

The typological hybrid identity formation of long-term western foreign residents in Japan

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(日本に長期滞在する欧米人に関するハイブリッド・アイデンティティ構造の類型論的研究)

This dissertation uses original empirical research on long-term western foreign residents (LTW) in Japan to form a typological result revealing various styles of integration and identity formation within the Japanese social construct. Certain identity types are formed and labeled (frustration, balance, satisfied but separated and the full circle). Some LTW are shown to have attained *hybrid identity* achievement within their community. The original form of the hybrid concept was applied to illustrate the various *styles of belonging* within a contextually mixed community. Communities could be defined as Japanese, non-Japanese or a mix of both. Erik Erikson's (1980) work on identity is applied as a foundational piece of the theory used in this paper, but also separates itself from past work on hybrid identities. The typological groups were devised from a combination of past literature and empirical results from 25 interviews and a nationwide 93 item survey conducted by the author. All the respondents for both the survey and the interviews have lived in Japan for over 10 years until the time of this study and needed to be from a western culturally based country. (i.e. U.S.A, U.K., some European countries incl.). Most studies on western foreign residents focus on exchange students or new arrivals, but this study hopes to see beyond the initial reactions of westerners arriving in Japan and rather observe how they have or have not become a functional part of the Japanese society over the long-term. The long-term aspect allows for observation of the latent functional outcomes of manifest functions performed earlier in their life in Japan.

These functions or actions were grouped together into catalysts used to determine the depth of integration and identity achievement. The presence or lack of several *catalysts* such as language ability, perceived discrimination and microaggressions were observed. The effects of the catalysts along with the *styles of belonging* (life satisfaction and cultural fit) factors were tested in a Pearson r correlation in a previous study (O'Keefe 2016). These results assist in determining which factors may show positive or negative correlations with life satisfaction.

This study also offers several other results beyond the main hypothesis. There were variances found between the LTW sexes as well as differences in the linguistic and social expectations of LTW versus other foreign groups in Japan. Foreign residents from non-western backgrounds are expected to learn Japanese to attain work in Japan while westerners are not. The high socio-economic status of westerners places them in a category different from other

Asian or South American groups. During the interviews for this study, respondents often referred to language as an important factor to success in Japan. While this holds true, cultural fit has been shown to be the final factor of being able to integrate successfully into the host culture (O'Keefe 2016). Perceived discrimination was shown to decrease over time for the majority surveyed respondents, while those who are affected by microaggressions seem to stay at a constant. Female respondents were also reported as being affected by microaggressions more than men.

The forming of an identity often uses the defining of the *other* as to what they are not rather than what they are. This study observes this in the form of *intragroup othering*. Respondents used examples of other westerners who they do not wish to become. Examples came from both ends of the spectrum, such as not becoming a Japanophile or another was not to be the westerner who has lived in Japan for 20 years and cannot speak Japanese were two examples given. Other examples are offered throughout the interview quotes. Finally, It needs to be stated how this study separates itself from immigrations studies on other foreign groups which apply the hybrid model. Past hybrid identity studies commonly focus on socioeconomically challenged groups, while westerners, due to a higher socioeconomic status, tend not to fall into this category, but rather do experience cultural barriers which can affect their psychological and sociocultural adaptation to Japanese society. This study does not attempt to include LTW with previous studies on socio-economically challenged foreign residents. This study is offering an original look into the lives of LTW.

Another complication experienced when performing this study was the lack of sociological studies on long-term western foreign residents in Japan. To offset the shortage of literature, references from a wide variety of fields such as socio-psychology, intercultural studies and management studies have also been used to fulfill some of this study's needs.