeLongis, Coyne, Dakof, Folkman, & Lazarus, 1982). Safdar et al. (2003; Safdar, 2002) provided empirical support for the model with diverse immigrant groups in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands.
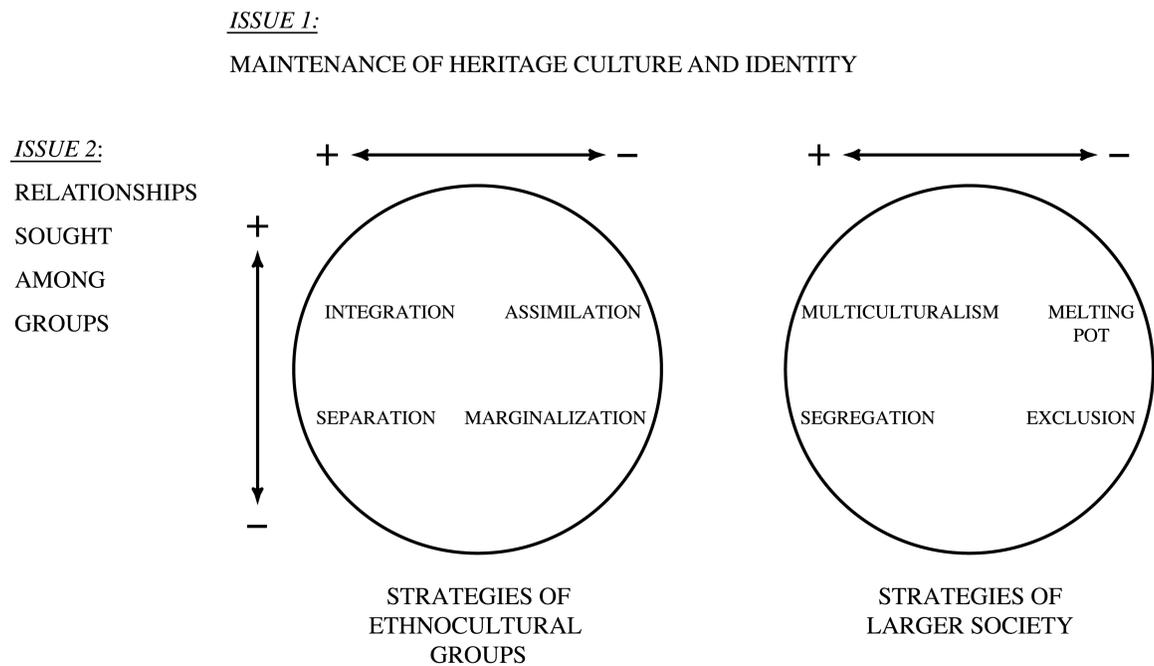
Intercultural Strategies

The concept of *intercultural strategies* refers to the various ways that groups and individuals seek to engage each other in culturally-plural societies. Knowledge of this variation has increased substantially in recent years (see Berry, 2003), challenging the assumption that every acculturating group and individual would assimilate and become absorbed into the dominant group (cf., Adams, 1811; Gordon 1964). At the cultural level, the groups in contact (whether dominant or non-dominant) usually have some notion about what they are attempting to do (e.g., colonial or settlement policies). The more immediate outcomes of the acculturation process (including the behavioural change and acculturative stress phenomena) are known to be a function, at least to some extent, of what people try to do during their acculturation; and the longer term outcomes (both psychological and sociocultural adaptations) are often related to the strategic goals set by the groups of which they are members (Berry, 1997).

Four intercultural strategies have been derived from two basic issues facing all acculturating peoples. These issues are based on the distinction between orientations toward one's own group, and those toward other groups (Berry, 1980). This distinction is rendered as (i) a relative preference for *maintaining* one's heritage culture and identity and (ii) a relative preference for having *contact* with and participating in the larger society along with other ethnocultural groups. It has now been well demonstrated that these two dimensions are empirically, as well as

conceptually, independent from each other (eg., Ryder, Alden & Paulhus, 2000) , and can be responded to on attitudinal dimensions, shown as varying along bipolar dimensions, rather than as binary (positive or negative) alternatives. This two dimensional formulation is presented in Figure 1.

 Figure 1. Intercultural Strategies in Ethnocultural Groups and the Larger Society

ISSUE 1:

MAINTENANCE OF HERITAGE CULTURE AND IDENTITY

ISSUE 2:

RELATIONSHIPS

SOUGHT

AMONG

GROUPS

| | INTEGRATION   ASSIMILATION | | MULTICULTURALISM   MELTING POT |
| | SEPARATION   MARGINALIZATION | | SEGREGATION   EXCLUSION |

STRATEGIES OF
ETHNOCULTURAL
GROUPS

STRATEGIES OF
LARGER SOCIETY

Source: Berry, 2003.

        Orientations to these issues intersect to define four intercultural strategies. These strategies carry different names, depending on which ethnocultural group (the dominant or non-dominant) is being considered. From the point of view of non-dominant ethnocultural groups (on the left of Figure 1), they are referred to as *acculturation strategies*. The first is when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures; the *assimilation* strategy is defined by this orientation. In contrast, when individuals place a value on holding on to their original culture, and at the same time whish to avoid interaction with others, then the *separation* alternative is defined. When there is an interest both in maintaining one's original culture, and in daily interactions with other groups, *integration* is the outcome that is being sought. In this case, there is some degree of cultural integrity maintained,

while at the same time one seeks, as a member of an ethnocultural group, to participate as an integral part of the larger social network. Finally, when there is little interest in cultural maintenance (often because there is little possibility of doing so for reasons of enforced cultural loss), and little interest in having relations with others (often for reasons of exclusion or discrimination) then *marginalization* is defined. These four strategies carry the acronym of AIMS, signifying both their names, and the notion that individuals and groups have acculturation goals, toward which they strive.

This presentation was initially based on the assumption that non-dominant groups and their individual members have the freedom to choose how they want to acculturate. This, of course, is not always the case. When the dominant group enforces certain forms of acculturation, or constrains the choices of non-dominant groups or individuals, then other terms need to be used. Thus, integration can only be "freely" chosen and successfully pursued by non-dominant groups when the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation toward cultural diversity in general, and to the specific ethnocultural groups. Thus a mutual accommodation is required for integration to be attained, involving the acceptance by both groups of the right of the other to live as a culturally distinct people. This strategy requires non-dominant groups to adopt the basic values of the larger society, while at the same time the dominant group must be prepared to adapt national institutions (e.g., education, health, labour) to better meet the needs of all groups now living together in the plural society.

It should be noted that researchers must be clear in their rationale for using a particular operationalization of acculturation, since different operationalizations produce different results. Playford and Safdar, (this volume) examine differences between three operationalisations of acculturation (contact with larger society, adoption of the culture of the larger society, and identification with the larger society). They have also compared these three operationalisations in terms of their ability to predict three different kinds of adaptation: psychological well-being, psychological ill-being, and socio-cultural difficulties. The three acculturation conceptualizations yielded different distributions of participants across four acculturation strategies and different predictions of adaptation (see chapter for details).

These two basic issues were initially approached by using the concept of *acculturation strategies* with non-dominant ethnocultural groups. However, the original anthropological definition clearly established that both groups in contact would change and become

acculturated. Hence, a third dimension was added: that of the powerful role played by the dominant group in influencing the way in which mutual acculturation would take place (Berry, 1974). The addition of this third dimension produces the right side of Figure 1, where the concept used is that of *acculturation expectations* (Berry, 2003). Assimilation, when sought by the dominant group, is termed the *melting pot.* When separation is forced by the dominant group it is *segregation.* Marginalization, when imposed by the dominant group, is *exclusion.* Finally, for integration, when diversity is a widely-accepted feature of the society as a whole, including all the various ethnocultural groups, it is called *multiculturalism*.

There is another aspect to the phenomena on this side of Figure 1. Research has also been carried out with respect to the dominant group's willingness to engage in cultural change themselves, as part of the process of mutual accommodation. This aspect has been termed *multicultural ideology* (Berry, Kalin & Taylor, 1977; Berry & Kalin, 2000; see also Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2003). Finally, it is important to note that the concepts of assimilation and integration have often become used as synonyms, particularly in Europe and the USA (Nguyen, 2006; Phalet & Kosic, 2006; Sabatier & Boutry, 2006). In Berry's original and continuing usage, these are clearly distinct constructs, based on their different emphases on the value placed on cultural maintenance (Berry, 2005).

With the use of this framework, comparisons can be made of the acculturation strategies, between individuals and their groups, and between non-dominant peoples and the larger society within which they are acculturating. The acculturation expectations (ideologies and policies) of the dominant group constitute an important element of intercultural research (see Berry, et al., 1977; Bourhis, Moise, Perreault & Senecal 1997), while the preferences of non-dominant peoples are a core feature in acculturation research, (Berry, Kim, Power, Young & Bujaki, 1989). Inconsistencies and conflicts between these various acculturation preferences are common sources of difficulty for those experiencing acculturation. For example it can occur when individuals do not accept the main ideology of their society (when individuals oppose immigrant cultural maintenance in a society where multiculturalism is official policy), or when immigrant children challenge the acculturation strategy set out by their parents. Generally, when acculturation experiences cause problems for acculturating individuals, we observe the phenomenon of acculturative stress, with variations in levels of adaptation (Berry, 2006a).

Safdar, Fuller, and Lewis (this volume) report the link between acculturation attitudes and socio-cultural difficulties among immigrants living in rural Canada. They found that those who endorsed integration, assimilation and marginalization were less likely to report socio-cultural difficulties. Although positive attitudes toward integration and assimilation have, consistently, been found to be associated with fewer socio-cultural difficulties (e.g. Berry, 2003), the link between marginalization and fewer socio-cultural difficulties is not the usual finding. Perhaps, in a rural context, in a country where assimilation is not insisted upon, a relatively marginal existence is a more feasible strategy than in other research contexts studied to date. This would be akin to a lifestyle that Bourhis et al. (1997) refer to as individualism (see chapter for further details).
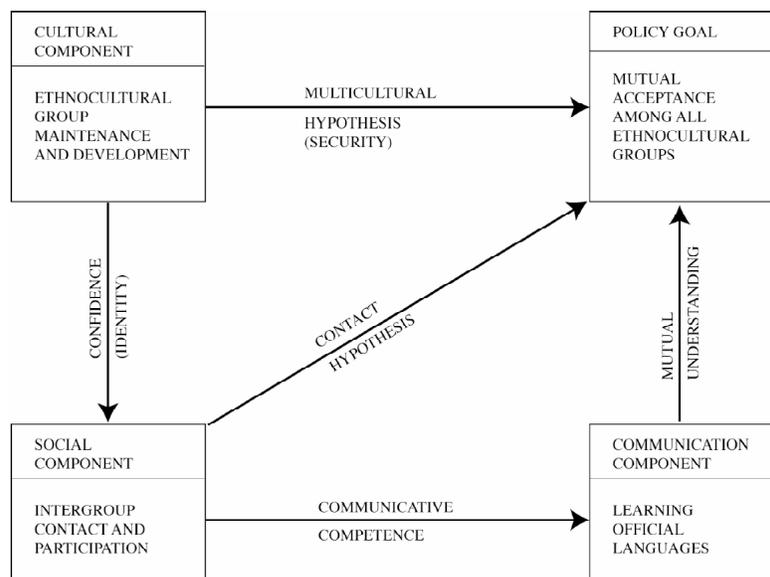
Multiculturalism

Research on these complex patterns of intercultural relations began in Canada as a response to the 1971 announcement by the Federal Government of a "Policy of Multiculturalism." (see Figure 2). This policy has one main goal, and three programmes to achieve it (Berry, 1984; 2006b; Berry & Kalin, 2000; Berry et al., 1977). The main goal is to improve the degree of mutual acceptance of all groups within the plural society. The first programme (the *cultural* component) is to provide support and encouragement for cultural maintenance and development among all ethnocultural groups. This component parallels the first issue in the acculturation strategies framework, which deals with the maintenance of heritage cultures and identities. The second programme (the *social* component) encourages the sharing of cultures by providing opportunities for intergoup contact, and the removal of barriers to full participation in the larger society. This component parallels the second issue in the strategies framework, which deals with contact with other ethnocultural groups. The third programme (the *intercultural communication* component) represents the bilingual reality of the larger society of Canada, and promotes the learning of one or both Official Languages (English and French) as a means for all ethnocultural groups to interact with each other; this serves as a basis for sharing each others' cultures and for participating in national life by everyone.

It is essential to note that the concept of multiculturalism and of the MC policy has two simultaneous and equally important emphases: the maintenance of heritage cultures and identities *and* the full and equitable participation of all ethnocultural groups in the life of the larger society. In the terms used in Figure 1, pursuing the first without the second, leads to separation/segregation, while emphasising the second without the first

leads to assimilation/melting pot. Together, and in balance with each other, it should be possible to achieve integration/ multiculturalism, and avoid to marginalisation/ exclusion. However, in some societies (e.g., many countries in Europe and the USA) there is a common misunderstanding that multiculturalism means only the presence of many independent cultural communities in a society, without their equitable participation and incorporation.

In addition to these four components, there are social psychological links among them. The first (at the top of Figure 2) is expressed in the policy statement (Government of Canada, 1971) as the belief that confidence in one's identity will lead to sharing, respect for others, and to the reduction of discriminatory attitudes. Berry et al. (1977) identified this belief as an assumption with psychological roots, and as being amenable to empirical evaluation; we called it the *multiculturalism hypothesis*. Our findings from national surveys (Berry et al., 1977; pp. 224-227; Berry & Kalin, 1995) lend support to this link between confidence and mutual acceptance. When individuals and groups feel culturally secure of their place in the plural society, they hold more positive attitudes toward others; but when they are threatened, they become more hostile (see Berry, 2006 for a review of evidence bearing on the multiculturalism hypothesis).

Figure 2. Multiculturalism Policy in Canada: Cultural Maintenance and Equitable Participation

Source: Berry, 2006b.

The benefit of multiculturalism has been also documented by other researchers. For example, Safdar (2004) compared immigrants' experience of hassles in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. She found that Iranian immigrants living in Canada reported significantly lower levels of acculturation-specific and non-specific hassles than the Iranian immigrants living in the U.K. The Iranian-Canadians also reported fewer hassles than the Iranian-Americans but the difference was not significant. Safdar (2004) argued that although factors such as level of education, employment status, and length of residency, could explain the high level of hassles among the Iranian-British, the national policy toward immigrants could also be a contributory factor. In countries such as the U.S. and the U.K., the promotion of assimilation has been the dominant policy. To assimilate, members of minority groups have to engage with members of the larger society which may well lead to more hassles. By contrast, in Canada, immigrants are not under the same pressure to assimilate and if they experience difficulty in interactions with the wider Canadian society, the option of withdrawing from the larger society is more viable than in the U.S. or the U.K.

This view is supported by findings reported by Safdar et al., (2003) that Iranian-Canadians who endorsed attitudes favouring separation from Canadian society did not report high psycho-physical symptoms. This finding is consistent with the results obtained in an international study of immigrant youth (see below), where a separation orientation was associated with psychological adaptation. However, it runs counter to the findings of some researchers of a positive link between separation as a mode of acculturation and acculturative stress (Berry & Kim, 1988). It is possible that separation, as a response to difficulties, may have fewer negative implications for immigrants living in Canada with a national multiculturalism policy than those living in societies that have not, historically, promoted multiculturalism (e.g., the U.S., the U.K.).

A second link portrayed in Figure 2 is the *contact hypothesis*, according to which contact and sharing is considered to promote mutual acceptance under certain conditions, especially that of equality (Amir, 1969). In the national surveys in Canada (Berry et al, 1977; Berry & Kalin, 1995) substantial support for this relationship has been found,

especially when status is controlled. For example, overall ratings of mutual *familiarity* (a rating of how much contact and interaction an individual had with members of a specific ethnocultural group) were positively correlated with favourable attitudes toward members of that group. In analyses at the level of neighbourhoods (Kalin & Berry, 1982; Kalin, 1996) the greater the proportion of a particular group, the more positive were attitudes toward that group by non-members. There was no evidence of a 'tipping point,' where a higher presence of a particular group in one's neighbourhood became associated with less acceptance of that group. Pettigrew and Tropp (2000) carried out a meta-analysis of numerous studies of the contact hypothesis, which came from many countries and many diverse settings (schools, work, experiments). Their findings provide general support for the contact hypothesis: intergroup contact does generally relate negatively to prejudice in both dominant and non-dominant samples.

Immigrant Youth

          To exemplify these ideas and issues, following are some findings from research with immigrant youth (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006).   This study examined the acculturation and adaptation of immigrant youth (aged 13 to 18 years) settled in13 societies (N= 5366), as well as a sample of national youth (N= 2631). The countries of settlement included the traditional "settler" societies (such as Australia, Canada USA), and others that have more recent experiences of immigration (such as France, Germany, Norway, Sweden). The countries of origin included major sending societies (such as China, India, Mexico,Turkey, Vietnam). Immigrant youth and their parents were interviewed in the major cities of settlement, along with their national peers and their parents. Variables in the study included those dealing with intercultural relations, and the adaptations achieved by the immigrant youth (see description of variables below). The study was guided by three core questions: *how* do immigrant youth deal with the process of acculturation; *how well* do they adapt; and are there important relationships between *how* they acculturate and *how well* they adapt?

          Examining our first question (variations in how youth acculturate) the first set of variables assessed *intercultural relations*, including the four acculturation strategies (AIMS); cultural identities; language knowledge and use; and peer relations (all distinguishing between ethnic and national orientations); and family relationship values (family obligations and adolescent rights). Cluster analysis of these intercultural variables produced four distinct acculturation profiles, which we termed

integration, ethnic, national and *diffuse.* These appear to correspond well
to the four ways of acculturating outlined in Figure 1.

        With respect to our second main question another set of variables
focused on youth *adaptation.* These included life satisfaction, self-
esteem, psychological problems, school adjustment and behaviour
problems. Factor analysis of the five adaptation variables revealed two
distinct forms of adaptation: psychological and sociocultural,
corresponding well to the conceptual distinction outlined earlier (Ward,
1996).

        Finally, with respect to our third question, there were substantial
relationships between *how* youth acculturate and *how well* they adapt:
those with an integration profile had the best psychological and
sociocultural adaptation outcomes, while those with a diffuse profile had
the worst; in between, those with an ethnic profile had moderately good
psychological adaptation but poorer sociocultural adaptation, while those
with a national profile had moderately poor psychological adaptation, and
slightly negative sociocultural adaptation. This pattern of results was
largely replicated using structural equation modeling.

        Of particular importance for our discussion is the relationship
between how youth acculturate and how well they adapt, and another
variable: *perceived discrimination*. This is important because such
discrimination is the best indicator of the degree to which immigrant
youth are permitted to participate equitably in the life of the larger
society. Those in the integration cluster reported experiencing the least
discrimination, and those in the diffuse cluster reported the most; in
between, national cluster youth had moderately low discrimination, and
ethnic cluster youth had moderately high discrimination. And in the
structural equation model, the single most powerful variable predicting
poor psychological and sociocultural adaptation was the degree of
discrimination perceived by immigrant youth. Thus, the degree to which
immigrant youth experience discrimination corresponds with their
preferred acculturation strategy, and has a direct impact on their
adaptation.

        How do these general findings relate to the issue of cultural
pluralism, and to the presence or absence of a multiculturalism policy in a
society of settlement? We were able to arrange the 13 societies according
to two indicators of pluralism: the degree of actual cultural diversity, and
the degree of a policy promoting cultural pluralism, based on the analyses

of Banting and Kymlicka (2004).   We found that that both diversity variables were directly related to *both* an increased orientation toward the national group and stronger involvement with one's own ethnic group. The combination of a stronger orientation in more diverse societies toward both their ethnic group and the national society (which we have earlier termed the integration orientation) might indicate that greater diversity provides a salient context in which youth feel more able to orient themselves toward both groups, rather than having to choose between them. We also found that higher levels of cultural diversity coincided with lower psychological adaptation, as well as with increased experience of discrimination. This finding suggests that greater diversity in a society offers the opportunity for greater discrimination against members of the various cultural groups; conversely, when there is little diversity, there can be fewer such opportunities. With respect to diversity policy, youth settled in societies supporting a policy of cultural diversity reported slightly better sociocultural adaptation than youth in societies less supportive of such policy.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at the process of acculturation at the individual and cultural levels and the four intercultural strategies (i.e., integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization). To exemplify these concepts we made particular reference to two recent studies on immigrant youth and immigrants living in rural area and drew attention to the significance of the larger society's acculturation orientation. This leads us to the following comments on the management of cultural diversity.

If individual preferences regarding how to acculturate (acculturation strategies), and the link between these strategies and adaptation are taken as useful criteria, then the integration/multicultural way of living in a culturally-plural society is clearly the best option. The experience of discrimination appears to be an important factor in the choice of acculturation strategy, and has a substantial limiting effect on youth adaptation. While an ethnic orientation is related to such discrimination, it does have some positive adaptation outcomes. However, an integration orientation has even better adaptation outcomes for immigrant youth, but this can only come about with lowered levels of discrimination.

In terms of the two dimensions in the acculturation strategies framework, there is clear evidence of a strong preference for cultural maintenance among immigrant youth; and there is also clear evidence for a desire to engage with the larger society. However, achieving this

integrative way of acculturating is also in the hands of members of the larger society. With public policies that broadcast the joint message that it is acceptable (even desirable) for immigrant youth to maintain their heritage cultures, and that this will be no impediment to their full and equitable participation in the evolving national society, the most positive outcomes (win-win) will be achieved for all. In contrast, policies that seek "one people, one culture, one identity and one language" are bound to be rejected by immigrants, encourage discrimination against them, and lead to negative (lose-lose) outcomes for all.

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