AMONG THISTLES AND THORNS: WEST INDIAN DIASPORA IMMIGRANTS IN NEW YORK CITY AND TORONTO

by

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A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

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Abstract

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ALWYN D. GILKES

Adviser: Professor Anderson J. Franklin, Jr.

The research investigated the relationships between resilience and immigration, and the social-psychological processes involved in the acculturation of immigrants from the English-speaking West Indies living in New York City and Toronto. The sample consisted of 21 adults, 11 women 10 men, with a wide range of immigration experiences. Seven had been in the respective cities 1-10 years, five 11 – 20 years, and nine 21+ years. These voluntary immigrants recruited by posters and snowball techniques were interviewed about their experiences negotiating and acculturating to the socio- cultural changes associated with living in the United States and Canada. Materialism and self-development were critical motivation factors for immigration, although the groups differed on the relative importance of each. Race-related stressors were the major risk factor for this sample. Individuals were constrained by group characteristics – race and ethnicity, from fully integrating into the respective societies. However, this appeared to be more problematic for the Toronto group where multiculturalism, as an aid to integration, was not supported. Instead, the multiculturalism policy is seen as contributing

to separatism, cultural intolerance, and marginalized status. Underemployment was persistent in both cities, as was family-related stress, which was most often associated with parent-child interaction. Protective mechanisms centered on personal agency or self-reliance, ethnic identity, cognitive ability, and an ideology of return. But most important to the resilience process were ethnic identity and intra-cultural socialization, and cognitive ability. Previous acculturation models identified integration as the optimal acculturation strategy because it minimized acculturative stress. Maintenance of native culture to the exclusion of the host country culture was seen as a separation strategy, one likely to increase stress. There was little evidence that this was true, in fact contrary findings were supported. The research shows that the integrative process for this sample of immigrants halts at the ethnic group level, or the wider community level, and rarely progresses to the broader societal level. Although the study is limited by its sample size, as an exploratory study it was not designed to generalize the results to the population of adult voluntary immigrants from the West Indies.

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Let me begin by expressing my gratitude to my committee members for their guidance and assistance. The greatest appreciation goes to Dr. Anderson J. Franklin, chair whose skill and expertise was most beneficial in my completing this process. I am also grateful to Dr. Suzanne Ouellette, who not only has been a tremendous support and encouragement throughout my graduate training, but also kept challenging me in the writing of this dissertation. To Drs. William (Bill) Cross, Kay Deaux, and Don Robotham, I say respect for honoring me by being committee members.

I am also extremely grateful to have a host of friends, and immediate family, in Barbados, Canada, and the United States, whose support throughout this project has sustained me, even when my resolve has wavered. I will not name names for fear of forgetting someone, but know that you all are forever in my consciousness.

Finally, and most importantly, I wish to thank those who participated in this research project. Without you this would not have been possible. You took a stranger into your homes and, in some cases, shared some of your innermost thoughts and fears.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Colin Worrell, Rodney Holloway, and my son Andre Gilkes. You represent the past, present, and the future.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Humans act towards people and things based on the meanings they have given to these people or things.

-Herbert Blumer.

Immigration is a stressful experience that produces immediate and long-term consequences for the immigrants and the immigrant-receiving countries. Moreover, the stress caused by these changes often leads to altered physical and psychological health outcomes, at the individual level. Although immigration is stressful, not all immigrants are disabled by the experience; in fact many thrive. How people experience growth, stagnation, or decline is of interest to researchers and policy makers. Where there is growth, this can be intellectual, social, or spiritual growth. When there is a lack of growth, what are the psychosocial factors that negatively impact the success of the immigration experience?

Debate about immigrant adaptation to a new host culture has multiple dimensions some of which are better understood than others. But it is clear that the issue of immigrants' psychological health warrants serious research attention. A key issue in writing about immigrants' resilience is the role of identity – social and ethnic. Notably, what are the factors that foster resilience in a specific immigrant individual or group? Conversely, is identification as a member of an immigrant group related to specific mental health outcomes? This study used adult immigrants from the West Indies to investigate both sides of this resilience issue.

Purpose of the Study

Published studies on the relationship between resilience and immigration have focused on a select number of ethnic groups. These include Russian Jews, Hispanics, and Asians - notably Vietnamese and Chinese (Aroian & Norris, 2000; Hovey, 2000; Zhou, 1997). Far more remarkable is the dearth of published empirical studies that spotlight underrepresented groups; in this case African descent individuals, particularly those from the Caribbean. This neglect partly results from the predilection of North American social scientists to lump all African descent groups – West Indian, African, and African American – together on the basis of skin color. This practice fallaciously assumes, *a priori,* a similarity of experiences and outcomes.

Furthermore, the majority of the available research on the relationship between resilience and immigration has dealt with individuals or groups who migrated, or were displaced, as the result of war or major catastrophe. Very little research has been published on individuals, or groups, who immigrate for purposes other than war or catastrophe – those to whom the phrase, voluntary migration, might apply; although the lines between voluntary and forced migration have become less distinct.

The study sought to explore this inadequacy in the literature, using as the focal group immigrants from the West Indian Diaspora. This population was chosen because it affords the chance to study both the effects of acculturation stress in general, and race related stress in particular. Social scientists have written and theorized about the above-average accomplishment of immigrant individuals from these English-speaking countries as compared with, for example, Black Americans. Nevertheless, West Indian Diaspora individuals' place in, and relation to, the social order is subjectively and objectively

different from that of the previously mentioned immigrant groups (e.g., Asians, Jews and Hispanics), therefore findings with those groups cannot be generalized to these immigrants.

Where published studies have dealt with the West Indian immigrants' psychological health (e.g., Burke, 1985; Rutter, Yule, Morton & Bailey, 1975), these have used the medical model, as opposed to the psychosocial model, to discuss the relationship between immigration and psychological health. This study sought to investigate how studying resilience as a process can help us understand, and portray accurately, how adult immigrants from the West Indian Diaspora negotiate acculturation and the stress associated with immigrating to Canada and the United States.

Immigration: Defining the function

Ideological and political shifts, along with globalization in trade and commerce, have resulted in profound changes within and across social organizations, countries, and nations. Nowhere in the economically developed countries is social change more profound than in the area of immigration. For example, the fastest growing segment of the Canadian and U.S. population is the immigrant population. Furthermore, the 2000 U.S. Census indicates that immigrants to this country come from a number of non-traditional sources, with traditional defined as Canada and Europe; primarily white Anglo-Saxon. The 2001 Canadian Census shows a similar trend; in the 1990s, of the top 10 places of birth of new immigrants, only three – Poland, the United States, and the United Kingdom –were considered traditional sources.

This growth in immigration and the resultant demographic changes have caused shifts in public policy, sometimes more than one shift. For example, within the last ten years a de facto anti-immigration policy in the U.S. led to the enactment of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (The Immigration Reform Act, 1996), meant to control the flow of new immigrants to the country. But the sustained growth of the U.S. economy in the late 1990s caused a shift to a "relatively" pro-immigration stance, and a move to attract more foreign workers to specialized industries. Further, at the time of this study the U.S. Government was considering a recommendation to regularize the immigration status of millions of undocumented Mexican workers. However, the September 11, 2001 bombing of the World Trade Center moved the pendulum's swing to an anti-immigrant position.

Previously, the dynamics of immigration meant people were fleeing: religious persecution, ethnic and racial discrimination, or ideological and political changes. In this era of international globalization of trade and capital[1], the mechanics and reasons for immigration have changed. Now, the reasons for migration center on economics and skill, and more and more it has become international labor migration. People with skills (e.g. biotechnology, computer specialists, nurses, teachers, etc.) are recruited into the economically developed countries, thereby depleting the skill resource and the social capital of the sending countries. This in turn leads to the migration of the less skilled, because as knowledge and expertise leave so too do jobs and employment opportunities. Paradoxically, the recruitment of skilled individuals may have created a new type or class of immigrant, the transnational.

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[1] However, if we conceive of slavery as the driving force of the Industrial Revolution, then the globalization in trade and commerce is not a new thing.

In March 2000, the U.N. released population projections for eight countries, including Canada and the United States. These showed that immigration could partially offset the economic, social, and cultural disruptions that accompany demographic shrinking and population aging. Although this makes a *prima facie* case for increased immigration, there are opposing positions on the impact of immigration on the North American economy. Some sociologists, economists, and politicians view immigration as beneficial since it provides a source of new markets and new entrepreneurs. On the other hand, others such as Borjas (1999) argue that new immigrants have an adverse effect on the wages and job opportunities of native-born Americans.

The duality in the American position on the issue of immigration is also evident at the institutional level. There is the ever-growing threat of American cultural imperialism, international capitalism, and the hypocrisy of bourgeois democracy, juxtaposed with the incipient sentiment of insularity that has seeped into the political rhetoric. This duality led researchers such as Massey (2001) to criticize some segments of U. S. society for seeking to prevent globalization in labor while building institutions to promote globalization in goods, capital, commodities, land, services, and information. Never mind, as Castles (2000) noted, globalization leads to increases in all kinds of cross-border flows, including movements of people.

Resilience and Immigration: Identifying the audience

Helping immigrants manage the stress of moving to another country and culture is fundamental to the resolution of conflicts – intrapersonal and interpersonal - that often arise as a result of the interactions between different national, cultural, and ethnic groups

who have different, and sometimes, conflicting beliefs and values. Nonetheless, most of the published studies on the relationship between resilience and immigration have come from the fields of anthropology, sociology, nursing, and social work. Psychology, as a discipline, has studied immigration and immigrant adaptation less than other social science disciplines. But as Dovidio and Esses (2001) note, intraindividual, interpersonal and intergroup processes - the defining elements of psychology - are essential aspects of immigration.

More psychological research has been conducted in Europe (e.g. Liebkind, 1996; Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000a; Sam & Berry, 1995) on the migrant situation than in the U.S. However, this has primarily dealt with refugees and displaced persons, as opposed to voluntary immigrants. The extant studies, both in Europe and North America, have investigated such factors as well-being, hardiness, alienation, and social support among others. However, the different conceptualizations, definitions, and measures used across studies have made it difficult to compare empirical findings on the relationships between resilience and immigration.

Resilience research has tended to focus on biological and medical deficits and not enough on social, environmental, and cultural stressors. Furthermore, earlier published studies on the relationship between resilience - often defined as well-being - and immigration used a medical model to explain mental health outcomes. Recent research has moved away from the medical model to one that implicates sociocultural and psychosocial factors. In addition, where earlier studies reported that immigrants were prone to psychiatric illness (See Cohler, Stott, & Musick, 1995), a number of recent studies (e.g. Dunn & Dyck, 2000; Harker, 2001) have reported that first-generation

immigrants have better outcomes, on average, than native born individuals, the so- called immigrant effect on psychological health.

Studying adult West Indian Diaspora immigrants' psychosocial adjustment to a new society has practical importance. At the practical level the research investigates the psychological impact of moving from a less economically developed region to more economically developed countries, and the psychosocial changes that ensue at the individual level. Theoretical implications also accrue from this research. The study's theoretical framework uses Berry's (1970) acculturation model as a point of departure in challenging the universalist assumptions of integration as the preferred path to acculturation for all immigrants by asking, what if historical, sociopolitical, and cultural differences exist at the group and individual levels, before, during, and after migration, between the immigrant and the host society that obviates any attempt at integration?

Resilience, as a concept, has been investigated from a number of perspectives (See Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000), but most of the literature is based on research conducted with children and adolescents. Where there has been research conducted on resilience in the adult population, it has focused on issues related to aging (Costa & McCrae, 1993), AIDS (Remien, Rabkin, Williams, and Katoff, 1992), and bereavement (McCrae & Costa, 1988). A far less studied application of resilience, in the adult population, has been in the study of immigration, and the psychological processes associated with relocating to another, in some circumstances hostile country and culture. This study sought to broaden the domains of inquiry on resilience to include adaptation and acculturation among adult immigrants as specific domains of enquiries, and to

expand our thinking about the processes and outcomes of contact between dominant and non-dominant cultural and ethnic groups.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Immigration from the British West Indies

Brief Overview of the British West Indies

The English-speaking West Indies, a string of islands in the Western Atlantic that include Jamaica, Antigua, Dominica, Barbados, and The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, among others, was an almost total creation of imperialism. While the other colonized peoples and countries of the Empire were subject to military and economic control, it was only the West Indies that was created based on slave labor forcibly transported from another part of the world (Brock, 1984).

To call this region the British West Indies or English-speaking West Indies is to oversimplify the historical and colonialist traditions of the countries. Although the region's English-speaking countries ultimately fell under British colonial rule, at various times the Dutch, French, and Spanish colonizers had settled most of the countries. Furthermore, these countries had preexisting cultures before the arrival of the European colonizers. The First Nations people included the Caribs and Arawaks in the island groupings, and the Amerindians in The Republic of Guyana, and The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Christopher Columbus's arrival in the region heralded the arrival of the colonials, and simultaneously the extinction of the preexisting cultures and the First Nation peoples. This also began the period of prolonged wars between Spain, France, England, and Holland over territory and bounty. Unlike Barbados, which was ruled by England continuously from 1625 to 1966, most of the other countries in the region had a much

less settled colonial history. For example, from 1494-1655 the Spanish ruled Jamaica, followed by the British until 1962; Dominica was a French colony from 1635 until 1805, broken by a period in 1763-1778 when the English controlled the island; and the twin countries of Trinidad and Tobago each had different colonial histories. Trinidad was "discovered" and named by Columbus in 1498 and controlled by the Spanish from 1592-1797. By comparison, Tobago, which changed hands 22 times during the colonial period, was finally ceded to Great Britain in 1814. In addition to Martinique and Guadeloupe, France also settled St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Grenada. Each of these three countries continues to show evidence of French cultural influence, especially St. Lucia where the majority of the population speak patois – a combination of French and English.

The region's racial majority are the Black descendants of African slaves brought to the region by the colonizers. But the history of the region presents evidence that the Caribbean, including the South American nation Guyana- which was controlled by the Dutch and the British - is more culturally and ethnically diverse than one would first imagine. This ethnic diversity is best represented by two nations – Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana, both of which had established histories of indentured laborers from India. The two major racial and ethnic groups in Trinidad and Tobago are Indo-Trinidadian, and Afro-Trinidadian, 40.3 and 40.0 percent respectively. The other ethnic groups include mixed raced, Europeans and Chinese; while the cultural, language, and art forms are influenced by African, Spanish, Indian, French and British roots.

Guyana had indentured laborers from China, Portugal, and India, in addition to slaves from Africa. These contribute to Guyana's racial and ethnic mix of Indo-Guyanese, and Afro-Guyanese at 40 and 32 percent respectively. When the still extant

Portuguese culture and the Amerindian First Nation culture is added to those of the two majority groups, it contributes to a unique cultural mélange. Interestingly, and perhaps not surprisingly, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago both have recent histories of ethnic and racial tensions.

The colonialists' pasts have impacted the West Indies in various forms, most prominently social and economic. For example, following the abolition of slavery, and before and after the countries in the region attained political independence the African descent majority had gained power in the political and social spheres. However, the ethnic minority white, descendants of the former slave owners, continue to wield substantial economic power in most countries. Furthermore, the unmet expectation of post-independence economic prosperity has profoundly affected the social and political climates of some countries (e.g., Grenada and Jamaica).

Immigration as a fact of life

Immigration as a fact of life in the West Indies has a long history. By 1850, slavery had been abolished in most English-speaking West Indian countries, but the now freed slaves were forced into slavery-like conditions. Because of chronic over-population, scarce resources, and limited opportunities to own property, many West Indians used immigration as a survival strategy; a strategy explicitly supported by some governments. Thus, immigration became an integral part of the life cycle and one of the viable alternatives for lower socio-economic standing persons.

West Indian immigrants – mostly Jamaicans and Barbadians - went to work in Panama, first in the period 1850 – 1855, when the railroad across the Isthmus of Panama was being built. This West Indian migration to Central America - especially Panama,

Costa Rica, and Belize continued well into the 1880s. The migration recommenced between 1904 and 1914, when individuals were recruited to work on the Panama Canal. Bonham Richardson estimates that approximately 45,000 black Barbadians emigrated to Panama and the Canal Zone between 1900 and 1920 (Richardson, 1985).

At about the same time, Montserratians, Grenadians, Antiguans, and St. Lucians moved to work in the oil refineries in Aruba and Curacao where crude oil from Venezuela was refined. Further, when labor shortages occurred in the U.S. Virgin Islands, many Antiguan and Kittians seized the opportunity to move there. Cuba was also a destination in this diasporic movement. Between 1898 and 1929, approximately 116,000 West Indian immigrants, again mainly from Jamaica and Barbados, migrated to the newly independent Cuba to work in the expanding sugar industry.

There also were waves of immigration to Britain in the 1950s and the early 1960s, fueled by the acute labor shortage after the Second World War. In fact, some British organizations aggressively advertised in the Caribbean for workers to fill the vacancies in the fields of medical care and transport. The United States and Canada reopened their doors in the 1960s, and the movement to these countries coincided with Britain's move to restrict immigration.

Although the majority of the English-speaking countries in the West Indies had some system of self-governance in place prior to the 1960s, most of the countries did not gain their political independence from Britain until the 1960s. Jamaica was the first to be granted independence in 1962. Because of, and in the aftermath of colonialism, the countries in the region have found it nearly impossible to reach or maintain a sustainable growth level in part because "all postcolonial societies are subject, in one way or another,

to overt or subtle forms of neocolonial domination" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1995) cited in Bhatia and Ram, 2001). Thus, while de facto slavery was abolished by 1850, some might argue that economic imperialism still exists today under the aegis of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Therefore, most if not all of the immigrants from the West Indies have experienced, either directly or indirectly, the debilitating effect of colonialism or neo-colonialism. Faced with these economic realities, and the inability to realize the basic aspiration of social mobility, a number of non-skilled and skilled workers and professionals choose to move to Canada and the United States to fulfill their socio-economic ambitions.

Receiving Countries

It is well documented (e.g., Foner, 2001) that Canada, England, and The United States are the three countries to which West Indian immigrants voluntarily move most often. Reference to Canadian and U.S. Census data indicate periods of high and low immigration from the region that coincide with historical, economic, or political changes in both the sending and receiving countries, (e.g., the Great Depression, World War II and the Walter-McCarran Act). The focus of this research will be immigration to Canada and the United States. This restricted focus is dictated by practicality, post-1965 immigration flows, and by the author's personal knowledge and experience gained living in these two countries. In addition, and the results support this, most West Indian Diaspora immigrant will admit to having family, relatives, and friends in both countries. Thus, how and why immigrants make the choice of settlement location is critical to this and any other research on West Indian migration.

Canada and the United States share common geopolitical histories. For example, both were British colonies, they share the longest undefended border in the world, and both are both signatories to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The countries also share similar immigration histories: both countries have a history of slavery although places like Chatham, Ontario, and Halifax, Nova Scotia were stops on the Underground Railroad. In addition both countries received large numbers of European immigrants (desired group), enacted legislation to bar entry to Chinese and Blacks (undesired groups), and imprisoned their ethnic Japanese citizens in internment camps during World War II.

Yet there are also sociocultural and sociopolitical differences, the early beginnings of which may be traced to permanent white European settlement in the two countries; Catholic New France in Canada as compared to Protestant New England in the United States (Lipset, 1990). Lipset sought to further distinguish between the two countries by invoking a history of lawlessness, fastest gun mentality, and the death penalty as typifying the United States. Canada, on the other hand, is perceived as having a greater respect for law and order (gun control) and is renowned internationally for its tradition of compromise and peacekeeping. The U.S. has a tradition of rebellion, individualism, independence, self-reliance, and decisiveness, less government and more private sector involvement. Canada, by comparison, has a stronger role for government and the public sector, universal health, and a stronger welfare state. The final word on the differences between the two countries is given to the late Pierre Trudeau, a former Prime Minister of Canada who fought to protect Canada's identity from the U.S. He famously

commented that, "we're a different people from you, and we're a different people because of you. Living next to you is in some ways like sleeping with an elephant."

One of the more significant differences between the countries is their official position regarding integration into the majority culture of the society. Canada is officially a multicultural country (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988), with a reputation for tolerance of racial and ethnic diversity. A review of the historical basis for this policy indicates that multiculturalism, within a bicultural framework, was when officially introduced in House of Commons in October 1971 designed to include all ethnic groups. However, its roots lay in an official policy of biculturalism designed to appease the French ethnocultural group, a majority in the Province of Quebec, but a minority in Canada.

Whether or not Canada's sterling reputation as a multicultural mosaic is deserved is an open question, because some agencies of the federal government have found ways to oppose a full implementation of the multicultural policy. Conversely, the United States, although becoming more multicultural continues to follow a "melting-pot" or assimilationist strategy (Gleason, 1964; Sears, 1996, Suarez-Orozco, 2002). The U.S. also has a well-chronicled history of racial and ethnic discrimination, and concomitantly residential segregation.

These positions have different anticipated outcomes; one recognizes the existence and explicit values of each culture of a cultural mosaic, while the other pushes for a single cultural orientation – assimilation. Further, the argument is made that countries with a multicultural immigration policy encourage integration by respecting cultural diversity (Berry, 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, and Vedder, 2001). Nonetheless,

Berry (2001) lists a variety of psychological preconditions that should exist in multicultural societies for an integration strategy to succeed; these include societal acceptance of cultural diversity, low levels of prejudice and discrimination, positive mutual attitudes among ethnocultural groups, and a sense of attachment to, or identification with, the larger society, by all individuals and groups (p.619).

Canada

Canada, a classic immigration country (Danso and Grant, 2000), is a favored destination for immigrants. In 2001, only Australia at 22% had a higher proportion of foreign-born population than Canada at 18.4%. By comparison, in 2000, the proportion of the foreign-born population in the United States stood at 11% (Statistics Canada, 2001; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001). Moreover, immigration to Canada over the past 100 years has shaped and altered the Canadian mosaic with each new wave of immigrants. For example, 50 years ago, most of the immigrants came from Europe; in contrast in the 1990s, 58% of new immigrants came from Asia, 20% from Europe and 11% from the Caribbean, and Central and South America. This shift in source nations, which started in the 1970s, coincided with changes in (a) Canada's immigration policies, and (b) international political events that resulted in the large-scale movements of migrants and refugees.

The 2001 Canadian Census shows that foreign-born persons account for 18.4% of the country's total population. This proportion is the highest since the 1931 Census when the foreign-born was 22.2 percent. This early twentieth century population boom was fuelled by the arrival of large numbers of immigrants recruited to meet growing labor demands. This established an immigration pattern that would continue throughout the

succeeding years – employment-based or economic immigration. Under these inter-related categories immigrants are admitted on the basis of a points system, which considers the applicant's age, education, training, language, and occupation. Thus, skilled immigrants are more likely to be admitted because they "bring with them the skills, entrepreneurial spirit and business knowledge that allows them to contribute to Canada's economy soon after arrival" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2001a, as cited by Esses, Dovidio, Jackson, and Armstrong, 2001).

West Indians[2]

In the period prior to 1955 there was an explicit prohibition on black immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa entering Canada. In the period 1938 – 1955 only 6,971 immigrants were admitted from the West Indies – 1,239 of these were of African ancestry. The de facto ban on "coloured or partly coloured persons" was lifted in 1955 when the Canadian government admitted, on an experimental basis, 100 domestics. Seventy-five of these women, ages 21-35, came from Jamaica and 25 from Barbados. The terms of this arrangement required that the women be single, and that they remain at domestic work for at least one year.

As of 2001, West Indian immigrants accounted for 77% of the 294,000 foreign-born from the Caribbean and Bermuda. Five countries -- Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago, each with more than 5,000 of its former citizens in Canada – made up 95% of the immigrant population from the English-speaking West Indies. With the inclusion of immigrants from Guyana, the number of West Indian immigrants in Canada, grew to over 300,000. However, data gathered on or

[2] For purposes of this discussion West Indian is defined to mean a person from an English-speaking country formerly colonized by Britain, as well as the South American nation, Guyana.

about West Indian Diaspora immigrants suggest that the group as a whole has not structurally or culturally incorporated into Canadian society. They have battled institutional and everyday racism, and discrimination (Dion & Kawakami, 1996a; Henry, 1994).

Nevertheless, a minority has figured prominently in recent Canadian events. In 1969, in reaction to perceived racism at Sir George Williams University in Montreal, Quebec, a group of students occupied its computer department. Among the West Indians prominently identified in the sit-in were the late Rosie Douglas, who later became Prime Minister of Dominica, and Anne Cools, a Barbadian, whom the late Pierre Trudeau, then Prime Minister, appointed to the Canadian Senate in 1984.

Other West Indian immigrants, or offspring of immigrants, have impacted the legislative, legal, and cultural sphere of the country. These include Lincoln Alexander, the first Black member of Parliament and former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario (1985-1991); Rosemary Brown, the first Black woman to run for leadership of a Canadian federal political party; Julius Isaac, the former Chief Justice, Federal Court of Appeal; a number of sitting and former Members of Parliament; and Austin Clarke, author of the *Polished Hoe* winner of the Governor General Award for Literature,

Few cities in the world have been more dramatically altered by recent immigration than Toronto. The city is home to a high proportion of foreign-born persons from diverse ethnocultural and class backgrounds. In 2001, the proportion of Toronto's foreign-born residents stood at 43.7%. In comparison, consider the proportion of foreign-born in the following cities: Miami - 40.2%, Vancouver – 37.6%, Los Angeles and

Sydney – 30.9%, and New York City – 24.4% (Statistics Canada, 2001; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001; Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2001).

West Indians

In 2001, Blacks were the third largest visible minority group (411,100) of Ontario's 2.2 million visible minority populations, behind South Asians (554,900), and Chinese (481,500). These positions represented a reordering from 1991, when Blacks were the largest visible minority group. Black West Indian immigrants represent the majority of the foreign-born black population living in Toronto, which is home to 56.9 % of Canada's Caribbean-area immigrants. Jamaica, the Republics of Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago are the three leading places of birth among recent Caribbean area immigrants. More to the point, the five previously mentioned countries account for the largest proportion (92%) of the West Indian immigrant population in Toronto (Statistics Canada, 2003). Guyana is the birthplace of another 66,980 of Toronto's foreign-born residents.

In the 1980s there was a relative decline in immigrant admissions, as compared to the 1970s. One reason for this decline in admissions was a downturn in Canadian economic output. But a weak Canadian economy has a disproportionate effect on the economies of the Caribbean region, which should lead to increase pressure to immigrate. Another, and more probable, explanation for the decline was the change in Canadian immigration policies, which while holding the level of family reunification immigrants steady, allowed more independent and business class immigrants. This resulted in increased immigration from other regions (e.g. Asia) over the same period.

The United States

The period 1901-10 marked the apogee of immigration from Europe. Sixty years later, Europe's dominance as the leading immigrant sending region was supplanted by the Americas, most notably Mexico and the Caribbean. In the 20 year period, 1981-2000, four countries from the Americas were among the top ten countries of birth for immigrants admitted to the U.S. Mexico, which headed the list, was joined by Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica.

Unlike the Canadian model, where economic immigrants are the leading category of admission, kinship-based immigration leads U.S. immigrant admissions. According to the *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics, 2002*, family-sponsored immigrants were the major group – 63.3% in 2002 - of immigrants admitted in the fiscal years 2000-2002. In comparison, employment-based immigration accounted for 16.4% of admissions (and these categories sometimes overlap e.g., when independent or employment-based and family-class members reunite). However, because employment-based immigration is low in this group, these situations are rare in the case of immigrants from the West Indian Diaspora.

West Indian Immigrants

In 2000, 88,200 (10.4%) immigrants admitted to the U.S. came from the Caribbean region. This number was eclipsed in both 2001 and 2002, with 103,546 and 96,489 admissions, respectively. Nonetheless, immigrants from the West Indies have been coming to the United States since the beginning of the 19th century. Some of those who came in the pre-1965 include such figures as Marcus Garvey, Richard B. Moore, Kwame Ture, and Claude McKay, known for their contributions to the spheres of social

activism, culture, and politics. To this list can be added Sir Arthur Lewis, Nobel Prize winner in Economics, and Derek Walcott, who won a Nobel Prize in literature.

More recently, the U.S. admitted approximately 350,000 immigrants from Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago[3] (U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, 2003). But in 1992, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) listed Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago among the top twenty sources of undocumented immigrants then living in the U.S. Specifically, between 1992-96, undocumented persons from Trinidad and Tobago to the U.S. averaged 4,000 per year. This dubious honor placed the twin-island republic tenth among countries with the fastest growing rate of illegal immigration to the U.S.

New York City

In 2002, 8.6% of new immigrants to the U.S. chose New York City as their intended destination, second only to the Los Angeles-Long Beach area of California (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2003). New York City, rather than being a microcosm of the U.S., is unique in its character and composition. In 2000, New York City's population of 8,008,278 divided among four major racial groups. These are Asian or Pacific Islander non-Hispanic – 783,000; White non-Hispanics - 2.8 million; Black/African American non-Hispanic – 1.96 million; and 2.2 million of Hispanic origin. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Three of these groups showed increases in size, as compared to data from the 1990 Census; the exception was the White non-Hispanic

[3] These countries were chosen because they (a) are the most populous, (b) have the most advanced economic activity of all the British colonies in the region, and (c) provide a point of comparison with the Canadian data.

group, which declined by 11.4%. The proverbial "White flight" was evident in four of the five boroughs. Staten Island was the only borough that recorded an increase.

By 2000, New York City was home to 1.5 million residents who were born in Latin America and the Caribbean. Four English-speaking West Indian countries (Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Guyana) account for one-third of the immigrants admitted from Latin America and the Caribbean. These are clustered in Brooklyn and Queens, where 76% of the more than a half million of West Indian ancestry person reside.

In summary, West Indian migration to North America has a history that dates back to the nineteenth century. Further, the data suggest that, either by virtue of group size as in Canada/Toronto or as a result of social activism and cultural endeavors, both countries have been altered by the presence of immigrants from the West Indian region. Prospective immigrants are aware of the social, cultural, and political systems in the different destinations and factor these into the decision-making process. Two that come to mind are relative ease of entry, given immigration laws and existence and operation of social networks of family, relatives and friends already in the destination.

The current immigration policies of Canada and the U.S. both consider employment- and family-based factors in regulating immigration. Family-based immigration or family reunification is understood to apply to situations where a family member currently living in host country initiates paperwork in support of the application. On the other hand, independent or economic immigrants coming to the U.S. and Canada usually begin the application process themselves. For example, in Canada where employment-based or economic immigrants represent the majority of immigrants

admitted, immigrants are selected specifically on the basis of their ability to "successfully establish in Canada."

Acculturation

Interest in the question of immigrants' adjustment to a new host culture stem from the assimilation paradigm first put forth by "The Chicago School" sociologists (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gordon, 1964; Park and Burgess, 1965). The assimilationist perspective holds that as immigrants become more educated, more familiar with the majority culture of the host country, and more successful in socioeconomic terms, they will eventually lose all identification with their culture of origin. This view suggests a linear process of incorporation into the host culture that does not take into account that different groups will have different relationships with the dominant group in the host society. For example, some groups will be more valued than others because of similarities with the majority group in the host society, while others will be less valued for the opposite reason.

Acculturation (Berry, 1970, 1980; Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987) provides an alternative to the assimilation model. The acculturation model posits that although immigrant individuals will become competent participants in the majority culture, they will always be identified as members of the minority culture (LaFromboise, Coleman & Gerton, 1993, p.397). Acculturation is assumed to be in the direction of the minority group adopting the majority group's culture, but can also be reciprocal, where the majority group takes on the culture of the minority group (e.g. urban fashions, hip-hop, rap, and reggae). But as LaFromboise et al. (1993) note, this reciprocity is rarely

discussed. Moreover, acculturation is mostly conceptualized as a majority – minority interaction, never as a minority – minority interplay.

Acculturation proceeds in ways that depend on group-level characteristics, as well as social, cultural, and political conditions of the receiving and sending countries. On the contrary, individual-level acculturation, termed psychological acculturation (Graves, 1967), encompasses changes in behavior, values, attitudes, and identities (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987); the acquisition of new social skills and norms; changes in reference- and membership-group affiliations; and adjustment or adaptation to a new environment (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000). The literature on acculturation and adaptation has suggested that a distinction be drawn between psychological and sociocultural outcomes (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). The first set refers to outcomes such as good mental health, psychological well-being, and achievement of personal satisfaction. The second set means the acquisition of the appropriate social skills and behaviors needed for day-to-day activities.

Individual level acculturation is premised on the individual also participating in the group-level acculturation process. Although a number of group- and individual- level variables enable the individual to manage psychological acculturation, the success of psychological acculturation depends, in part, on individual responses. The four responses, or strategies, identified are separation, integration, assimilation, and marginalization (Berry & Sam, 1997). Being positive to and embracing a heritage culture, while avoiding interaction, or being negative, with other cultures, is considered a separation strategy. An integration strategy is identified when an immigrant maintains his or her original culture, but also participates in the cultural forms of the majority culture. Alternatively, rejecting

the original culture and accepting the dominant culture of the host society is considered assimilation. Finally, rejecting both the original and the new dominant culture is seen as opting for a marginalization strategy.

Integration, or bicultural competence (LaFromboise et al., 1993), is viewed as the optimal acculturation strategy. However, the choice of integration as the optimal acculturation strategy has been questioned (See Rudmin, 2003). Further, Berry and Sam's (1997) definition is restrictive, because it refers only to cultural integration as opposed to economic or residential integration. This becomes an indefensible position because the dominant culture is usually synonymous with White or Eurocentric traditions. For example, most of the measures used in research on acculturation are based on Western or Anglo-European cultural norms.

A second challenge is the universalist assumptions that are key to acculturation's theoretical development (Berry & Sam, 1997). This universalist perspective assumes that the psychological processes that occur during acculturation are essentially the same for all individuals and groups. Bhatia and Sam (2001) persuasively argued that adherence to universal models of acculturation "undervalue the asymmetrical relations of power and the inequities and injustices faced by certain immigrant groups, as a result of nationality, race or gender" (p. 8). Thus, an integration strategy depends on the willingness of the dominant society to allow or support it.

Finally, the acculturation model is limited by its inability to fully address the effects of pre- and post-migration experiences, race, gender, and class, and the sociocultural and personal factors that motivate immigrants to immigrate in the first place. An investigation of the historical, psychosocial and sociopolitical factors involved

in the immigration decision is important for all groups. A history of cultural imperialism and colonial subjugation makes it critical to an analysis of the West Indian immigrant experience. Therefore, there is a need to expand the definition of integration to include the depth and breadth of cultural, social, economic, and structural integration.

Acculturative stress

Research on the effects of immigration has identified the stress of acculturating to a new host society as one of the major risk factors for immigrants. Many terms, some virtually meaning the same thing, have been used to describe this change. These include cross-cultural adaptation (Anderson, 1994); socio-cultural adjustment (Searle and Ward, 1990); and acculturative stress (Sam and Berry, 1995). Immigrant individuals coming into a new society and culture often have difficulties negotiating the behavioral, value, and attitudinal shifts that are appropriate for the new culture.

These difficulties are often associated with environmental stressors and lead to psychological conflicts or acculturative stress (Berry & Sam, 1997) experienced by both immigrants and citizens (Padilla, 1980). However, this study focuses on acculturative stress in the immigrant population, documented and undocumented, although undocumented immigrants are expected to experience higher levels of acculturative stress and more psychological problems than documented residents (Berry et al., 1987).

Acculturative stress occurs when an immigrant individual faces attitudinal, behavioral, and value conflicts between his or her original culture and those of the host society. The effect on the immigrant's mental health is time indeterminate because psychological distress increases in the first few years, but after a few years of stability,

psychological distress may again rise (Ritsner & Ponizovsky, 1999; Rotenberg, Kutsay, & Venger, 2000). Acculturative stress in ethnic minority immigrants may also be multidimensional caused by the adaptation process in first-generation individuals and the pulls of maintaining ethnic ties in second and later generations (Roysircar-Sodowsky & Maestas, 2000; Waters, 1999).

Risk Factors

According to the Canadian Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees (1988a), there is nothing inherent in the migration and resettlement process that puts mental health at risk. Rather, it is the contingencies surrounding resettlement that influence mental health outcomes. Some of the contingencies listed were: negative public attitudes towards immigrants and refugees; separation from family and community; inability to speak French or English; unemployment and underemployment; being adolescent or elderly at the time of migration; and being a woman from a culture in which gender roles and values differ from those in Canada.

One of these contingencies the process and stress of acculturation, has been shown to put immigrants at risk for: depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic problems (Aroian & Norris, 2000; Berry, 1997; Berry & Sam, 1997; Sam, 2000), although Ali (2002) reported that immigrants in Canada, particularly the newly arrived, had lower rates of depression than the Canadian-born population. However, migration and acculturation are not the only factors that put immigrants at risk for reduced mental and physical outcomes. For example, loneliness and alienation (Rokach, 1999; Nwadiora, 1995), feelings of

powerlessness, and loss of control over personal events (Kuo & Tsai, 1986) have also been associated with increased health risks.

Acculturative stress is a major risk factor for immigrants, but the degree to which acculturative stress is experienced is a function of social and cultural variables (Hovey, 2000; Liebkind, 1996; Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000a; Miranda, Alexis & Matheny, 2000; Williams & Berry, 1991). Furthermore, the stress experienced will vary with modes of responses at the individual and group level. Therefore, acculturative stress in and of itself is a necessary, but not sufficient, factor in analyzing the relationship of stress and health outcomes. For example, stress may result when attempts to adapt to the host culture are frustrated, as in restrictions on residential location. Further, as Berry et al. (1987) posited, " people who resist acculturation or who feel marginalized by the process tend to be most stressed" (p.509). Finally, a variety of social and psychological factors have been associated with acculturative stress (e.g., age, education, gender, length of residence, cognitive style, and racism and discrimination).

Racism and discrimination

Racism and discrimination are specific risk factors associated with the immigration experience (e.g., Aroian & Norris, 2000; Burke, 1985; Dion, 2001; Liebkind & Jasinska-Lahti, 2000a, 2000b; Ndetei, 1986). Racism underlies the colonialist ideology and strategies, as well as sets the legal frameworks that determine who can and cannot enter national boundaries. For example, both Canada and the U.S. used laws to specifically exclude immigrant Blacks and Chinese from entering the respective country.

Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000a) found that discrimination experiences in various realms of life were highly predictive of the psychological well-being among a

sample of seven immigrant groups in Finland. Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti found that while this association was true for all immigrant groups, it was more so for those in the highly visible groups, such as Somalis, Arabs, Turks, and Vietnamese.

Racism-related stress may be direct such as when institutions permit the exclusion of one group or the other, or it may be indirect through social rejection or restriction and segregation – residential and psychological - and the concomitant decline in social status. For example, Kritz and Gurak (2001) found that native-born non-Hispanic white men showed a tendency toward outmigration if new immigrant neighbors originated in Latin America or the Caribbean. The process of outmigration was reduced if the new immigrant neighbors originated in Europe or Asia. The identified links between racism and ethnic discrimination and negative psychological outcomes draw attention to racism's effects on the emotional and mental health of the immigrant in the United States.

Discrimination in employment, housing, and other interpersonal relationships, on the basis of skin color, is a feature of the daily existence of immigrants of African descent. Racism and discrimination, a fundamental feature of the social and cultural formulation of U.S. society (Jones, 1997), have been identified as major stressors for West Indian immigrants in Canada and the U.S. (Dion, 2001; Henry, 1994; Vickerman, 1999; Waters, 1999). Although racism and discrimination are a major part of U.S. society, some writers (e.g., Sowell, 1981) have argued that West Indian immigrants, the focal group of the research, are successful because they show few signs of having internalized the racist attitudes pervasive in the mindset of racial majority members of the host society.

Work-related concerns

Poor educational skills, lack of recognition of professional qualifications and credentials earned in the sending countries, and inadequate technological training are all associated with unemployment or underemployment. Rutter, Yule, Morton, and Bagley's (1975) study of West Indian families living in London found no significant differences in the number of immigrants versus non-immigrants who had some form of after-school educational qualifications or training, yet the two groups were significantly different in occupations. Approximately twice as many West Indian immigrants held unskilled or semi-skilled jobs, as compared to non-immigrant families. Rutter et al.'s study dealt with conditions in England and was published almost three decades ago; nevertheless, I would posit conditions for black West Indian Diaspora immigrants have not changed much since then, as compared to the majority White population.

Status reduction is also a source of concern for many immigrants who come into new cultures and societies (Beiser, Wood, Barnwick, Berry, deCosta, Milne, Fantino, Ganesan, Lee, Tousignant, Naidoo, Prince & Vela, 1988; Liebkind, 1993). Large numbers of West Indians, either personally or through families, had high occupational status back home (Foner, 1979). This status gave them the skills and the confidence that comes with such positions. At the time of Foner's study, immigrants from the West Indies came from the stable wage-earning to middle class stratum of Caribbean society, the colonial elites (Waters, 1999; Watkins-Owens, 2001). Since 1965, there has been a change in this pattern; with the possible exception of the intellectual elites, those in privileged positions do not immigrate. On the other hand, the less privileged classes use the opportunity to advance socially.

Familial Stressors

Occupational concerns and financial difficulties are significant risk factors for all immigrants, but a more common risk factor for immigrant families is the transitional nature of the family structure. As early as the mid-1960's, Graham and Meadows (1968) expressed concern about the frequent and destabilizing separations immigration patterns imposed on West Indian family life, particularly for the children who suffered separation from parental figures. Later, when the children are reunited with the parent(s), lack of secure attachment lead to delinquent behavior with predictable outcomes (Martin & White, 1988).

Familial stressors are multifaceted; one of these is the expectation that immigrants will provide material financial support to relatives and families in the sending countries, usually by way of remittances, barrels, etc. Implicit in this process is the anticipation that immigrants will achieve more, both socially and economically, than they did in their native countries. The pressures of these expectations create immeasurable stress for the immigrants, chiefly in terms of the immigrant's ability to provide for his or her needs in the host country.

Environmental concerns

Residential behavior is one measure of the degree of immigrant assimilation into North American society, most notably the level of residential concentration in urban settings (Lieberson, 1963). As a consequence of different power relationships with the dominant ethnic group, a number of immigrant groups live in ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods. This feature has been variously called spatial or residential separation, or ethnic enclosures.

Choices of accommodations for newly arriving immigrants are often expensive, overcrowded, and of poor quality. These choices are themselves associated with reduced coping resources. Frequent relocations, as a result of social mobility, stress, or family growth, are also associated with the transitional nature of migration. On the other hand, frequent moves lead to a decline in individual as well as community social capital.

Gender

Gender is a risk factor in immigration related stress, either as a specific variable or in association with factors such as race, marital status, ethnic identity, and work status. However, findings on the relationship between gender and immigration-related stress are mixed. For example, Aroian and Norris's (2000) study with 450 adult Russian immigrants to Israel and Crispin's (1999) research with 96 Haitian adolescents found that women experienced more acculturative stress than men. In addition, findings from the Canadian Task Force (1988a) indicate immigrant and refuge women have more mental health needs than their male counterparts. Conversely, Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000a) report that visible minority male immigrants suffered more psychological stress.

The criteria under which they were admitted makes women more susceptible to heightened acculturative stress. For example, Dion and Dion (2001, citing Boyd, 1986) reported that, "married female immigrants to Canada who entered as dependents, either under the visa of their spouse or subsequently, in the context of family unification criteria, confronted risks related to their entry status as dependents" (p.512).

In a large sample epidemiological survey conducted among Korean immigrants in Toronto, Canada, Noh, Wu, Speechley and Kasper (1992) reported a higher incidence of depression among Korean females as compared to Korean males. Among those with

greater income and higher education level, female immigrants who were employed were eight times more likely than males to be depressed. One suggestion for these differences was the combination of employment, home-making, and children-related responsibilities.

Women with poor educational and labor market skills were most at risk. Like their male counterparts, West Indian women, when confronted with the legacies of slavery, colonialism, un- and underemployment and limited educational and occupational opportunities, resort to immigration as an alternative employment strategy (Colen, 1995; Watkins-Owens, 2001). In response to the domestic labor needs in Canada, women were recruited through agreements between Caribbean and Canadian governments. This resulted in a stage migration pattern -- women came first and then sent for children and significant others. One outcome of this immigration pattern was role reversal where the woman took on the role of providing for the family and the childcare responsibilities fell to the man who remained in the native country.

Protective factors

The majority of published studies on the effects of migration have focused on the significant stressors associated with moving to a new country or region, and the difficulties faced by a number of groups and individuals where there are cultural and other differences between the sending and receiving countries. Nonetheless, the outcome of the immigration experience isn't always negative. A number of variables -- protective factors - have been associated with helping immigrants cope under stressful conditions.

Researchers have identified the following among a range of protective factors for acculturative stress: personality-related factors such as motivation and hardiness

(Boekestijn, 1988; Dunn & Dyck, 2000; Kuo and Tsai, 1986; Murphy, 1973); feelings of hopefulness (Hovey, 2000); a sense of family and social support (Harker, 2001; Noh & Avison, 1996); religious beliefs (Harker, 2001; Kamya, 1997); high educational-achievement motivation (Berry et al., 1987; Jasso, Massey, Rosenzweig & Smith, 2000); ethnic identity (Bankston & Zhou, 1995; Buddington, 2000; Crispin, 1999); and social capital and human capital (Bashi-Bobb & Clarke, 2001; Padilla, Cervantes, Maldonado & Garcia, 1989; Potter, 2000; Waters, 1999).

Ethnic Identity

Ethnic identity has been described as the degree to which individuals identify with and derive aspects of their self-concept from knowledge about, participation with, and attachment to their ethnic group (Phinney, 1990; Roysircar-Sodowky & Maestas, 2000). However, ethnic groups are not monolithic with respect to their members' connection to and understanding of their ethnicity. Gilkes (2002) found that the results of a study conducted with first and second generation West Indians living in New York City "not only challenge the commonly held notion of a single monolithic West Indian ethnic identity, but also highlight the complexity associated with ascribing ethnic labels." Instead, the results suggest that ethnic identity is contextually and situationally determined.

That said, there is little doubt that ethnic identity is crucial to the understanding of the resilience process among immigrants. Phinney (1990) argued that "attitudes towards one's own ethnicity are central to the psychological functioning of those who live in societies where their group and its culture are at best poorly represented and are at worst discriminated against or even attacked verbally and physically" (p.499). Thus, the ability

to separate the private, or internal, ethnic identity from the public, or external, ethnic identity seems key to the maintenance of good psychological health

Research with various ethnic groups suggests that a strong ethnic identity serves as a contributor to positive psychological well-being in immigrants. However, there is disagreement as to whether ethnic identification influences acculturation or vice versa. For example, Jasinskaja-Lahti and Liebkind (2000) found that ethnic identification among a group of Russian-speaking adolescent living in Finland tended to decline and acculturation to increase with length in the host country. Conversely, Phinney, et al. (2001) posit that, "ethnic identity will be strong when immigrants have a strong desire to maintain their identities" (p.494). Because ethnic identity provides immigrants with personal and external resources that enable them to cope with the stresses and demands of a new culture (Liebkind, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Solheim, 2004), it serves as an effective protective factor against acculturative stress.

Transnationalism

The major portion of research conducted on ethnic identity and acculturation assumes a stasis in the immigrant interaction with the sending country. It takes for granted that the immigrant has left his or her country of origin forever, intending to settle in the host country with little or no relationship across borders. These studies rarely, if ever, consider the transnational domain. But a bi-modal ethnic or transnational identity is supported and maintained by the growth of globalization and current technological innovations. As an example, an immigrant can stay connected to family, relatives, and friends, as well as get home country information via the Internet, calling cards, and or mobile phones. Further, the growth of globalization presupposes the ability to easily and

quickly travel the world. Such facility provides immigrants with increased opportunities to visit their respective home countries. In that regard, two studies conducted in the U.S., one with Jamaican college students (Buddington, 2000) and the other with Irish immigrants (Christopher, 2000), found the more contact immigrants have with sending countries the less acculturative stress is experienced. This was especially true for those Jamaican students who returned to Jamaica at end of semester breaks.

On a related note, Portes (1984) argued that the more within-group interactions immigrants have – the ethnic enclosure hypothesis - the more likely their ethnic identity will be reinforced and the less likely they will become U.S. citizens. The ethnic resilience perspective (Hannan, 1979; Cobas, 1988) takes a different view of how ethnic identity is strengthened. The perspective holds that it is precisely when immigrant groups abandon their enclaves and share residential and work environments with whites, that awareness of racial and cultural differences is heightened, thereby highlighting the discriminatory nature of American society.

Education

There have been competing claims about the effectiveness of education as a protective factor against acculturative stress. Some have argued for the protective features of education in overcoming cultural and occupational barriers (Lieberson & Waters, 1988). Others (e.g., Christopher, 2000) have argued against education's usefulness in reducing acculturative stress.

However, because educated immigrants are more welcomed in host societies, I would argue that education facilitates both the immigration experience and the acculturation process. Because of its association with improved self-esteem, self-efficacy,

personal beliefs, and cognitive style, education may be seen as indirectly influencing the level of acculturative stress. Limited education and low income have been associated with feelings of social distance from other groups. Additionally, immigrants with post-secondary education were significantly more likely to report improvements in living conditions than immigrants with a university degree or with lower levels of education (Canadian Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees, 1988b).

Social support and Social Capital

The role of social support as a contributor to health in the general population has been well established. Similar findings appear to be borne out for immigrant as well. In their longitudinal study of Korean immigrants, Noh and Avison (1996) conclude that social and psychological resources have important deterrent effects on stressors and their outcomes. Separation from family is a particular stressor for the immigrant, who migrates first, to be joined later by family members. Mental health improves after family reunification.

Social support networks – defined as social capital – also play an important role in motivated migration and migratory decision-making (Watkins-Owens, 2001). High human and social capital in the host country leads to high probabilities of individuals immigrating (Bashi-Bobb & Clarke, 2001; Phillips & Massey, 2000). For example, migration may continue even as economic pressures to migrate diminish. Massey, Alarcon, Durand, and Gonzalez (1987) found that when migration networks reach a certain critical level, migration has a self-perpetuating momentum regardless of the initial

structural-level conditions that caused it. One might speculate this is particularly true as it applies to undocumented immigrants.

Social networks have a direct influence, as well as a mediating effect, on an immigrant's psychological well-being (Liang, 1994), because the availability of social resources in the receiving country plays a critical role in immigrant adaptation. Part of the power and utility of social networks is the provision of information to network members about job and employment opportunities (Waters, 1999), educational advancement (Bashi-Bobb & Clarke, 2001), and assistance in locating affordable housing and overcoming language difficulties (Padilla, Cervantes, Maldonado, & Garcia, 1989.

To summarize, acculturative stress among ethnic individuals occurs when conflicts develop within these individuals as they attempt to resolve or minimize cultural differences. But acculturative stress is not always debilitating. How an immigrant experiences the stress of acculturation is dependent on a number of psychological, social, cultural and environmental factors. Psychosocial factors associated with immigration range from feelings of profound loss to heightened opportunities and aspirations. However, the stress of acculturating to a new society is not the only stressor that immigrant individuals must cope with in their immigrant experiences. Factors such as racism and discrimination, environmental (e.g., housing, fear of crime, language), employment-related, and family-related stress are all risk factors for negative outcomes. At the same time factors such as ethnic identity and social support mitigate negative outcomes.

Resilience

The study of resilience as a concept was born of the stress and coping research (e.g., Holmes & Rahe, 1967; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which found that some persons though subjected to stressful events, survived and overcame the stressors, while others succumbed to the stressful events. The concept of resilience more fully developed within the field of developmental psychopathology with the work of researchers like Jack and Jeanne Block (1980), Garmezy and Tellegen (1984), Rutter (1987), and Werner and Smith (1982). Research with children who were exposed to extraordinary stressors - developmental psychopathology - in their personal and family lives yet survived, and even thrived, by developing what was described as extraordinary competence, was the impetus for studies of what we now consider resilience. Children considered resilient had better communication skills, less impulsivity, more ability to reflect on their life experiences, and a belief in their capacity to exercise a degree of control over their environment (Garmezy & Tellegen, 1984).

The empirical and theoretical research on resilience has been very differentiated, because two models have guided the study of the phenomenon. Some definitions or conceptualizations of resilience see it as a fixed attribute of the individual that is general to most domains, functions across various contexts, and is assessed by measuring adaptive outcomes reflective of social and psychological competence (e.g., ego strength, social intimacy, coping styles, and locus of control). Terms such as vulnerable and invulnerable (Anthony, 1974; Werner & Smith, 1982), hardiness (Kobasa, 1979), subjective well-being (Diener, 1984), and coping are used as correlates of resilience.

Other theorists (e.g., Cohler, et al, 1995, Masten, 1994, Rutter, 1987, 1999) have argued that resilience is not a static trait, but an ongoing dynamic process involving relationships among risk, antecedent factors, and protective mechanisms. For example, resilience has been described as: relative resistance to psychosocial risk experiences (Rutter, 1999); the means used to maintain adjustment by reducing the otherwise noxious effects imposed by unfortunate life experiences (Cohler, et al, 1995); and the protective process that promotes successful adaptation in response to psychological or environmental stressors (Rutter, 1987).

There is, however, a growing awareness (e.g., Rutter, 1987) that it is necessary to broaden the conceptualization and definition of resilience to reflect the multidimensional nature of the concept. The use of constructs such as psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Schumutte & Ryff, 1997), thriving (Carver, 1988; O'Leary & Ickovics, 1995), and social capital (Coleman, 1988, 1990) have become more frequent in research on resilience as a process.

The above indicates there is considerable fragmentation in resilience research. But, I believe the field of resilience research would be less fragmented if researchers could come to a consensus about how to study resilience. Specifically, the field needs to address issues such as: How do we create an operational definition of the resilience process in the study of immigrant acculturation generally? Further, how do we foster, study, and evaluate the immigrant resilience process generally, and specifically in the Caribbean adult immigrant population?

Nevertheless, it is clear that resilience, however defined or conceptualized, does not come from avoiding risk, but instead results from these immigrants successfully

dealing with the risk situations. Likewise, resilience should be seen as more than a personality attribute of each individual, since social and psychological processes also need to be considered. Thereby, a social psychological view of resilience would include situational and contextual factors, thus ensuring that resilience is viewed as a dynamic process; when circumstances change resilience changes.

Aims of the Present Study

In 2002, Michel Dorais, The Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration in Canada wrote that he saw integration as a two-way process of accommodation between newcomers and Canadians, which "encourages immigrants to adapt to Canadian society without requiring them to abandon their cultures." Therefore, the ultimate goal of integration is to encourage newcomers to be fully engaged in the economic, social, political and cultural life of a society.

Integration has been offered as the optimal acculturation strategy because, the theory suggests, immigrants become immersed in the majority (dominant) culture, while simultaneously retaining a positive attitude toward their own ethnic minority (non-dominant) cultural heritage. One purported benefit of the integration strategy is reduction of the stress linked to adjustment to the new country (e.g., acculturative stress); the more the new immigrant is able to "fit into" the host culture, the less stress is experienced. Integration may indeed be the preferred acculturation strategy, but preexisting hierarchical patterns and structural inequalities such as racial stratification make integration – cultural, spatial, and economic - a monumental challenge.

Adjustment or acculturative stress is an unavoidable and major risk factor for immigrants, but for non-European descent immigrants, racism and discrimination are

added risk factors. Nonetheless, many immigrants are able to successfully cope with the stress of relocating and adjusting to a new society and culture. Effective adjustment and less problematic acculturation are called immigrant resilience. But there are a number of challenges that empirical research on immigrant resilience must overcome one of these is defining resilience.

Designing reliable and valid measures of resilience is the most serious need in research on the relationship between immigration and resilience. To accomplish this, it is important to (a) bring precision to the definition and discussion of the concept of resilience, (b) distinguish between resilience as a process and resilience as a trait or measurable outcome, and (c) distinguish between general aspects of resilience that apply across all immigrant groups and specific aspects of resilience that distinguish groups. However, a psychological investigation of resilience must include the immigrant's use of native and acquired systems of attitudes, beliefs, cognitions, worldviews, and representations. To these are added various social and psychological factors such as premigration experiences, social context of host societies, and ethnic identity, all of which have been associated with the acculturation experiences and psychological well-being of immigrants.

As noted, there was a lack of consensus about the global definition of resilience, especially with regard to psychological health. Operational definitions of the term understandably vary from one study to another according to the specific factors being investigated. Although this is essential for manageable research projects, it makes it difficult to compare findings from different studies. Yet another complicating factor is

that both global and operational definitions of the term differ among and within different domains of resilience.

Because of historical and cultural differences it is anticipated that the process of resilience will be different in dissimilar population groups. Of particular note are African descent individuals, a population that is frequently negatively stereotyped. Viewing resilience in West Indian Diaspora immigrant individuals as a measurably discrete endpoint is problematic, when one considers the ongoing struggles inherent in adjusting to a new culture in a society where most contacts, and the contexts in which they occur, are racialized. Therefore, in this study resilience will be defined as the ability to identify, access, activate, and utilize social, personal, and environmental resources. Examples of these resources include social capital, cognitive ability, self-efficacy, motivation, ethnic identity, and governmental and institutional supports.

There has been considerable empirical research on factors that impact the psychological health of immigrants during acculturation, but these have primarily dealt with select racial or ethnic groups (e.g., Jews, Asians and Hispanics), or immigrant refugee groups. Few studies have attempted to investigate how risk, protective factors, and acculturative stress are related to each other in African descent immigrant individuals. In particular, scant research attention has been paid to the specific factors that influence the psychological health of adults from the West Indian Diaspora, most of whom are voluntary immigrants.

Data show West Indian immigrants, who because of difficult pre-immigration social conditions are at risk for adverse psychological outcomes, exhibit a wide range of strengths. But there is disagreement as to whether the present day immigrants will

succeed to the same degree that the earlier immigrants did, in part because of socio-demographic differences between the waves; pre-1965 and post-1965. Furthermore, studies have found that for many West Indians who have immigrated to North America, their worldviews and identities have become increasingly "racialized" over time (Waters, 1999).

Therefore, the research had three goals. First, examine the relationships between acculturation, acculturative stress, and resilience. Second, investigate how specific acculturation factors (e.g., pre-migration history, cultural differences), modes of responses or acculturation strategies, and protective factors influence acculturative stress. Third, explore the interrelationships of ethnic identity, gender, social capital, racism and discrimination, and motivation for immigration to determine how these relate to resilience, acculturation and acculturative stress.

Research Questions

The settlement and development of Canada and the United States has taken place through both involuntary [e.g., slavery] and voluntary immigration; the second pattern is the object of this research. Two major processes drive voluntary immigration: family reunification, and employment-based or "economic" migration. Furthermore, the policy emphasis of Canada and the U.S. differ for the two immigrant categories. These two sub-categories offer different reasons for immigrating as well as different psychosocial challenges. Foremost among the psychosocial challenges faced by both categories of immigrants is the pervasiveness of racism in North American society. What happens when these immigrants encounter such entrenched societal attitudes?

Prospective immigrants choose different destinations for different reasons. Two that come to mind are relative ease of entry, given immigration laws, and existence and operation of social networks of family, relatives and friends already in the destination. Personal knowledge informs that voluntary immigrants are aware of the cultural and value differences between sending and receiving countries, and factor these differences into the decision-making process. Thus, the first research question that the study sought to answer was:

- What are the multi-level motivations for West Indian immigrants to leave their countries of origin, and how do these motivations influence the choice of destinations?

Most Black immigrants from the West Indian Diaspora come from countries where they are in the racial and ethnic majority, and social mobility is dictated more by class than by race. Further, adult immigrants usually bring with them lived experiences, as well as expectations formed as a result of previous exposure to the host society's culture. This exposure comes through earlier visits to the host countries, interacting with returning relatives, and friends or visitors from these cultures, or through mass media representations. The more accurate and objective an immigrant's expectations are of the host country, the more successful the experience. Conversely, if high expectations are not met poor adjustment and decreased mental health will result. Therefore, participants will be asked to respond to the prompt:

- How do the immigrants' daily experiences relate to the expectations they had before resettling in North America?

Berry (2001) argued that for immigrant individuals there are two issues to be resolved: To what extent do I wish to have contact with (or avoid) others outside my group, and to what extent do I wish to maintain (or give up) my heritage culture? In multicultural societies these choices are not as stark; the immigrant individual can elect to maintain his or her original cultural heritage as well as seek contact with other cultural groups in the society. The U.S. and Canada have different immigration policies; therefore the following question needs to be asked:

- What acculturation strategies do these immigrants most often adopt, and how do these transform over time?

The conceptual model assumes: (a) that different risk factors require the use of different resources to deal with the interpersonal, cultural, social, and environmental stressors that arise during acculturation; and (b) that the stresses associated with immigration would vary across time. For example, the ability to pursue one strategy or another may be dictated by society's willingness to encourage or discourage such a strategy (e.g. integration). Frustration of acculturation strategies is expected to increase acculturative stress. Consequently, the study sought to answer the following question:

- What are the relationships between acculturation strategies and acculturative stress?

Factors such as ethnic identity, social capital, and high self-esteem have been identified as protective factors in other immigrant populations. The unanswered question is, will these or similar protective factors mediate and or moderate the acculturative stress experienced by West Indian Diaspora immigrants? Therefore the fifth research question is:

- To what extent do protective factors or knowledge of protective factors play essential roles in the immigrants' experiences?

Researchers (e.g. Dion & Dion, 2001; Noh et al., 1992) have argued that under a number of conditions, female immigrants have experiences that are subjectively and objectively different than males from the same ethnic group. A number of these experiences have resulted in increased acculturative stress, which is associated with poor psychological health. It must be noted that other research has concluded that male immigrants suffer greater psychological distress during acculturation. Therefore, one aim of the study is to:

- Compare the immigration experiences of male and female West Indian immigrants.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Design

Immigrant settlements, both globally and domestically, are overwhelmingly an urban phenomenon (Sassen, 1994). Moreover, cities are now the prime venues for assessing how well societies are responding to problems created when ethnic groups with diverse cultures and social conditions interact. The above are two compelling reasons to focus on cities when studying the interrelationships of immigration, ethnicity, race, politics, and power (Siemiatycki & Isin, 1997). In addition, Roger Waldinger (1996) argued we should pay special attention to "how particular immigrant cities shape immigrant destinies" (1996: 1078). With the above in mind, I chose New York City (New York) and Toronto, two cities with large numbers of West Indian Diaspora immigrants as sites for the research. In addition, these are two cities where the researcher has lived, and has family, relatives and friends.

The challenges of immigration, and the resources needed, vary as the acculturation process unfolds. Therefore, persons at different points of their immigration experience were identified as possible participants in the research. These points had been, *a priori,* divided into three categories. The first category was recent immigrants, those who were in the respective countries ten years or less. Immigrants who were in the host country 10 to 20 years made up the second grouping, and those who had been in the respective host country longer than 20 years comprised the third group. These groupings were somewhat artificial, but followed the description used by the various Census

organizations and researchers (e.g., Kaplan & Marks, 1990) to designate recent arrivals from those who had been in the respective countries longer.

To date, most of the studies that examined the relationship of resilience and immigration have used a quantitative method of inquiry: "the research paradigm that usually follows entails individuals from the minority groups answering Likert-scale questions about each of the four acculturation attitudes and about psychological distress...generally, the goal is to demonstrate that Integration causes least distress so that multiculturalism can be recommended" (Rudmin & Ahmadzadeh, 2001, p.42). In contrast, this study used a semi-structured interview protocol to answer the questions of interest.

The search of the research literature showed no consistent approach to measuring acculturation. Many studies relied on proxy measures, such as education, wages, and employment; others used religion, language use, daily routines, or social relations. The study used a qualitative research methodology consisting of interviews to investigate the influence of the social, political, and cultural processes on the adjustment, and psychological health outcomes. This was deemed an advantage over the frequently used nomothethic method of isolating variables, and averaging responses designed to test correlates of variables of interest. Moreover, this is a research methodology previously used by sociologists Waters (1994) and Vickerman (1999) to study West Indian immigrants living in New York City.

The West Indian immigrant population is often written of as a homogenous group, but personal knowledge – insider status – informs the researcher that different national origins provide examples of different cultural norms. For example, the Creole spoken in

Trinidad and Tobago, with its mix of French, Spanish, African, and English words, is different from the patois spoken in Jamaica. Further, as Gilkes (2002) argued, "a West Indian identity is not a clear and distinct pattern of psychological attitudes and behaviors. Instead, West Indian identity, if it exists, is in a process of continuous formation and is a complex, multilevel, pattern of interactions that include national identity, culture, history, language, beliefs, experiences, and socialization practices." Parenthetically, the different cultural norms provide this population with an array of choices of resources to meet the obstacles they face.

I decided to use a semi-structured interview to document the varied and unique experiences of these immigrant individuals. This was based on the previous findings, the known differences between the host countries, the different national origins subsumed under the social label West Indian, and the different reasons for immigration (e.g., family reunification, economic, education).

After reviewing the literature on immigrant acculturative experiences (e.g., Ali, 2002; Aroian & Norris, 2000; Buddington, 2000; Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000a), I developed a preliminary list of interview questions. The final 43-item list is based on the preliminary list, lived personal experience, and consultation with my advisor (Appendix B). The items were designed to delve into retrospective memories, current experiences, as well as information on psychological variables (e.g., self-esteem, locus-of-control, and self-efficacy). Specific domains included were: (a) premigration history, (b) migration history, (c) ethnic identity, (d) residential behavior, (e) labor market experiences, (f) social networks, (g) physical and psychological health, and (h) transnationalism. Included

in the interview protocol were five Likert-type items, scaled 5-1, designed to elicit responses to structured questions connected to a topic of interest .

Procedures

Participants

Twenty-six participants completed a survey designed to capture basic demographic information on age, gender, and immigration history, including country of birth and age on arrival (Appendix A). The survey was also used to identify the social context in which the participants were embedded. Preliminary information related to prior immigration experience and status, education, labor market experience, residential behavior, and degree of contact with country and culture of origin were also collected. Finally, the surveys were used to establish eligibility to participate in the interview session. Five individuals who completed the demographic survey declined to be interviewed, and thus demographic information provided by these participants was excluded from the study.

Participants were recruited by means of flyers, postings, and snowball techniques. Persons interested in participating in the study were asked to provide contact information, or to contact the researcher directly. All individuals in immigrant status – legal or illegal – were eligible for participation; specifically excluded were persons holding unexpired student or visitors' visas. There was no maximum age requirement but inclusion in the sample was dictated by the parameters detailed in the previous sentence. The major recruitment site in New York was the Borough of Brooklyn, whose central area has approximately 300,000 of the nearly 600,000 West Indian immigrants living in New

York City. Participants in Toronto were drawn from throughout the Census Metropolitan Toronto Area, home to approximately 230,000 immigrants from the West Indies.

Surveys

Before completing the survey, each participant read IRB form in Appendix E, F, and G and signed a consent form indicating their awareness of the aims of the study, voluntary participation, and knowledge they could withdraw from the study, at any time, without penalty. The surveys were completed in individual sessions. The researcher conducted all the survey sessions in New York City, and a quarter of the sessions in Toronto. A cohort of the researcher, trained as to consent procedures, and level of interaction and support with participants conducted the remaining survey sessions in Toronto. On average the surveys took twenty minutes to complete. Each participant was paid $10 for his or her participation.

At the conclusion of each session participants were informed of the second, or interview, phase of the study, and asked if they would be willing to participate. Individuals who indicated a willingness to participate further were asked to provide, in writing, full contact information. This information was kept separate from the questionnaire responses.

Interviews

Twenty-one persons who had previously completed the survey agreed to participate in the interview sessions. Again, these individuals were asked to read and sign consent forms indicating their voluntary agreement to participate in the interview portion of the study. The length of time the participants had lived in the respective countries ranged from 2 – 44 years. This planned diversity in time spent in the host countries was

useful in exploring the unfolding immigrant and acculturation experiences. The 10 Toronto participants included a couple who were in the country four years (recent immigrants); three who were in the country 10-20 years, and six who had been in Canada twenty years or longer. Ten New York City residents who completed the demographic survey agreed to be interviewed. Two had lived in the City at least two years, and three others less than ten years; two between ten and twenty years, and three who have been there in excess of twenty years. Each participant was paid $20 at the end of the interview.

The interviews, which ran between 1 ½ - 3 hours, were audiotaped and then transcribed. The interview sessions used a semi-structured question format during which the individuals were encouraged to tell, in their own words, the stories of their experiences living in Toronto and New York as immigrants from the West Indies. The interviews not only explored how these immigrants dealt with the everyday psychosocial challenges they faced in a new and different society, but also asked the respondents to reflect on their time living in their native country.

Eighteen of the interviews were conducted in the interviewees' homes; these settings varied from flower-filled backyard to a basement/family-room. Two of the three remaining interviews were conducted at a college in Central Brooklyn, and the other at a neutral location mutually agreed to by the researcher and the individual. Because of logistics the Toronto interviews were completed over two, non-consecutive, weekends. The New York City interviewees were completed over different days and times in a five-month period.

Each interview started with a series of questions focused on the individual's premigration history. Each individual was permitted to fully develop his or her story

before we moved on to the next question. Where necessary, probes, planned or unscripted, were used to more fully develop an unfolding narrative. This meant that some topics were dealt with out of order. For example, when asked about household size and composition, an interviewee may include his or her reasons for migration as part of their answer. Thus, it was unnecessary to ask every respondent all the questions, or in the same order. However, this occurred in very limited number of interviews. In addition information contained in the demographic survey was used to elicit additional information, or to further develop responses to questions or probes on the interview guide.

At the conclusion of each interview a visit summary was prepared, summarizing the place and time of the interview, the interviewees' overall reaction to the questions and the interview process, and any pre- or post-interview details or comments. This process suggests that none of the respondents had difficulties with the questions asked. Some respondents appeared more comfortable than others in, answering the questions and dealing with the wide range of topics covered in the interview.

Data Analysis

A number of demographic factors (e.g., age, education, gender, and length of time in country) have been associated with acculturation, acculturative stress, and resilience. Therefore, descriptive statistical tests were used to analyze the data to see the patterns that exist within and across sites. In addition to the statistical analysis of the demographic data, the analysis plan includes transcribing, reviewing, and analyzing the audiotaped interviews. Each transcript was read and reviewed in an effort to get a flavor of the narrative and the social context in which the participant existed. Following the review

process, the transcripts and the visit summaries were reread, classified, analyzed and coded.

Codes evolved from major themes identified prior to the analysis phase and were based on the literature, conceptual framework, and key questions. These included: pre-migration history, migration, employment, ethnic identity, social networks, environmental conditions, and transnationalism (Appendix C). Some categories were developed after an initial review of the transcripts. As these and other themes emerged, they were listed and a preliminary list of codes developed. The Visual Qualitative Data Analysis Management and Theory Building (ATLAS.ti) (Version 2) computer program coding system was used to develop and look for patterns of interactions and events in the data that were common to the variables of interest.

The review of the transcripts also served as a basis for follow-up conversations with some of the participants simultaneous to, or subsequent to, the content-analysis process. In all six follow-up conversations were held, two in Toronto and four in New York City. These conversations enabled the researcher to clarify outstanding issues, and to explore new and emerging themes in the transcripts. The five Likert-type items included in the interviews were analyzed using the SPSS Version 11.5 statistical software package. Analysis was conducted at two levels, (a) individual level of analysis, and (b) cross-site analysis. At the individual level I was interested in the personal narratives across the previously identified themes, and any new and emerging themes. The cross-site analysis was performed based on themes and issues. Data from the two sites were separately and jointly analyzed for themes common to both sites, as well as those that were unique to each site.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

I will use the following format in presenting the results: first, demographic, and preliminary statistical data will be reported. Next, I present data representing site and individual level analysis of the differences and similarities between the two sites. These analyses will be subsumed and reported under the major domains and themes of interests. In most cases the quotes, or excerpts, presented reflect the majority opinion. As an additional strategy, I will use the terms typical, or typically, to indicate where at least ninety percent of the respondents made the same or similar comments. Alternatively, the expressions general or generally is intended to reflect agreement, or similarity, in comments of sixty to seventy-five percent of the respondents. Where the statements reflected a minority view, an alternative perspective, or where they contrasted sharply with the majority position these were presented. However, an attempt was made to include quotes and the perspectives of all twenty-one participants. As an aid to understanding and situating the quotes, I have identified the respondent by a number in parenthesis after the quote. I have also presented basic demographic information about the speaker in Appendix D.

Demographic Data

The mean age of the eleven Toronto participants (6 females; 5 males) was 48.45 years (*SD* = 11.26 years). On average they were 26.4 years (*SD* = 5.96 years) when they arrived in the city and they had lived in the city an average of 22.1 years (*SD* = 12.99 years). Six participants had migrated from Jamaica, two each from Guyana and Barbados,

and one from Dominica. On average women in the sample were older than the men when they arrived in Toronto, and had spent more time in the City. (See Table 1)

By comparison, the average age of the 5 female, 5 male New York group was 44.9 years (*SD* = 8.65). They had lived in New York City an average of 13.8 years (*SD* = 10.80 years); and were an average of 31.1 years (*SD* = 6.64) when they came to New York to live and work. Seven of the participants were born in Barbados and three from Trinidad and Tobago. As with the Toronto sample, the females in the New York sample were older than the males. However, unlike Toronto, New York males had on average spent five more years in the City than females.

Ten of the eleven Toronto participants had college or university degrees; four had earned degrees before moving to Toronto. Half of the New York participants had college or university degrees, two of which had been earned before the individuals had took up residence in New York City. Two New York participants had studied in the U.S., and gone back to their native countries before returning to live in New York City. One of the Toronto residents had lived in and earned a college degree in the United States. At the time of the interviews, five Toronto participants had post-graduate or professional degrees or training, as did two New York City participants.

Some differences between the groups pertain to residential behavior and citizenship. More Toronto participants, as compared to the New York City group, owned their homes – seventy-three versus thirty-six percent respectively. On the other hand, New York City participants lived at their current addresses longer, and paid a higher percentage of their income on housing costs than the Toronto group. Finally, a higher percentage of individuals in the Toronto group had exercised their citizenships rights. As

we shall see later these differences will all be associated with psychological acculturation, identity, social capital, and acculturative stress.

The two groups differed on a number of demographic characteristics, as well as on variables related to human, cultural, and social capital (Table 1). Thus, it is an open question the degree these reported differences are associated with the descriptive statistics related to the five Likert-type items included in the interview protocol (Appendix B, Items 5, 11, 16, 19 & 31). For example, the New York participants reported having a greater sense of control over life events than their counterparts in the Toronto (Table 2). Was this based on personality, social, or contextual variables, or some combination of these three and other as yet unidentified factors?

Both groups experienced low levels of harassment and insults, but the Toronto respondents reported a higher occurrence rate than the New York sample. In addition, both groups agreed to the proposition that race or skin color limits the ability to succeed (Table 2). However, as we see later when the participants are asked to give reasons for their views, differences emerge. Both groups disagreed with the suggestion that it is easier to raise children in North America than in the West Indies but differed as to significance. These differences and the reasons for the differences will be further developed as part of the analysis of the interviews.

Pre-migration Experiences

As noted previously, the vast majority of published studies failed to investigate the relative contributions of pre-migration experiences to immigrant acculturation and related psychological health. Thus, the first theme addressed during the interviews was the participants' memories of life and growing up in their respective home countries.

Generally, words and phrases such as fun, happy, enjoyable, and a typical childhood, were used to depict their early lives, while a New York City resident described her early life as secure, and fairly comfortable - virtually problem-free. These glowing portrayals could not hide the fact that early life for the majority was not easy, because the majority of the families were very poor. In particular, if you lived in the rural area – as did thirteen of the participants – opportunities were limited. Most respondents recalled leaving their immediate area on finishing high school, but in some cases the respondents moved away from their family, to attend high school in other areas, usually moving from a rural to an urban environment.

A majority detailed their struggles growing up in poor households, but few dealt with colonialism's impact on their situations or opportunities. Only three interviewees mentioned the colonial tradition, one directly and two indirectly. The respondents' choice not to focus on their negative life circumstances, including the social and economic difficulties engendered by the colonial system, was a surprise. Not mentioning the colonialist past may be a combination of the respondents not reflecting on this period; the age of the sample; or the fact that the topic wasn't more fully and directly broached.

Some of the macro-level factors reportedly present in the early developmental phases were scarce or embargoed goods and products, and social and political instability. Difficult social and economic conditions are risk factors for negative life outcomes, and competition for resources became more intense when family circumstances changed. As one female participant remembered, "it was difficult because it was nine of us... when my father died and it was nine of us. It was very difficult; it was not easy."

The participants' reflections indicated the nuclear model of family-life was not representative of this group - only half reported being raised in two-parent households. Reasons for this varied, for example, four participants reported losing parents – three fathers, and a mother - early in their lives. But as one Toronto respondent offered, losing a parent taught him early coping skills, "I learned to be responsible." When he was asked what was his definition of learning to be responsible, he replied, "well, learning to be responsible is like you're growing up, when you see the other kids with their mother and their father and everybody, you didn't have that- so you learn to survive, and be responsible. Everything rests on your own shoulders."

Generally, the respondents described their mothers as the primary caregiver; when she was absent, things often were quite different. One individual remembered when his mother immigrated to New York, things changed drastically for him and his brother. They lost her support, as well as the knowledge that there was always someone there for them. Mothers were not always the secure attachment figure because one woman remembered her father was the emotional bulwark, "sitting at the bottom of my bed until I fell asleep or until I'd feel better." In some households other family members were the secure attachment figure.

Extended families

The extended family was a general feature of the participants' pre-migration experiences. Extended family was not limited to blood relations but often included the village or neighborhood community. This network arrangement served multiple purposes; it provided childcare opportunities and meted out discipline, but frequently the network

was the source of emotional, economic, and social support. On occasions, extended family were role models:

> *My family, they were all, you know, in those days, I don't know, how to say it- they had, a lot because they always wanted to be at a certain level, and I saw that, and so I just decided, well, I didn't want to be a head-mistress, or anything, but I wanted to have a vocation, because I saw that my family were educated people. So it has a lot to do with the environment (26).*

She went on and drew a contrast between Canada and her native country:

> *... See- this is the problem. This is not a problem, but this is - in the West Indies, we had extended families. And because of that extended family surroundings, it helps you as a child, to look around and see. Over here, it's just you and your parents, growing up, your father and mother. But I had great aunts and cousins and all, and these were people playing the piano, you see and hear all these – people.*

Career and Future Plans

The participants were asked to remember, and discuss, the thought they gave to what their life would have been like as they grew up! Typically, education figured prominently in the reflections on their future and career plans. In fact, education was perceived as being absolutely essential. This female remembered, it was by parental edict:

> *There were certain things that were just instilled in us - because of the poor district that we were from, so, a lot of the people, the girls, they would finish school and started having a family right away. Before we were ten, my mother instilled in us that when you're finished school, you're going to have to go to university or some other tertiary institution, so right away you thought to yourself as finishing high school and going to a university and getting a good job. That was basically drilled in you (28).*

Mostly, it was personal agency. For example, this New York City resident remembered, "...the studying part of it, I was very focused on that part because I knew without education, a lot of the things I wanted were not going to be." This focus and commitment

usually required personal sacrifices and discipline. As an illustration, I will include a male respondent's evidence of this effort:

> *But after finishing university, that in itself was a lot of struggle, I started off part-time, with the intention of quitting my job and finishing up on a full-time basis. So, I started saving. But if you're trying to save in an environment – at the time inflation was running up to like seventy percent. And the money didn't have any value, so it didn't make any sense. So I told myself I would start you know being a full-time student, and having a full-time job. So I -got up in the morning at six, get to work at seven, leave work at four, and had to be on campus at five. I didn't drive. I have to like beg rides because there was actually no bus - it wasn't like we were on a bus route. The airport would hardly have a bus route, I would beg ride all over. And in the nights it's the same thing coming back- there was a bus, and then I'd have to walk part of the way because the buses, they truncate their routes at night for security reasons (23).*

All the participants had finished formal education – up to high school - in their respective home countries. Prior to immigration three of the Toronto group and two from the New York City sample had earned college or university degrees. As we will see later, this educational achievement was associated with the acculturation and immigration experiences of the immigrants. One Toronto resident reflected, "I think it's because of the way - I think that they did a pretty good job in terms of education at home, in preparing us." All but one participant had gained labor market experience before moving to the respective host country. These experiences included civil service positions, the financial services industry, sales and service, teaching, and the building trades, to name a few.

One aim of having the individuals respond to the prompt, " ... how much did you think a lot about what your life would be like when you grew up?" was to gauge how many participants saw, or anticipated, immigration as part of their life's path. Most did not address this issue as part of their initial response. In fact, few participants reported much prior excitement about immigrating. Some reported they initially passed up the opportunity to immigrate. For example, this male Toronto respondent reported,

"originally I had no inclination to migrate...I lived in a household with my aunt and two cousins, and the entire family migrated and it still never dawned on me that I wanted to."

Typically, most of the study's younger respondents envisaged remaining, and making a good life, in their respective native countries. This general sentiment is expressed by a female New York City resident, "I didn't think that in order to be successful, I needed to be out of my country." Her comments and others like it raised the possibility that immigration was no longer viewed as the foremost avenue to social mobility, as it had been for earlier generations. Nonetheless, a minority of the sample saw immigration as a way to realize their potential, a goal that was often not possible in their native countries.

A minority of the participants had never traveled outside their native countries. Others, wanting to see different countries and have new experiences, had visited other countries, including Canada and the United States. Not surprisingly, given the preexisting socio-economic conditions, all the participants had family or relatives living overseas, mainly England. This fueled the need to experience the adulation these relatives, and others, received on return visits to their native country:

> *...I had relatives, who had left, went to England and to the States and when they came back, they came back -- they were The People, you know, I don't know what I would do away, but I wanted to go away too. A big celebration, you know, on their return. I don't know what they did over here, to be honest, they'd never tell us, but there's one thing that stuck in my mind, I had a cousin who had left, I think he was in Barbados, -- and he went to England and spent a Long, long time and he came back, and all the papers were writing about him, and in my little mind I was saying, 'See, he has become like a King in the family and everyone looked up to him,' and I think this is what pushed me to go away. Not that I knew what I was coming here to do. At that time, I didn't know what I wanted to do, really, but later I started to make plans what I would like to do (26).*

Because of the particular socio-cultural and historical legacies in the Caribbean some participants were already exposed to multiple cultural forms. Some remembered the breadth of experiences this offered. Describing growing up in The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, this woman differentiated between the two views of the country's culture, the external broad-brush perspective and the internal elaborate tapestry:

> *Basically...you know that we were run under the British system.... But we have - I should say the society has grown into its own, having your steel pan under – They are two basic cultures, Negroes and Indians. So the Negroes had the pan, the steel pan, the Carnival and stuff like that. Bongo dancing, and all that. And the Indians have their Diwali and the Ramadan and which - sometimes both intertwine, because both the Indians and the Negroes mix – participate in both cultures. (17).*

Others, like this male participant, failed to appreciate the unique opportunity life in a multicultural society offered:

> *I don't know that - it might have been an advantage, because it certainly prepared me for living in Toronto, which is itself, a very multicultural society, or city. But living in Guyana during that time that we had the multiculturalism there, I guess because we were ourselves part of it, certainly I did not have an opportunity or did not take the time to compare or even to be Aware of the fact that I'm living in a multicultural city or culture that has these different segments to it (21).*

Religion and/or spirituality was the final socializing agent examined in the premigration developmental process. I asked the participants to reflect on the role that religion or spirituality played in their household and in their early development. Most remembered religion playing a central role in their early lives a role typically reinforced by mothers or grandmothers. There was a split along gender lines, with more women saying that it played a major role in their lives. On the other hand, men saw religion more as a catalyst for social interaction.

In summary, the premigration period was similar for both the New York and Toronto groups; reduced and non-existent opportunities but high with goals and ambition:

> *Academically, I wanted to attend college and to have my degree and to have a profession. I wanted to have a course that all young people would want -I wanted to have my own home, a family, but I didn't want to have a family until I was secure and professional, you know. I also wanted to have a social life. I don't mean just partying and everything. At least a decent social life where - and I also wanted to be in a position, financially, where I could help my poor parents (19).*

Motivations for immigration

What were the multi-level motivations for West Indian immigrants to leave their country of origin, and how do these motivations influence the choice of destinations?

A majority of the interviewees believed their need for achievement and social mobility could be met in their native country and never imagined living in another country. Others who were similar to this female New York City resident understood the necessity to be flexible and open to change, "everything doesn't work out according to what your plans are, so you shift to suit what you need to do at the time."

The immigration experiences in this sample of adult West Indians were very diverse. For example, five participants had lived and worked in one or more country before settling in Canada or the U.S., and some had never left their home country. Four of the five individuals mentioned above now live in New York. Two of the five had resided in England prior to moving to the respective host country. More specifically, one individual had lived in England, and the United States before moving to Toronto.

The respondents were prompted: *"Tell me the story of why you came to Canada or the United States, and why you chose Toronto or New York City?"* There appeared to

be no ambiguity in the question, but review of the transcripts showed that neither the stories, nor the motivations, were straightforward. In fact this process was quite complex. The different reasons, and means of immigration, are associated with different outcomes and psychological experiences. Individuals recounted family reunification, educational advancement, economic migration, and the search for adventure, as the major motives for leaving their home countries.

Four participants in the study indicated family reunification was a primary reason for immigration. One woman came because, "-my sister was here, and my father was here, in New York. But when I came to New York I hated it." Two others, one male one female, moved to Toronto to join spouses already living there. Some respondents gave educational advancement as a primary, or a secondary, reason for leaving their respective home countries. Typically, however, most did not immediately pursue these opportunities. It should be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive. In addition to the goal of educational advancement, three of the respondents came as part of a new experience. For others, adventure or new experiences was clearly the intended reason for moving to the host country:

> *"Well, when I came - why I came to New York because I was really following friends, who said -- come and go to New York, it's nice -I always thought that money used to grow on trees too, I figured I could do better than I was doing in Barbados, at the time. And seeing guys come back, they tell how good it is and whatever, and I choose that route (11).*

This wasn't this man's first experience outside his home country. He had previously lived and worked in Canada. Another male interviewee characterized his being in New York City as an accident. He elected to remain in New York City after being in-transit to a training program in another American city. Upon landing at Kennedy Airport and seeing

the bright lights, "something went off' in his head and he vowed not to return to his native country.

The quest for adventure is often related to social networks, or social capital, in the receiving countries. Researchers (e.g., Bashi-Bobb & Clarke, 2001; Phillips & Massey, 2000; Watkins-Owens, 2001) have speculated about the role social networks – defined as social capital – play in migration. All the participants had friends, family, and or relatives living in at least one, or both host countries. Yet, it was difficult to clearly determine the specific roles social networks played in the migratory decision-making process. For example, one woman remembered she chose the U.S., and New York City, instead of Canada because:

> *It's where I had - I have most of my relatives, close relatives, and close friends and also it's 'cause where I thought I would get the best opportunity---opportunity to study, to further my education, work opportunity and living opportunity. I should say, again that's what I thought, I would have all these opportunities because other people migrated here and came home and everything you heard or saw about it was the Great land of opportunities. So that's why I chose (19).*

As a follow-up question, she was asked if her closest relative encouraged her to come, or if she said she was coming and wanted to stay with him. She replied, "I asked his permission, he and his wife's permission, and he told me it was okay, I could stay with them, if I wanted someplace to stay." This seems less than a whole-hearted invitation, and as the participant later shared was a contributing factor in acute family-related stress.

The motivation for some was clear, as an example, one woman shared, "my personal life...was not going the way it should and I thought I needed a change." However, it soon was apparent the motivations were more complex and multi-layered. A female Toronto resident provides an example of this complexity. She first stated she had no plans to leave her native country, but then told her brother she wanted to leave and he

sponsored her as a family-class immigrant to Canada. She recalled, "I decided I would come here, go to school here, (and) head back home after ten years - as most people say they're going to do." For her, self-improvement and family reunification appear as competing and independent reasons for immigration. However, the following excerpt from later in the interview suggests she craved new experiences away from the restrictive native cultural environment:

> *What I like in Canada is people not knowing your business every minute. You can live your life, basically, how you want to live it. You do what you want to do- you're not censored – no one's looking to see what you're doing. Yes, sometimes maybe we go from one extreme to the other, but I'm not sure that I'm ready to be back in the Caribbean where I'm under a fish bowl (28).*

The story of the restrictive home country environment – the other side of the involved community - was one that resonated throughout the female participants' stories. One Toronto professional recalled her mother telling her that her native country is so small, "you have to be careful of what neighbors say, or what you do." Nevertheless, the values that established and nourished such environments were often not perceived in a negative light. Some saw these cultural norms as beneficial in shaping their values, attitudes, and behaviors.

Most respondents mentioned a combination of motivations. This female New York City professional's story again demonstrates this, "One of the 'whys' is financial. You go and hear what people have to say and then you do the numbers, and you project. Well, if I do this for X number of years, I can see myself accomplishing- ok. That was one. One of the main ones too, was adventure." But multiple motivations are more the norm than any single reason:

> *To start over. Like, I don't think it was happening in Trinidad. ... You know, education-wise I wanted to get a start. But my mum, ... she was mostly concerned*

> *with my health, alright, and she don't want me to be like getting' sick the way I was and going into a hospital in Trinidad, alright? So she told me to come here while she filed for me. Right now, for my - for my career, I want to like go to England... (13).*

Irrespective of the proffered reasons, it is clear that immigrant individuals chose their destinations with deliberateness. To further explore this belief, I asked the interviewees to respond to the following prompt: "I'm thinking of going to Canada, or I'm thinking of going to America, or I'm thinking of going to England. Which one should I pick?" A long-term Toronto resident's response suggested a person-environment fit:

> *So, ok, I live in Canada and I see what's happening in Canada. So I don't really hear about the States, hear about England. A lot of people prefer to go to the States. Again, it depends on the person, what they have to offer. I'll tell you - if a guy was a fly-by-night guy who said, "I think I'm coming to Canada or I'm thinking of coming to the States." I'd you don't have anything to offer- you might as well go to the States. You can do anything, you can work illegally; you can do all kinds of things. You can't do that much in Canada. Things are tighter in Canada (24).*

The study's results support the view that knowledge of immigration policy and ease of entry influenced the motivation and choice of destination. For example, eight of the ten New York City respondents were at one time undocumented immigrants. By contrast, only two of the Toronto sample came as undocumented immigrants.

Some like this male respondent saw Canada, and Toronto, as enabling social advancement. He remembered he wanted to both leave his country and qualify himself, but for him the overriding intention, " was just to get out of the country, 'cause at that time, we still have the picture back home that everything outside was better than inside the country, so the desire was always to get out. And find the milk and honey, the lands of opportunity outside."

But selection of host country, and city, was sometimes serendipitous. The man quoted above stated, "-initially, I was going to the States. That was my plan. But I could not get my papers posted in time. My vacation was due to start in September of that year and I had one month within which to leave the country...at that time I didn't need a visa to come to Canada. And that's why I ended up in coming here." Similarly, this female professional recalled, it was a case of first come first served:

> *I didn't choose Toronto, it just happened by the way...I thought I needed a change, and I didn't just apply to Toronto, I applied for scholarships for the U.S. - for Post-graduate scholarships - and I applied for Post-graduate scholarships in then Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and I also applied for a post-graduate scholarship in England, and I applied to come to Canada, and the first one that came, I decided I was going to take it, and Toronto was the first one that came through (25).*

Generally, the participants traveled to the host countries alone, but among the sample there were three instances – two in Toronto - when intact family units migrated. In order to get a multifaceted view of the immigration and acculturation process in one of these families, I invited both spouses to participate in the study; they both agreed to be interviewed. To protect against cross-contamination of the data, both interviews were conducted on the same day, with only one interviewee present in the room during the interview.

Analysis of the two interviews brought into stark relief the complexities, including gender issues, involved with a family's resettling in another country. In the interview the husband offered he immigrated because he was concerned about the present and the future. His immediate worries related to the rampant crime situation in his native country, which directly and indirectly, heightened his unease about his, and his family's future possibilities and prospects:

> *And I started to even look further down the road, and I said eventually, you know, five years from now, will I be better off, based on what's happening and I couldn't give myself the reassurance that yes, it will be better. So I had to really realistically start thinking about other alternatives. Plus, at the time I was thinking about getting my MBA. I didn't want to do anything else at the University of the West Indies. So I said I'll have to go abroad to study (23).*

Conversely, the spouse came because she wanted to keep the family intact. But she was very conflicted, and had little enthusiasm for the immigration process. Later, I will explore the gender differences in these types of decisions.

In summary, as was expected, many reasons were offered as motivation for immigration. These included adventure, educational attainment, and social mobility, or some combination of each. In the next section, I will see if the realities of living in the host countries matched the expectations that were part of the stated motivations.

Acculturation Experiences

How do the immigrants' daily experiences relate to the pre-migration expectations the immigrants had before they moved to North America?

Acculturation is defined as the change that occurs as a result of continuous exchange between cultural groups; where cultural identity is defined as the values, attitudes, and behaviors that distinguish one individual and one group from another. Theoretically, acculturation is bi-directional, however, the term is generally used to describe the change in ethnic minority groups as they identify with the dominant culture or ethnic group.

Expectations

Most immigrants from the West Indies who settle in Canada and the United States come into situations that are different from conditions in their home countries. But it is

generally believed that exposure (e.g., previous visits, friends and family, media, etc.) to the host society's culture reduces the level of adjustment stress the immigrant will encounter. One woman in Toronto recalled that her brothers, aunts, and others who came back to her home country had given her an idea of what to expect when and if she moved there, "you really know what to expect in terms of snow and that kind of thing."

Thus, there is empirical support for the belief that foreknowledge aids the adjustment process. Although there is a degree of naiveté associated with the idea:

> *There is so much to get, to come to grips with when you're here... In a lot of ways I - for me I don't think it would have been possible to really prepare for certain things without being here. Because I think, it's such a vast difference between coming for a temporary stay and coming to actually be a part of the workforce. It's Way different (15).*

Participants described both positive and negative experiences adjusting to cultural and social life in the two countries. Typically, the respondents reported disappointment with their early experiences that didn't match their expectations. Some were surprised the perceived advantage associated with moving to an economically developed country was not readily apparent. Case in point, this female respondent offered an acerbic description of her first experiences:

> *The Canadian people, the stupidity--- Because you have these expectations that they have these bright ideas, and -you're from the Third World. It was surprising that it was kind of backward, because even though we're the First World country and Jamaica is Third World, some of the computer systems that they had-like even just a simple thing like the telephone that they were just getting to when I went to the bank, we had that years ago. And even their computer system, - it wasn't better than ours (28).*

A male New York City resident's story provides evidence of the pervasiveness of unrealistic expectations:

> *I had a very skewed idea of America, to be honest with you. My impressions of America as a young man was that you would walk down the streets and get*

money, for some reason, I don't know why. I don't know. I thought- I think I was fooled or I was misinformed but I thought America was this place where things were easy. Everything was easy, easy, easy. That you just walk into America- Once you're in America, the streets are golden. But I had notions of America - to be honest with you. Because I remember quite distinctly, the day -the next day I woke up at my uncle's place and I saw all the burnt-out buildings in America. I was so disappointed. But what disappointed me most of all is the burned out buildings, the dilapidated buildings I'd see in the neighborhood. It was all burned out buildings. I was like - This is America! Dang. Barbados is better than this, man (10).

The differences between expectations and reality did not simply relate to the social and environmental:

For one thing, I thought it would have been much easier - even though I said I got the job at-- prior to that, I was looking through the papers and there were ads for insurance agents, stuff that I felt - I can do that kind of thing - but it was not as Easy as I thought it would have been to get those jobs. And I think one of the things I was looking at too was that I (emphasis) felt I was qualified enough to do those jobs - but - from what I can remember, I think my impression at that time was that - being Black was one of the things that was preventing me from getting those positions (21).

One thing that was different between the stories in the two cities was that most respondents in Toronto gave themselves timelines to achieve certain objectives. The first of which was to find a job, and the timelines varied from weeks to six months. The same was not true of the New York City participants, where the materialism and adventure motivations, and immigration status worked to reduce opportunities for timelines.

In one interview, I got a better understanding of the often, deep divide between expectation and reality. By offering a glimpse into her personal struggles, an undocumented immigrant provided insight to an unspoken truth for a number people in the New York City group:

Q: You said you came for multiple reasons. One was education. One was financial. And the other was the social...In terms of the plans you had before you

came and now, how satisfied are you with your progress? I'm assuming you had a timetable, that you will achieve certain things by a certain time. Is that correct?
A: Yes. I thought I would be able to accomplish certain things, or achieve at this point. And it so happened that obstacles, obstacles that are in my way and that have gotten in my way before - it so happened that I have not done - a quarter of what I wanted to do.
Q: - how are you feeling about that?
A: You know I'm disappointed. Very disappointed... I'm disappointed in myself.
Q: Why?
A: Well, again, I- because I'm not as motivated as I should be to really move forward, do what I have to do and what I want to do. And I'm also disappointed in the United States of America. Because it is not the place I saw when I was coming here on vacation. You know, coming here on holiday and coming here to live are two different situations altogether.
Q: Tell me more about that-
A: Because when you really come here on a vacation, you know, you see things, things look easy to accomplish, until you decide that you're coming here to live and then it is not.
Q: Give me an example. You said 'things'- things aren't as easy. Give me an example, one thing or something.
A: Let's say employment. I remember on my first visit to this country I was told by two persons, I should not even return home. That they could get me a job that I would be able to live and I'd be able to work. At that time I wasn't interested in living here, I just wanted to come on vacation. When I decided I wanted to come here and live, it took me approximately six months before I could get a job.

A majority of the respondents recounted their surprise and disappointment that the reality did not match their expectations. However, the reasons differed, for example in the Toronto group the focus was on employment prospects. In New York the disappointment dealt with social, cultural, and environmental differences. Nonetheless, they were a minority whose expectations and realities were not too dissonant. For example, one woman indicated she was aware of before moving to Canada of the difficulty in getting work that matched your education, skill, and experience. Thus, when she did not immediately get the job of choice, she wasn't surprised.

Acculturation strategies

What acculturation strategies do immigrants from the West Indian Diaspora most often adopt, and how do these transform over time?

Acculturation proceeds in ways that depend on the social, cultural, and political conditions of the sending and receiving countries. Relocation erodes the immigrant's sense of identity, while the challenges of immigration and the resources needed vary over time. Therefore, I was interested in the strategies used by these individuals, immediately on arrival and currently, to deal with the cognitive and behavioral changes that ensue from contact with the dominant and non-dominant cultures to which the individuals are exposed. For example, how might factors such as physical features (race) and culture (language) constrain the immigrant individual's responses to the changes he or she encounters.

A number of items in the interview guide were designed to examine the immigrants' responses to these differences (Appendix B, Questions # 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 24, 25, etc.). The narratives indicate that the range of cultural experiences in the group differed by city. The New York City participants' narratives highlighted the degree of lifestyle (i.e., cultural) differences they encountered between their home country and the host society. The Toronto group's narratives did not focus on differences to the same extent. Was this because there were no significant differences between the home countries and Toronto? Or were they more aware of these differences and better prepared to deal with them? The narratives suggest the latter is true.

One item (Appendix B, item # 7) on the interview guide prompted the respondents to think and talk about the differences they noticed when they first arrived in

the country/city, and how they adjusted to these differences. On arrival and shortly thereafter, immigrants experienced the greatest differences with, as well as pressures to change and adapt to, the host culture. The differences and pressures added to the level of frustration, anxiety and uncertainty usually associated with immigration.

In theory new immigrants are expected to seek and rely on the knowledge, kinship, and social capital held by family, friends, and co-ethnics in the acculturation process. Conversely, some new immigrants may choose to distance themselves from their native culture, in preference to the host culture, or an alternative culture. A third option exists, where the immigrant seek knowledge and kinship from the social network in some areas, while simultaneously seeking to become more familiar – immersion – with the dominant cultural themes. However, this option or motivated behavior requires and relies on the immigrant possessing a high level of cultural capital. Most of the individuals in the Toronto group reported using some variant of the third option, as compared to the two other options. Perhaps, because of differences in immigration status on entry to the U.S., most New York residents used the first option – relying on the social capital available in their social network.

Immediately on arrival

> *Transportation, that's different from what I'm used to there in the Caribbean...I had to get into learning the whole train system, how to - where to go, how to go, where in Barbados you go on a bus and you know where you are going, or you ask the conductor or something. Here you have to know the map. You know, you're in a lot of trouble when you start here; you don't know where you're going. So that was different for me too. I had to learn how to read the train map (19).*

The above quote is emblematic of one of the changes newly arrived immigrants have to deal with – learning to get around on their own. More than one participant mentioned having to learn this new skill. Further, a long-term female immigrant remembered she

was reluctant, and often chose not to ride the New York City subways because of the rage and resentment she said saw on the faces of other riders.

The following quotes are all from New York City residents. This does not mean the Toronto group had no comments on cultural differences, but these quotes are striking, because of the intensity of the emotions involved. For example, one woman who has been in the City for about six years noticed:

> *The lifestyle, one, the lifestyle of the people is so different from the lifestyle I'm used to -- By "lifestyle" I mean the way people go about things now. Ok, in Barbados, we had a more laid back lifestyle. Whereas here everything is so fast going. And that's one of the things I had to understand, and I had to catch up to (19).*

A respondent who has been in the city for over fifteen years remembered:

> *The culture shock was really bad in the sense that, you know, I grew up in an area where everyone would say 'Good morning. Hi, how're you doing' to everyone; old, young, whoever. Everyone respected each other. When I came here, I was in a daze. Everybody I say, I would say 'Good morning,' or 'hi,' and people would look at me, like, with this angry face, you know, and that really disturbed me until one day my brother said to me, "That's how the people are in New York. It's not like in the Caribbean. They don't tell you 'hello' so I think you should stop (17).*

This is how a recent immigrant to New York City described it:

> *I think it's kind of - not just -there's something about people in the U.S.A. where they are civil but not sincere. You know, you get a smile on the subway and you know that smile is just - it doesn't go to the eyes at all much less in here (heart) (15).*

She added being here was, "Nerve-wracking. I find New York is a place very lacking in compassion. Very, very lacking in compassion. I asked, "How have you dealt with it?" Her reply was, "sometimes better than others."

The above quotes were all from female respondents, but men also spoke of these differences. This forty-something male who described the environmental and social

components felt it would have helped his adjustment if he had known of some of the differences earlier:

> *The culture- the shock of the culture, the difference in culture. How different we are in culture. Barbados was more sheltered. The exposure to the sexual revolution - I, you know, in Barbados they know about sex and stuff, of course, but the openness and the vulgarity...the culture shock was my biggest problem. It was a total different experience in terms of the culture. American culture is a free for all type culture and back home (10).*

The majority of the respondents recalled immediately plunging into the maelstrom of the new society and culture. But others took a more nuanced approach to coming to terms with these differences. As an example, this thirty-something man described how he immersed himself in the culture:

> *Let's see. I learned the bus system. A friend of mine and I were like sparring partners and we -every weekend we'd just pick a spot on the map -without anywhere to go or anything to do, buy Metro passes, we'd go to that place the map would take us there.... Every Friday evening we'd head downtown; he had his cousin - his cousin was born here...He just started his clothing line - and every Friday evening we were down by his store. He was in the basement of the Third World Bookstore. We met a lot of people along the way. Everybody would come into the store- a lot of bright young people. And I guess I met a lot of other people who were moving up in the world - or who would move up in the next ten years.... And what was greatly enlightening - I'll never forget - the owners of the Third World Bookstore. They were telling stories about their life, growing up in Canada. They were about maybe eighty years old around that age...so basically I spent the first couple of years getting to know people and getting to know Toronto, on the whole (20).*

Generally, the respondents reported receiving assistance negotiating critical cultural differences, but there was no repository of services to assist newly arrived immigrants. The result is that immigrant individuals must rely on others for assistance, and some of the participants, like this man still remembers:

> *...How unwilling people are to offer assistance or maybe the right assistance. Apart from a few friends and my relatives here, there are not many people you can depend on. That's probably the most surprising thing; you can't really depend on the community in Canada (20).*

Current Acculturation Strategies

Some of the conflicts and pressure to change are resolved as the immigrants continue to reside in the host countries. Typically, they described maintaining strong ties with their ethnic and cultural group(s) to the exclusion of other groups and cultures.

The degree and quality of intercultural or cross-cultural contacts is one useful approach in assessing individual-level acculturation. Using that approach, I found a low level of psychological acculturation in this immigrant sample. Respondents indicated they typically socialized among their cultural or ethnic group, and this results in minimal cross-cultural contacts. This separation strategy extends to their choice of friends and residential locations. However, the heterogeneity of the West Indian Diaspora immigrants, suggests varying degrees of inter- and intra-cultural contact, vis-à-vis the dominant culture:

It is informative, the degree to which this cultural separation exists in Toronto, where the majority of interviewees live in racially and ethnically diverse communities. This implies spatial integration, but less social, cultural, or behavioral integration. As a consequence of, or subsequent to, living this equal but separate parallel life, these immigrants, as well as the majority group, are essentially missing out on the full range of experiences associated with living a modern, multicultural city.

With the exception of one self-employed businessman, all the respondents work, or worked, in environments with diverse cultures and ethnicities, but again there was only nominal socialization. The following from with a male participant was an essential explanation for the intra-cultural socialization:

> *Yeah, with people I can relate to, you know, in a social way. Like, there's a language barrier with this person here beside us. He socialized with us once, he*

> *came out once, with us to a bar. He came out once, we went to a bar one night for a drink, and he came with us, but that's because - he came, but this language barrier that - we just can't get by that, right? So, that's probably one reason. You know, with your own people, if you're from the Caribbean, you have to speak the same language, so you identify with everything. It's easier to socialize. Yeah, no matter what color they are, once they're from the Caribbean (22).*

Taking the opposite position, this New Yorker believes that inter-racial and cross-cultural contacts are the way to go:

> *I like mixing the races. I hate all Black or all white, you know what I'm saying? One thing I would like to go away is racism. I would just like it to go away. I mean, you know what I'm saying? We're People. People, just- I'm Black and you're white, whatever, we're people. As a matter of fact, I never see myself as being Black or white. I don't see - I see myself as non-colored. I know I'm Black, I know I'm Black. Mentally you know, I know. But psychologically I don't think of myself as anything in terms of a color, really. I don't get up today - and say "I'm a Black man" I really don't. I think that's helped me, you know, as a person. I embrace all races, all cultures. Yeah, you have bad Black people, you have bad white people, you have bad Mexican people, you have bad Asian people. You also have good people of all these people, so you have to find the Good ones. But some of them, some Black people will kick you in the butt every day if you don't have- to be careful and pull you down every day. Your same race! And to say 'I don't like white people because white people put me down," or "white people piss me off or because it's really a misconception because Black people do the same thing. Every day. Even within families, every day, the same thing. See what I'm saying, so I try not to get the race, every time I hear people talk about race, I try to pull myself right out of the conversation (10).*

Despite this individual's assumed non-racial perspective, the majority used an acculturation strategy that relied on membership in clubs and organizations. West Indian Diaspora immigrants' memberships in social and professional clubs and organizations tend to be based on the needs of the home countries, and the wider West Indian region. For example, one man described his membership in an organization that's for anybody from Dominica. "It's patriotic so we formed our own club, for our own entertainment for our own people and stuff like that.... and we do a lot of scholarships and stuff like that." Some organizations, like Toronto's Jamaican Canadian Association, cater to the broad

West Indian community, while others such as Association of Black Law Enforcement provide a narrower range of support and involvement to this immigrant population.

Most participants reported they elect not to be members of clubs or organizations that promote the needs or views of the host countries. Any reference to American or Canadian in these organizations names is chiefly for charter or registration purposes. However, these organizations or individuals do a poor job representing their community:

> *... Something that's always upset me is prominent West Indians in this country, I find that when they have gotten certain positions here, they do not help their fellow brother and sisters who need help and I would like to see that happening. Because I think a lot of us immigrate to his country, and there are people, West Indians here who are doing very well for themselves, in positions they could really help each other, and I find that they do absolutely nothing (19).*

This de facto separation decision, with its concomitant loose association with other cultural groups, has direct and indirect effects on the immigrants' modes of responses to the possibilities available in the societies. A female health professional believes this inability, or reluctance, to network has resulted in the lack of widely held knowledge among West Indian immigrants about available resources directed towards mental and physical health:

> *I don't know what it is about us as a group, I find the Chinese are more, they network more, I find even some of the Africans, they network more...if they are having difficulties they know where to go within- you know to seek help. I find that, I don't know, that's different among us, and I don't know why...I don't know if this is pride (27).*

Therefore, it is possible the perception that the more established West Indian immigrants are unwilling to assist new immigrants may stem more from a lack of awareness or the difficulties with networking than with indifference.

Acceptance

The minimal intercultural socialization often results from conscious choice not to socialize outside the individuals' ethnic group. Equally, it may emanate from a social construction where members of the majority cultural group elect to limit intercultural contact. The results suggest that both processes are at work in each city.

To explore this feeling of acceptance versus non-acceptance, I asked the interviewees to respond to the following statement: " While living in New York/ Toronto I have ---------- been subjected to insults and harassment because of my foreign background." The five-point Likert-type item was scored from 5 (frequently insulted or harassed) to1 (didn't know whether it has happened or not). Typically, the feeling of acceptance was a key psychological variable in the respondents' immigration experiences but the patterns differed. The Toronto respondents reported more instances of insults and harassment than the New York group. Men reported more incidents in Toronto, while in New York City women reported experiencing more insults and harassments (Table 2). However, the transcripts showed that this issue of non-acceptance was interwoven throughout the narratives.

There were a number of reasons why the respondents felt they were not accepted; primary was the issue of racism or discrimination. As a female respondent observed, "First of all, the color of your skin identify you as different...they look at people – people always look at you [as being] from a Third World country." Further, as the following excerpt suggests, participants felt they were tolerated, but not valued or respected, for their contributions to the host countries:

> *...If accepted means that you have somebody to fill the gaps within the society that working-class gap, fine, I'm totally accepted, but if it means excelling to*

> *certain levels, maybe to the levels of people who've been here, whose ancestors basically have been here for three, four generations who have all the assets of all the land and basically pass things down from one generation to the next... We're just working for them. So, basically that was - Yes, I'm accepted, yes, I feel like in Canada I'm working-class, yeah, as a lot of people are. We're needed to fill- that's why the immigration law is so lenient because they need to fill that gap. They allow people in (20).*

This issue of non-acceptance was also present in the New York City narratives, "well, to tell you the truth, as a Black man - I don't think America really want Nobody that's Black, whether Bajan or nobody. They don't even want their own that was born here from days of slavery."

Permeating the narratives was an anti-immigrant sentiment. Comments were directed at the immigrants suggesting they were coming to take the jobs held - mostly not held - by the natives. Ironically, the persons making these comments were often immigrants themselves. Further, while the comments were presented as anti-immigrant, they were less frequently directed at white, or favored immigrant groups. Paradoxically, it was a recent New York City immigrant who experienced first-hand that this non-immigrant sentiment cuts across, racial categories, developmental stages, and work locations:

> *People tend to be subtler, but you know when there are a couple of people blocking you. As we would say, they put a spoke in the wheel kind of thing, and even some of the international teachers will tell you stories of their principals who have told them outright "We do not want internationals in our school." They tell you stories of the ridiculous things some of these principals do. Unfair things, and they just don't care. They break the rules. They go out of the way to make you miserable. Kids. I've had students say to me, I try not to take these things personally, but they tell you some insulting things. One little boy said to me one day, 'I was born in the Bronx. I belong here. You're an immigrant. (15).*

The irony, in her view, was that the children who were spewing this anti-immigrant dogma were in most cases less socially and economically advantaged than she was:

> *But these little kids are going to say, "I'm an American and you are less than me because you speak with a different accent and you have come here looking for I don't know if they think I crawled from under a rock somewhere or in a grass skirt, and I come here looking to make life. But they are not enjoying the goodness that is here...Sometimes I wish I could pick them up bodily and carry them into some of these people's homes and schools and show them. This is your country is this what you have?* (15)

Acceptance is not the sole determinant of how, and if, the immigrant acculturates. The feeling of acceptance or non-acceptance is often associated with hierarchical relationships, which play significant roles in the adaptive process. To illustrate, a male participant identified a pecking order, one with Black West Indians at the bottom:

> *-- no white American would prefer a foreigner over a Black American. He'd rather have a Black American provided he can give him the same results. ---I don't think that no Southerner or no redneck would hire a West Indian before he hires a Black American. You have to remember, Black Americans would go in front of a white employer and talk he jive talk. He understands, you know, "my man---" he understands it. A West Indian goes there, on that same job, and trying to speak the English best he could, and right away he's got an accent. "Where are you from? You've got an accent." It's an attitude problem among employers, when it comes to West Indian. I would never be fooled that a white man would employ a Black West Indian over an American. He wouldn't, but Exploitation is the word that we (he) would use West Indians for (11).*

In situations where exclusion was not overtly displayed, feelings of inclusion were qualified. Responding to the question of being accepted in her neighborhood, a female New York resident offered, "I would say yes and no because let me see, right now, where I live here, is mostly West Indians. I would say 'yes,' to others it might be 'no,' I don't know." It is worth noting that this participant's husband is White and she lives in the only racially diverse New York neighborhood encountered in the study.

A minority of the sample felt accepted in and by the respective society. One woman equated her monthly Old Age Canadian Government pension with acceptance, "what I am saying to you is that, although there is discrimination, we – I don't know

about others – I am saying I was still accepted by some to get where I am today."

Another respondent compared how things are now to what they were before, and saw changes:

> *It's like out of the threat of fear they had about Black people, and Black Power of the Sixties, I think that's away a bit...- especially in Canada. We have more Black people running for political offices now, and they just accept us more now. We get more prominent positions in the community now (24).*

In conclusion, some long-time respondents still have difficulties with the changed cultural norms and take deliberate steps to hold onto their native culture. Most respond in a fashion similar to that espoused by this woman who has lived in New York City for approximately fifteen years:

> *--I accept a lot of stuff that doesn't bother me anymore... In the sense, you know, (of) what we discussed about the culture differences, racism, ethnicity, the disrespect for human beings, the lack of loving, the lack of caring. I've accepted that that's part of the system, but it's not part of my personal system (15).*

We shall see later issues of gender and race aligned with the feeling of non-acceptance. For example, some women in the sample who were in management or supervisory positions spoke of being ignored by staff, and the public at large.

Multiculturalism as an aid to acculturation

The argument is made that in multicultural countries like Canada, integration is encouraged by the endorsement of cultural differences. This is a view supported by this man's narrative:

> *I think what has surprised me most was the mix of peoples in Toronto. I mean, in Guyana, even though we have five or six different nationalities [ethnicities], they are all more or less - what should I say- you grew up with them. They were there all the time. The Portuguese who were there, were there forever. The Chinese who were there, were there forever kind of thing. What I found in Toronto, I was amazed at the number of different peoples from different countries who were coming into Toronto. You know, we had people from all parts of Africa. You had Asians and this whole mix of people in Toronto. That's (emphasis) - that I was not*

> *prepared for. Not that they caused me problems, but that in Guyana when you hear you're coming to Canada, never in my wildest dreams did I think I was coming to a city that had all these different mixes of people. I thought I would find mostly white people, hardly any Black people, people from any other African country here...To me it says that, you know, the country, the government of the country - or the government of the city, welcomes anyone is able to come here without prejudice. It certainly makes you feel, or made you feel at the time more comfortable in that you do have people that do look like you, even though they might not be from your country here in Toronto. You meet them on the streets; you meet them in businesses, in other places (21).*

However, the research indicates a certain conflict or ambivalence associated with the policy of multiculturalism. As official policy, multiculturalism is generally considered a good thing, but there were many like this female Toronto participant who have questions, "sometimes I wonder what it really means, if it's just having all these blocks of all different nationalities, but when it comes to certain areas not all groups enjoy that." Moreover, some respondents view government's endorsement of the idea with suspicion. The following respondents hold pragmatic views of multiculturalism's aims, albeit one cynical, the other more sanguine:

> *Oh, multicultural, yes, but, you know, let's just call it what it is...- the immigration policies were just to bring in people to fill certain gaps in working class, right (20).*

Whereas,

> *I'm not sure. I guess it makes it more attractive to prospective immigrants and - who want to leave their own country, especially immigrants from the non-European countries. It makes it more attractive - the destination (21).*

A view of multiculturalism juxtaposed with ethnic diversity prompted a female participant to agree there is something to be said for the policy's goals, but wondered if this wasn't also an exclusionary strategy:

> *... I often think, sometimes I wonder if - sometimes I think, this multicultural thing, sometimes I think they don't want us to melt in and become one of them, so they say, ' maintain the culture because we don't want you in ours.' That, in a*

> *way is how I see it, at times. So I don't mind - but I like the idea of being among others (27).*

Another long-term Toronto resident opposes the policy not for reasons of politics or culture, but on philosophical grounds:

> *I think it's stupid. I think it's stupid, this emphasis on multiculturalism. Because what it does - it all you get is a mosaic of people - one little group here, one little group there, one little group in different places, right? Ok. Fine. Maybe when you look at the whole mosaic it may look colorful and you'll think, 'oh well, this is a real multicultural society.' But basically what they do - they're encouraging people to maintain their heritage instead of saying 'I am Canadian.' (25)*

In her view, one of the less desirable outcomes of multiculturalism is the tendency to assign persons into visible minority categories, thereby creating inequalities among equals:

> *...basically you may get a Chinese who's a visible minority who in turn will be supportive of another Chinese and you will have in a department or an organization an influx of Chinese and basically, you could find that the Black person could be marginalized, and yet still Not -it would not be represented when you look at that Employment Equity Status because they say 'oh well, we're visible. We have X number of people visible minority (25).*

However, this man, while in the minority, was able to discern an advantage from multiculturalism:

> Well, *I guess the advantage to me is the fact that because we represent a force to be reckoned with, let's say collectively, immigrants, and the different cultures, we represent a force to be reckoned with - I think our voice is more likely to be heard than if we were not so represented in the country. So indirectly it helps every one of us because it allows our voice be heard more so than if we weren't a multicultural society (21).*

In conclusion, the view of multiculturalism as seen by the immigrants does not match the view of the official policy. For this group of immigrants, multiculturalism has created an underclass, i.e., because of race the Black West Indian immigrants are treated as unequal among the group of minority immigrants.

Acculturative stress

What are the relationships between acculturation strategies and acculturative stress?

Adjustment or acculturative stress is unavoidable, and a major risk factor for immigrants. Acculturative stress is associated with changes in values, attitudes, and identity, particularly if, for personal or societal reasons, the immigrant has difficulty making the needed changes. Symptoms of acculturative stress include confusion, anxiety, depression, alienation, hopelessness, identity confusion, and heightened psychosomatic symptoms. These were all present in the participants' reflections. One female respondent's description of her early immigrant experiences captured some of these constructs:

> *It was emptiness. You felt hollow. You know, you go to bed and you're sad because - and the little phone call you get from back home is like, you know, you hurry up and you finish talking. And yet, you won't go back and you don't want to go, because you don't want to seem as you've failed, you know (30).*

A recent male immigrant to Toronto spoke of his sense of alienation from the majority cultural group, loneliness, and loss of cultural and social identity, and the discrimination he experienced:

> *Well the first feeling you get is like you've moved back. In terms of – it's not where you are in society- now you're in your job - you've been there for eight years, you're a supervisor, you're pretty much in control of what's around you, everybody knows you, you're respected. All of a sudden, in this big city and you are a Perfect Nobody. Nobody knows you. You go on the subway for days and not a soul say's 'hi' because you don't know anybody, and it's not like in the West Indies where people are friendly and I could see you and we could have a nice half an hour conversation, I probably don't even know your name and I wouldn't care less if I saw you again...its completely different here. So that's the time you realize that once you're in a big city, still you're so lonely...I didn't expect it to be as lonely as it turned out to be. All you're life you've lived in a society where everybody was just the same. All of a sudden you find yourself in a society and you suddenly begin to realize that despite what people tell you about, "oh there's no prejudice," you're starting to realize that you're in a society that's a lot more*

> *stratified than the one you're coming from. And unfortunately for you, you're not in the upper echelon...I find that's happened to a lot of people coming here. And I see - and I see them come here and start behaving in a certain way...because, like in a lot of ways, what we are is what society makes us out to be. We basically role-playing a lot- it allows society to tell you what role to play, you find that you become something else than what you were before--- living here as an immigrant, you have to be constantly conscious of it. Not to play the role that they want you to play, but to play the role you want (23).*

Further, as the respondent described it, loss of social identity is significantly associated with role-playing and becomes an integral part of the immigrant's existence. This looking glass self (Cooley, 1902) and the associated identity-confusion, renders the immigrant helpless and hopeless:

> *And that's -- that's what contributes to that whole thing that I was telling you about, where society puts you in that role, people begin to take a factory job and they're satisfied with it now, and they're like, 'Oh, I'll never get anywhere, and I'm not going back home, so I'll have to stay here, and all this. ...Even though they left their countries as professionals, - they come here and they say 'you're a Perfect Nobody.' And they're role-playing the role of a nobody (23).*

Social networks are one of the mechanisms usually accessible to new immigrants, and typically the network members are available to assist with the resettlement process. When immigrants have no social network, the experience is even more problematic. This participant described her experiences arriving in a new city and country, without friends, and no settled place to stay:

> *So anyhow, it was a struggle. I was told in Guyana that if I walked with my YWCA card they would honor it. The cab took me there, and I was there for about six weeks. And in those days it was two fifty a night because of the membership. And I was told some of the girls who were domestics and who stayed, were at the YWCA...Thursday was their day off. And so I should go down there, and see if I would meet some people I knew. And I did do that... it was a terrible time, I came in May and school started in September...And I met quite a few of the girls and my saddest moments were when we had to part, because I Really was homesick. And when I saw them, and we started to talk I felt like, this was home, because I didn't know anybody from Guyana. I had to meet them (26).*

Some of the identity changes that result from the immigration process often lead to diminished self-worth. In the next section I will focus on the narrative of a female New Yorker, whose situation is made more extreme by her immigration status. However, it highlights the range of possible effects:

> *Well, when I was living with relatives, I was dependent on them to provide me with clothes and shelter, food, and my sister-in-law was even giving me an allowance, occasionally. So as an Adult, who was once independent, right? And then - to go to that extreme to be so dependent on someone, again, I felt - I felt less than a woman (19).*

I asked her to rationalize the difference between her expectations and reality, and she spoke about helplessness and hopelessness:

> *It's, it's different. Some days - some days I just feel like I just want to give up. Just work and just live and call it a day. And other days I wake up and I'm all ready to go. Ready to go do what I have to do. Of course, I haven't done it, but some days I wake up and say I will get ahead.*

Later the interviewee speaks about isolation, and invisibility:

> *Q: -- When you say nobody knows you here, --*
> *A: I'm not documented. I can't go to the hospital and show a number and be attended to or something, if there are areas, businesses that want me to get a social security number, I don't have it, so it's a little more difficult for me. Let's say, for example, I want to go to college. Now, I will have to pay for my tuition because I can't get any funding from the government or anything like that. Now that is a Big setback for me, because although I am working and yes I could pay for it, I also have to have some form of finance there if something should happen to me, and I can't pay for it too, because I'm not covered by any insurance...where other people can get funded by the government, I don't have those privileges. So, that's - you know, are drawbacks for being undocumented in this place.*

I asked her what is happening when these 'some days I am going to give up' thoughts occur, and what are the frequency of occurrences? She says she can feel this way four or five time a month, and on occasions specific factors or events are precursors to these

psychological changes. But in other circumstances it is the mundane that trigger these changes of affect:

> *I guess something may have gone wrong somewhere. Something that may not have anything to do with my work or even - with my work, but something may have happened before, and I just start thinking about it. It could be just listening to the news. It could be something that happened to somebody- a friend, and I say, well that's it (19).*

Some of the specific environmental stressors include the inability to access services such as getting cable, opening a bank account, or finding suitable employment. These modes of responses, or strategies, increase acculturative stress, while simultaneously negatively impacting self-esteem:

> *It's humiliating --before I came here to live, I stood on my own. I could have gone - and do anything, go anywhere, any place in the country I wanted, you know. Sign any paper, for anything I wanted. Here, I can't do that. I have to ask other people. So it's humiliating. It tends to make me feel - it's degrading. That's the word. Because of it, there are so many things I can't do, because I don't have the necessary documents to use (19).*

Earlier, I reported on a respondent's recollections of her fear of failing to live up to the expectations that go along with the immigration experience. This fear of failure was present in the reflections of a number of respondents. As a result some immigrants individuals stayed not because their dreams have been realized, but because their options are virtually non-existant:

> *Sometimes I think it may not become a reality, and I ask myself, now why I live here. And I say, I'm so ashamed to return back home. One, if I go back home, I'm going back home with like - what? The same way I came here, I'm going back home - that is not why I came here. Secondly, I don't know if I'll get employment. At least I have some sort of employment here. If I go back home, I don't even know if I'll get employment. And I don't know - I don't know even what money, I have- I don't know how I'd live on it back home (19).*

I asked her to share some more of her emotional and mental distress:

> *-- that shame, that emotional shame. I resigned from a job. And we were talking about the Caribbean where when you say you're living in the United States of America and you're expected; let's talk about me-I left to accomplish something, to get something. I'm expecting something from myself, when I return. And others, my family, and my friends, they're expecting' me to come back home with something. And here I'm - if I were to go home tomorrow, I have nothing to - nothing more than what I came here with. So, I mean, I would feel ashamed. What have I done for the seven or eight years that I have been living' in America. I resigned from a job. Leave my family, my relatives and my friends in order to come here to start All over Again, I haven't really done as much as I want to (19).*

This woman, like others in the study, is playing the role of an achieving immigrant; trapped between others' expectations and the reality of her circumstances. In fact regrets permeated her narrative. As an example, the following quote came early in the interview. She was asked to reflect back to when she was a young girl growing up in her native country, and what she thought her life would be like when she grew up.

> *I could have done it -ok, the others, when I was in (home country) sometimes, I picture myself having it out of (home country), but now that I have lived out of (the island), I could have my home, and I could have my family in (the island). It would be much easier...I regret the decision. -- because, again, when I think about the job I left to come here, and what I am doing right now. When I thought about if I probably had stayed at home, the opportunity that I'm looking for here is most likely what I could have gotten at home.*

However, role-playing does not always negatively impact the ego. Instead, when used as an active coping or protective mechanism its impact changes. Reacting to the suggestion that her white employers may think her less capable and therefore non-threatening, another undocumented female offered:

> *Well, if you've got a goal to achieve, you really don't care if they think you're non-threatening or not, you just going to do what you need to do and that's it. Whatever they think. So once you don't internalize it and know that you could be a threat to them, let them go on and believe that. Leave it alone...I think they have this, because when people think that you're not at their intellectual level, they feel more comfortable. Intellectually, you're just as equal or you're even Brighter than*

they are. But if that's their perception that's not the reality, so - as along as it works for you, leave it there (18).

Racism and discrimination

The participants in the study represent the majority racial group in their native countries, and the Caribbean region. Blacks have gained political and social ascendancy and this power provides them with a sense of entitlement, not transferable to other countries and regions of the world, principally North America.

Discrimination in employment, housing, and interpersonal relationships on the basis of skin color is a feature of the daily existence of immigrants of African descent. This is often a new experience for these immigrants, but research (e.g., Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000a) found discrimination experiences in various realms of life were highly predictive of the psychological well-being of immigrants.

As part of the exploration of this topic, I asked the interviewees to respond to the following: Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following: *"in this country race or skin color does not limit the ability to succeed."* The five-point Likert-type scales ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Analysis of the data, which was reversed-scored, indicate the New York City sample believed, more strongly than the Toronto sample, that race does limit the ability to succeed (Table 2). This finding, though not surprising, was somewhat illusory. Gender differences were not in the direction I had expected. Women in both cities felt more strongly about race affecting the ability to succeed than the men did. Perhaps these gender differences reflect the strong empathy the women in this study have for Black West Indian immigrant men who they believe have had a harder time acculturating. This view will be supported later in the results section.

Ethnic and racial diversity is viewed as a hallmark of the multicultural Canadian society. However, the research suggests that racial intolerance not only exists in Canada, but also has a similarly corrosive effect on the mental health of the Black immigrant in Canada as it does in the United States:

> *Personally, I think, people always chastise me for saying this, but I think there's more evident racism within Canada than even within the U.S. let's eliminate "evident", more racism; let's say more racism in Canada than in the U.S. The only difference is, in the U.S. --It's explicit, exactly, and here it's under the rug, basically. It's covered up, right? You have a lot of people that basically - I'd rather have it up front - in front of me, and be able to identify it out there, right? But when you shake my hand and wish me the best of luck, and in the back of your head you're saying 'I have to wash my hands when I go into the bathroom (20).*

A participant who has been in Toronto for more than ten years made the above quote, but it mirrors comments made by a recent immigrant to the City. He believed the Canadian society and culture is similar to the U.S. only less overt, "It's not like in America. 'Oh, I hate niggers,' that kind of thing. (But) you'll never get a Canadian to say that. That doesn't mean he loves you any more than the guy who says he hates niggers."

Nine of the eleven individuals interviewed in Toronto provided first-person stories of racial or ethnic discrimination. Seven shared stories of work-related discrimination, four recalled experiencing housing-related discrimination, and three mentioned various aspects of racial profiling by the police. Noticeable in the accounts was the change in type and visibility of the racism experienced. Those who had been in Toronto the longest spoke more about housing discrimination. On the other hand employment based discrimination was more prevalent in the narratives of both recent and long-term residents. I speculate this prevalence is related to the difficulty proving, or disproving, this category of racism and or discrimination.

The majority of the Toronto sample accepts the presence of racism and discrimination. During the interview they articulated their strong opposition to it, and described a number of strategic and proactive measures to combat its effect. Conversely, a minority takes the position, "there are certain things you can't challenge. You'll get yourself into deeper trouble." Another sentiment was, "you just have to live with it and hope it gets better." Some respondents see these racist and discriminatory practices at the government level, where they are part of the immigration policy.

The statistical data (Table 2) show the New York group to be as concerned as the Toronto group was about racism and discrimination's detrimental impact on their lives and success. However, this was not reflected in the narratives as it pertained to the Likert-type item (Appendix B, item 31), or to discussions in general. One exception is illustrated in the following quote. This is an excerpt from the interview of one of the few New York City respondents who voiced strong opinions on racism and discrimination, and its relationship to acculturative stress in the immigrant population:

> *I find in this state - I'll talk about New York, 'cause I know more about New York than the other. New York is mostly whites, I should say Caucasian and I find the ability to move on and to get along - I find that those people, I find white people have the support of their own people to help them, whereas the Black race or ethnics here, what you call them. They do not have that support, and even in jobs where they may probably qualify they find difficulty getting to the top, whereas a white person will come with the same qualifications, and get there (11).*

A recent female immigrant's reactions to the effect race or skin color have on the ability to succeed was an interesting critique of society's low expectations of Blacks:

> *I mean, something that fascinates me about this country is that every now and again you hear big news. Oh, such and such is the first Black person to have accomplished - since I was here, there was a celebration of the first Black - I don't know if it's a man or a woman, to reach a high position in the Police Force. Then there was something about a Black person in the - what would you call it- fire service? That's what we call it, the fire service; things like that. And that*

> *always makes me do a double take. There are Millions of Black people in this country. And I mean, even the Fact that they are going to come on National TV and celebrate like as though you're supposed to applaud and say " What a wonderful thing." My question to them is how come it took 2001 or 2002, you know, finding the first Black person to reach that far. How come (15)?*

Another woman offered this analysis on the state of race relations in the United States, and the possible impact:

> *-- I feel insulted because what difference does it make? Because I mean - In this environment, this United States of America, color has a lot to do with it -how you're perceived. I didn't used to have that problem in Barbados. This is something new to me. – Because it's been proven time and time again, that race does play a role in how successful you are. Whether it's politically, whether it's economically, whether it's socially, this country was based, was built on segregation. And as hard as people might try to deny it, it is still entrenched. People do things; it is so much a part of this environment that in your subconscious, you know, sometimes you don't know you're reacting to it (18).*

As I noted earlier, the statistical data indicate the New York sample believed racism and discrimination is very stressful, but they spoke less about the topic, Only two highlighted work-related racism, one as it related to promotion opportunities and the other in relation to hiring practices. On average, women and those with university or college degrees were most vocal in their opposition to the racist's practices and experiences.

Labor-market experience

The demographic surveys show a wide range of employment opportunities. These varied by individual categories and by sites. In an attempt to see how identified the participants were with their jobs, I asked them to use one word to describe how they felt about their jobs. This produced a range of responses including fulfilling, adventurous, boring, pays the bills, and stressful. Analysis showed that most of the participants did not incorporate their jobs and or careers into their social identity.

These positions include employment in accounting or financial services, health and wellness services, and government services. The New York City group's labor-market experiences were less concentrated in one area. The profiles indicate employment in the educational services, as childcare providers, and clerical, and or labor intensive positions. The New York participants' reflections underscored the issue and concerns West Indian immigrants have about status reduction. However, I suspect this is highly correlated with social and immigration status. A high proportion (80%) of the New York City sample was at some point in their acculturation experience undocumented immigrants. This made choices of employment more restrictive and problematic and colored their view of things:

> *And that's -- that's what contributes to that whole thing that I was telling you about, where society puts you in that role, 'cause people begin to think, people begin to take a factory job and they're satisfied with it now, and they're like, 'Oh, I'll never get anywhere, and I'm not going back home, so I'll have to stay here, and all this.' If I die, wherever, when I get old, I'll get a pension...Because they come here, and even though they left their countries as professionals, - they come here and they say 'you're a Perfect Nobody.' And they're role-playing the role of a nobody (23).*

Unemployment was not a major source of acculturative stress, since most participants described using a combination of human capital, prior labor market experiences, and a "foot-in-the-door" strategy to avoid long-term unemployment. Interestingly, the narratives suggest social networks played inconsequential roles in the groups labor market experiences. In fact, social networks were described as being more helpful in New York than in Toronto. This difference may be a result of the Toronto participant's human and cultural capital. For example, the Toronto sample was heavily weighted with individuals - eight - with professional degrees and or training.

Typically, individuals in the Toronto sample reported they quickly found employment after moving to the city. This was generally true for both long-term and recent immigrants. However, underemployment, defined here as working below an individual's training, experience, and qualifications, was more a defining feature of the Toronto group's narratives than of the New York sample. In most cases this was associated with the foot-in-the-door strategy – getting the first available job. This strategy obviated unemployment, but when linked with other social and cultural variables, typically leads to underemployment and status reduction, both sources of acculturative stress. For example, this woman described her experiences this way:

> *-- In Jamaica; I was basically, in charge of all the administration in the branch that I worked at - of the bank; so you basically in a managerial position. I come to Canada, and the only thing that you could get, is a part-time job where you are a teller. People, you know, that ---you don't get any respect here. You're basically starting all over again (28).*

However, underemployment as a factor of acculturative stress is a complex issue in most immigrant studies, and it may be just as complex in this study. For example, more of the New York City sample was undocumented than in Toronto. This necessitated these individuals getting and taking available jobs, not desirable jobs. Since regularizing their status some of the previously undocumented have seen objective and subjective improvement in their labor market experience. For others underemployment continues to act as both a stressor and an impediment. They feel unable to begin, or continue, their goal of educational advancement, which in turn negatively impacted their ability to get jobs that pay better.

The narratives provided evidence that length of residency does not diminish the effects of underemployment as a stressor. Most respondents reported they were over-

qualified for the positions they currently occupy, and many felt their academic and professional credentials were not respected. A professional with a college degree and work experience reported being by-passed for a supervisory position, which was offered to a white individual he believes is less qualified than he is:

> *I know what my background is, and I know how hard I worked to be where I'm right now, how hard I've worked and what I've contributed and my achievements...knowledge of the industry and everything. I think I deserve a shot at the supervisor's position in that job. I didn't get it. And I just felt like - ever since, my job hasn't been the same – my job satisfaction (22).*

Unfortunately, this experience of workplace discrimination was not gender specific, as this female Toronto participant can attest:

> *I'm not in the working market anymore, so I don't have to complain about -as an immigrant the discrimination in the workplace. I'm very glad that I am out of the working market, and I don't want to return there. But, things have changed quite a bit now, and in those days- even though there might have been discrimination, it wasn't as glaring as it is now, and at least I was younger... Like, I've had a few jobs that I've gone on an interview, and it might have been - from discrimination, and it really didn't bother me because I felt like I was turned away from one, I'd get another. That there were more jobs, and if you don't get a job today, you'll get a job tomorrow. But things were different. But now, it's dog eat dog out there...Especially, you don't only have it with race, but with age. If you're a certain age, you can't get a job. They're looking for younger people now for jobs, no matter how qualified you are, it's very hard to get a job if you're over forty (26).*

Non-recognition or undervaluing of foreign education, skills and credentials, constitute a widely recognized problem, not only in this community but in other immigrant groups as well. Some respondents believed when employers see foreign qualifications they immediately become suspicious and view them as inferior. In their view, there's a disconnect between the standards required by business, academia, and the government. This created a situation where different segments of the society

differentially valued the immigrants' potential contribution. A Toronto resident drew on personal knowledge for this example:

> *What also points to the fact that it's an attitude, for example, my friend who is unable to get a job, he got accepted to the University of Toronto, one of the top universities in Ontario, Just like that. So that the education system, it Recognizes your qualifications. But to get into the Business world -also the government recognizes, and on that basis they say, "Ok, we'll grant you an Immigrant Visa because you have the skills – requisite - that we're looking for. The education system said yes, we will admit you to our system, if you want to seek further studies because you have the necessary qualifications but you go into the Business world, the working world, and then they said, "oh, you have no Canadian experience; and your degree (is) not a Canadian degree. So, as I said ---they (government) have accepted you on the basis that you are qualified. And the educational institutions say you're qualified. But that's a completely different thing, when you go looking for a job (23).*

Individuals in the New York sample have similar experiences to those described by the Toronto respondents. One participant knew what to expect, "-- When I left home, I know the kind of employment I had at home, I would not get it here, because of my status, and I was prepared to do anything honest and decent for my livelihood. And even a low-income job, was hard to find." Conversely, others believed they were by-passed or victimized for their outspokenness:

> *"If I'm not working - I let them know how I feel. Maybe sometimes I'm being punished because I speak my mind, and maybe touch the wrong toes. Once I ran for the District Council and lost, then I backed one guy who was running a brother, he lost. Sometimes I think you are being punished for taking a stand. I was out for a year because I was -I supported a guy and he loses- then the guy who's in charge doesn't give me the work. So I took it to a higher level (11)*

This perceived discrimination was enough to make the fifty-something male cynical:

> *...you have two strikes against you- you're Black and you're foreign. So anything else - in the workforce today, you're already born with two strikes against you. One - and those are things you can't get rid- you didn't ask to be are Black, you know. And you got two strikes against you already. You're Black and foreign (11).*

Residential behavior and acculturative stress

Residential behavior has long been considered a gauge of immigrant assimilation. Therefore, I explored the connection between residential choices and the incidence of acculturative stress. In order to better understand residential behavior and its relationship to immigrant assimilation, I decided to use home ownership as a proxy of immigrant assimilation. Controlling for other factors (e.g., length of time in country, marital, employment, and immigration status), homeownership, in my view, is the leading measurement of immigrant assimilation. This belief is justified because the investment in a home is associated with financial, emotional, and social commitment to the host country.

Eleven of the twenty-one interviewees reported owning homes – eight in Toronto, and three in New York City. Therefore, using this simple evaluation Toronto residents in the sample would appear as more assimilated than the New York City group. Living in racially and ethnically diverse communities may also be used as a determinant of immigrant assimilation. Relying on apparent neighborhood as a determinant of assimilation, an outside observer would conclude, that half the participants have assimilated to North American society. This conclusion relies heavily on the data of the Toronto sample, where all the participants live in racially and ethnically diverse communities. However, the other aspect to be considered in the equation is, how do participants experience and use the neighborhoods? The data suggest these lead to different conclusions.

Zhou (1997) posited that tightly knit communities contribute to better psychological conditions, higher levels of educational achievement, and stronger

education aspirations. Although all the participants in the Toronto sample reported living in racially and ethnically diverse communities, the evidence suggests most participants do not consider their communities tightly knit. Likewise, the majority of the respondents will not socialize with or in some cases do not know their neighbors well.

Also to be considered is the view reported earlier, that spatial integration does not equate to cultural, social, or psychological integration, as was noted by the long-term Toronto resident:

> *There are still areas in Toronto even, where if you wanted to live in that community and these are predominately white communities, because white have their homes there- there is nothing that says - this is restricted to whites - but living in that area, you don't feel as accepted. People are - people are more prone to - to be governed by stereotypes and they still think of people other than themselves, particularly Black people as being undesirable in these communities (21).*

A facet of residential behavior not to be overlooked is the landlord - tenant relationship. In Toronto, white landlords owned all of the rental units formerly occupied by the participants. As exemplified by this female immigrant's narrative, this created situations where racist behavior was commonplace:

> *In the early days when I first came here, it was that - I'm staying at a friend's place. Then after I got a job, I decided I had to get my own place. And the nearest place was Borden and Brunswick Street area. I went over there for a place along Borden Street. That's the first place I started to look, and I know there's signs saying "Room for Rent, flat to rent" and I asked, "Can I see the place?" "Oh, it's already taken." I said, "Your sign is still there." And that's the first time I really experienced discrimination in housing. And he said," I didn't take the sign down, I forgot to take it down." So I said If I pass back here tomorrow and it's still up, I'm gonna come up here and ask you if you have a room for rent." So he said, 'Oh, at least you are more or less European Not Greek, or Italian.'" (26).*

She went on to describe the extent to which cultural differences, and racism and discrimination are often interwoven:

> *Then I finally found a place the next week, and it was a Greek person. It was a room and a kitchen, because I was alone then. Now, I was in a house, they were very nice, but every morning, 'don't waste too much water, I'm taking a bath. ' They probably accustomed bathing twice a week; we accustomed having a bath every day. So it started with the water, and then 'you keeping the lights on too long' 'Cause I'd be reading. I used to read a lot. I was reading until one, two o'clock in the morning, and they could see the light on under the door of the room, that the light was on.. So I said one day to her, 'I'm paying you rent. I'm not here free.' She said, 'Yes, you're paying rent, but you're not paying enough to cover the light bill.' I said, 'What? Then raise my rent. Don't come harassing me every night.' So then, I decided to leave there, to find another place. So...That's why it's nice when you have your own (26).*

In contrast, the majority of the New York City sample lived in, or continued to reside in, rental units owned by members of the West Indian ethnocultural group. This results from institutional practice and circumstance. Unfortunately, circumstance often dictates poor choices and poor outcomes. For example, one woman described her housing choices in the following manner, "this neighborhood- first, I had no choice. This is where I got an apartment."

There were few if any stories among the recent immigrants of direct evidence of racist and discriminatory practices related to housing choices. However, residential behavior premised on individual, or institutional, discriminatory or exclusionary practices is associated with acculturative stress:

> *I'll give you an example, right? One time, you know, I have another friend here; he was a new immigrant too. So we phoned an ad in the paper. He was looking for a room and these people told us the room was available and they told us how much and they told us to come down. And we went down and all excited, and as soon as they opened the door, they see the color of our skin; they decided the apartment was taken (25).*

When asked to comment on his certainty that racial discrimination was the critical factor in not getting the apartment, the Toronto resident recounted how he recruited a white

friend to call to determine whether the room was still available, and it was still available for rent.

Nonetheless, personal agency, rather than circumstance, featured prominently in the group's residential behavior. This male interviewee's residential behavior was dictated by a desire to escape the environmental stressors prevalent in his ethnocultural neighborhood:

> *I knew I wanted to move from Brooklyn. I had enough of it. I just had enough of Brooklyn and the style and some of the nonsense that was going on in Brooklyn in terms of - People in Brooklyn, I find out - it might be the neighborhood I was living in, people in the neighborhood that I was living at didn't have respect for property. And I didn't want to live in that neighborhood because I wanted to buy a home, and if you don't have respect for property- No property owner can tolerate that. It seemed they didn't have a value system. Plus, I had had enough noise, rah, rah; I just had enough of that. Living there for ten years, I guess I had enough of that (10).*

Conversely, a female teacher took a more hardnosed approach to her choices:

> *Well there are certain choices that I have to make. I couldn't handle living certain places, so I choose not to. The way the people are, even though it bothers me, I know I can't be a one-man catalyst for change. I try to, when I can connect with individual children to make a difference. But my being here- I am - I don't want to say 'a visitor' but for me it is temporary. It is a part of my wider experience but I haven't owned it, by choice. Sometimes I hear people from back home and from other places saying they will never go back - wherever it is they come from. They intend to remain here. That's not how I feel. Whilst I'm living here, I will abide by the rules that are good, and the rules that are not good, they don't bother me, but I'm bearing in mind that I don't belong here. I'm one of those people who have come for a limited...(15)*

Conversely, residential concentration, which result from discriminatory policies, may serve as a protective mechanism since it provides a readily accessible source of social capital, as well as maintains and reinforces ethnic identity and cultural traditions. A New York City resident shared his experience living among his heritage group:

> *They're mostly African. Yes, it's a building that has a lot of Africans, and then a few houses -side-by-side that have a lot of African, and when you know one*

> *person, you get a chance to meet everybody, because once - once you have a friend who's an African, and he appreciates you, he introduces you to his other friends who are there, and you go upstairs and sit down and have a little social evening, that sort of stuff... We just discuss, like, ok, we discuss like what's going on and what's going on right now in New York and we just discuss, like, most of the fellows are musicians, and so on, so we discuss music (12).*

Environmental stress

The two cities differed, not only culturally, but also in environmental characteristics. Toronto was described as clean and pleasant, where "...you can have a better standard of living." These factors have all been associated with psychological well-being. Further, compared to New York City, the (Toronto) apartments are nicer and the houses better, and money was the only hindrance to residential location. Evidence suggests the neighborhood environmental stress level was higher in the New York City group than in the Toronto sample. Two separate, but interrelated, categories appear as critical factors: neighborhood conditions and fear of crime.

Environmental concerns, including ecological decay and crime, corollaries of residential behavior, have all been associated with psychological health. Environment's role in acculturative stress is often related to significant events, and may be experienced directly, or incrementally, as evidenced in the reflection of a New York City resident. Her fear of crime and concern about her family's welfare was well founded; "I was living on (Old Court) before I moved to (New Street) and I experienced three break-ins on --- so we had to leave there."

On the other hand, the impact of environmental stress may be incremental, as reflected by the following excerpts. In comparing two of the neighborhoods where she

has lived since moving to New York City, a woman commented on the noticeable differences. The area she first lived was:

> *...A crime-ridden neighborhood. It's not as peaceful and quiet as Canarsie. A lot of crime, a Lot of crime, and I was aware of it. Living there was like you don't want to be on the street. If you go to the store, you just try to make it back inside the house. You don't want to be outside, even in Summer, you didn't feel comfortable being outside, like just standing on the step for some fresh air, because you don't know if someone would come, would come at you, down the street with a gun, just firing bullets at random. I had that experience. You just don't know (19).*

The incremental nature of environmental stress was also true for this Toronto resident, who in comparing present day conditions to what they were in the Sixties and Seventies found that, "things have changed a lot. I could have walked the streets, three, four o'clock alone in the morning and not have a fear." Although she is older than she was in the sixties and seventies, she says she can't now because there is, "So much fear with shooting--- things have changed, the generation we have today- they think differently, act differently, so - in asking what I like about Toronto, to compared to the time I came to now, it's not the same."

Family-related stress

The study showed that family-related acculturative stress has different geneses and outcomes. Although the study's findings relate primarily to post-migration acculturative stress, family-related stress may start before the immigrant individuals leave their home country. As an example, I earlier related the story of one woman who was opposed to leaving her home country, but came to keep her family together. Her lack of commitment to the immigration experience was associated with difficulties making attitudinal and behavioral changes. Both spouses observed that this strained the marital relationship.

Another example of family-related stress is contained in the following narrative. This is the single example of this type in the study, but the stress reactions have been noted in studies with other immigrant groups:

> *Q: Let's get back to when you came, your plan, then, was to go back to Trinidad. This is what you were saying to me, but I need help resolving what to me is a conflict. Because if you were trying to get away from your husband, why would you only want to spend three months, because eventually you'd have to go back there?*
> *A: Yes, you're right. I guess-- at the time I wasn't thinking clearly, to be honest with you. Not only that, I was really thinking about my daughter, because although I know she was happy, comfortable, I should say, with my parents, I was still having these guilt trips, you know, about not being with her. So that was my main reason, for thinking that I should go back. But of course I was going to be in the same situation again, if I did go back. So, I didn't (17).*

Later this woman shared that when her daughter finally joined her household, including her new husband, she had a difficult time negotiating the transition. The daughter, who had been coming on regular visits, did not consider her mother's new husband her father, and refused to call him dad as he requested.

More often than not, family-related stress is first encountered on arrival in the host country/city. As this female Toronto resident shared, adjustment is difficult for adult immigrants who may already possess largely intractable habits and personalities:

> *Living - that was a whole big difference because in Jamaica, we had our own place and it was just the three of us. And when we came here, it was the first time as an adult, living with another family. So that was a bit hard to get used to, which was probably one reason I was unhappy. It was difficult, really difficult to adjust - not that they were a problem, but just difficult to adjust to.*
> *Doing whatever you have to do to fit in with what somebody else has to do. Like at your own place, if basically, you don't feel like doing the dishes, heck, you don't them. If you're at somebody else's place and they do the dishes by six-o-clock, you know you have to do them by six-o-clock. I never like that (28).*

The majority of newly arrived immigrants stay with others in their social network -family, relatives, or friends - when they first move to the host country. Some like this

New York City resident were unsure of the expectations and unprepared for the outcome of such arrangements, " I would let them know about living at people's homes. Sometimes people invite you to come here, and when you come, you live, and it's not the way they told you, it can be something totally different."

Furthermore, some immigrants see themselves in worse situations than those they left in their native countries. For example, this male New York City resident remembered, "Man, let me tell you, I was wondering what the hell I put myself in. Why did I leave Barbados? Why did I leave Barbados? You know what I'm saying? 'Cause I know I was doing a Lot better in Barbados." When he spoke about his time living with a male relative, he noted:

> *---I didn't have my own room. Like so many people that come over having to sleep on the sofa in the living room and didn't have a bed. He had a wife and one child at the time. They subsequently have another child, but he was living with his mother-in-law too. His mother-in-law, his wife, and kid. Three adults living in a two-bedroom apartment. And here comes a big man now. I'm not a boy living, and a child. You have two rooms. So, very inconvenient. Now, looking back - it wasn't the best situation for me at the time, I stuck it out for less than a year (10).*

Parent-child relationships

Previous research has identified parent-child relationships as a major source of acculturative stress among other immigrant groups. This study's findings lend support to the belief that a major part of family-related stress generally relates to parent-child interactions. In exploring this issue I asked individuals to indicate the degree to which they agreed with the following prompt: "It is harder to raise children in New York/Toronto than in (country)". Items ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Four of the respondents, all females, did not have children of their own, some by choice

others by circumstance. But all had nieces or nephews, or as was true with two participants had childcare as part of their employment responsibilities.

Nonetheless, the statistical analysis indicate that, as compared to Toronto, New York City residents felt more strongly about the difficulties associated with raising children away from the home countries. There were no significant gender differences found, although the two samples differed. For example, the New York sample felt it was harder to raise children in this environment than in the West Indies (Table 2).

Typically, the participants discussed two aspects of this question – culture and structure. The cultural aspect speaks to the differences in norms between the sending and receiving countries, as it pertains to discipline. Participants in both cities frequently identified discipline as one reason why child rearing was more difficult in Toronto and New York City than in the native countries.

Differences in family structure were also identified as a factor that influences immigrant family relationships. One female Toronto respondent, who is also a mother, used the extended family context issue to critique the Canadian individualist culture:

> *...when we come to Canada, or away, we have this thing, we can't live with people. And that, I find, is so selfish. I mean, you came from a background where, you live with your family, six of you in one room, and you were happy with something. I felt Love then. I felt not alone. But coming here, having a child, each child in a bedroom, you have to have problems. You are there alone with your mind. And then you look outside for fun and for friends, so there is where you start to go wrong. So the extended family, I see that was an advantage (26).*

The quote that follows, while made by a Toronto resident, mirrors the sentiments I heard from a number of the New York participants. This father of three implicates the capitalist culture in the reduced role and influence parents have in their children's lives:

> *I mean, like, you don't have the time, a lot of time, because of your work schedule - the things you have to do... - all the kids are raised up by nannies, because you*

> *have to work a nine-to-five job. You actually are not really raisin' the kids. The kids are being raised by somebody else, not really you...you only have the little time you have to spend with the kid. You pamper them. So the kids usually grow up spoiled. Back home, when you come out from work there's not all this distraction... When you calm down; you have time to see them do their homework. You don't have to work a night shift. That's how I look at it (24).*

In a similar vein, a female New York City resident bemoaned how North American culture not only limits the ability to discipline, but changes the relationship between parent and child, "- I find too, that here in this country, you want to be your child's friend, as opposed to being a child's parent. And I see it happen over and over."

Most of the interviewees talked about the lack of extended family or community involvement in the child-rearing process, a deficit that was associated with acculturative stress:

> *We live here in a society where people have almost no time to raise children and what I find, - I think it's becoming less in Barbados - I find that here, there's little or no extended family. When I was going to school, and my mother didn't come, my mother was at home, You'd go down by grandmother wait for your father (to) pick you up, and she'd make sure your homework was done, make sure you're fed. That sort of thing. I still think it still stands for Barbados, even in terms of teachers, neighbors, that sort of thing; they still look after children more as opposed to here. I don't know about raising kids in this environment, because - it's hard for you -it seems like the parents leave so much for the teachers to do, that they've got to be out the house. By the time they come in, it's time for the children to go to bed (18).*

The study's results suggest family and relationship discord was often caused by role reversals, and or lack of emotional bonding. However, the women in the study were more likely than men to talk about this aspect of the immigrant experience. The stress associated with changing attitudes and behaviors often threatens relationships. A New York City resident identified lack of emotional supports and suspicion as leading causes of the discord in her relationship with her partner:

> *In my experience, and I've heard other females say the same thing, their husbands or significant other - boyfriend, you know, always has a problem with that female going to school. You know the female is going to school, but you will be accusing her of having an affair when she's trying to get an education (17).*

One obvious explanation for the above quote is that a better educated woman will leave her less educated spouse and or partner. A corollary to this point is the woman in the role of the sole provider or leading income earner. Some female respondents argued that this damages the male psychologically.

Financial obligations

Another aspect of family-related stress is the expectations that adhere to immigrant individuals. One of these is the commitment, in some cases the obligation, to send money or other means of support to family members back in the home country. This participant viewed it as a commitment; she sends money to her mother when she has it, "It's because I think - I see that as something one should do. Because I look at it this way - We're not from very affluent families, and our parents worked hard and struggled to give us the educations that we have, and I think that in their old age we should return the favor."

Conversely, the following respondent believed she has a responsibility to send money back to family and relatives. But her major focus was her father, whom she felt she had an obligation to: (a) provide with a good home, (b) take care of financially, and (c) ensure would have a content retirement life. Hence her remittances were:

> *More than once...it has been mostly for Christmas but more than once. I sent it whenever there's - I send it - I don't keep track anymore. I don't keep track. If my father says he wants something. If money needs to go, I'll send it. I know, every year in September I send money for back-to-school. I sent for Christmas, I send for Easter. Birthdays. And if I have extra, I send. I send what I can (19)*

The extent of this dedication appeared unique among the study's participants. But as is often the case, this determination or sense of commitment to others negates her being able to effectively advance her own economic situation

Gender

How are the immigration experiences of West Indian females similar to and or different from the experiences of male West Indian immigrants?

Gender plays a major role in determining how individuals and families experience the processes of immigration, acculturation, and social integration (Table 2). For example, immigration and acculturation experiences may lead to significant changes in the social and economic roles of men and women, or they may reinforce gender role identities from the country of origin.

Evidence suggests that social capital among immigrants is gendered. For example, Steven Gold (1995) reports that immigration to the U.S. enhanced the human and social capital of male Israeli immigrants, but lowered the human and social capital of Israeli women. Research with this group of West Indian immigrants fails to support Gold's findings. Instead, the study's findings were similar to those of Heron (2000) who found that among Caribbean immigrants in the U.S., women's human and social capital are more valued as compared to Caribbean immigrant men. In this sample, the women had or acquired skills and human and social capital, which enabled them to more easily access social networks.

There were marked differences between the male and female participants in the study. Women were better educated and had higher status occupations than the men in the study. As a case in point, ten of the eleven female participants had college or

university degrees; four of the ten earned these qualifications before moving to the host countries. In comparison, four of the ten male participants had college or university degrees, only one of which was earned in the native country.

This disparity between male and female immigrants' educational achievement and the concomitant labor market experiences may reflect differences in discipline, focus, and commitment to education. Or, it may lend credence to the belief voiced by most of the study's participants that male immigrants have a harder time adjusting than female immigrants. Interestingly, the men in the sample reported getting jobs more easily or more quickly than the women - both white-collar and blue-collar.

I would speculate that the difference in educational achievement would impact other areas of these immigrants' experiences, for example, labor market outcomes. Although men tended to get jobs more easily than women, typically these jobs were non-skilled and did not allow for job enhancement or significant inter-cultural contact. More women, as compared to the men in the study, indicated they had friends from outside their ethnic, cultural, or racial group. These friendships were usually formed in the workplace.

Another statistic either supports or argues against a gendered psychological impact of immigration. Of the ten men in the study, eight were married and two were single. In comparison, among the women, five were divorced and or separated, four married, and two single. Whether or not this is associated with role reversals and the attendant consequences that occur during and after immigration is an open question. A case in point, a divorced female supervisor in a male-dominant Toronto work environment offered, "that's why I'll never get a husband. I'll never get one because I

have to be stronger...for example, I'd say to my staff 'why don't you do so and so' and I have to win. I have to win, cause I gotta show that I am the boss."

Aroian and Norris (2000) and Crispin (1999), among others, argue that women suffer more than men during and after immigration. I was interested in the participants' perspective on the above findings, therefore I asked them to respond to the following prompt: "people believe that female immigrants have a more difficult time adjusting to life away from their home country... do you agree with that statement?"

Generally, the respondents disagreed with the statement; but I was most interested in the female perspective. The following quotes from female participants reflected their sensitivity to the male plight, and spoke to an issue that's important in immigrant households, cultural differences. A female Toronto respondent shared,

> *I see men with degrees and they just wanted to get somewhere in their career. And they have a harder time looking for a job. Sending resumes here and there...and they have to be doing all kinds of menial jobs just to get themselves through...(26).*

In her opinion this devaluation often led to the disruption of the home and the family. The respondent wondered if the many broken West Indian families were a deliberate desire "...of the Canadians, to make certain that once (the) home is broken, the man is broken too. Because if you can't find a job and you cannot support your family, it means from there the home life starts – between husband and wife – starts to go. You can't cope." It must be noted she was the only participant who saw a conspiracy in the treatment accorded male Black West Indian immigrants. However, a female New York City resident, a recent immigrant and a teacher, voiced sentiments not too dissimilar, "So - it's kind of hard on the men sometimes. And I cannot help saying, in this place, there

seems to be extra pressure placed on men of color. I watch them even at my own school, how the non-Black supervisors dealt with strong Black personalities."

A New York City respondent spoke more directly to the socio-cultural and psychosocial aspects of the question:

> *Because I think the male is giving up his job, you know, coming here to do some menial security job and things like that. It's very difficult for him to be able to very difficult - he as a male figure, you know the breadwinner. Whereas women, you can always get something for a woman. You can always get something for a woman (16).*

She felt it was important to the man to be seen as the breadwinner, because cultural traditions dictate that the man must earn more money than his wife. She believed when the woman earns more it belittles the man.

There was less than universal agreement that immigrant men suffer more than women after immigration. As an example, a male Toronto respondent felt women have a more difficult time adjusting than men:

> *From a - strictly from a social acclimatization perspective, I think that might be true. I think based on my own experience, while I know the experiences of some women, including my wife, it took me a shorter time to become acclimatized to life than it did her, both in terms of becoming comfortable with - or becoming comfortable in adjusting to life in Canada. Both on the employment side and on the social side, like in gathering with friends and meeting new people, that kind of thing. As far as I can remember, it was - it took her a longer time than it took me. And even with my own sister, who had come here a year prior to the year I came here - I found the same thing, more or less, to be the case (21).*

In a similar vein, this New York resident said:

> *Women, too, have a hard time adjusting here. For instance, a girl comes here from a strange land, a far-off land, and happen to fall in love with a guy. The guy use her or mis-use her, for a couple months then she goes, like in the wilderness find another guy, He does it and leaves. By the time - other people knows her reputation, she already had Tom. Now the other guy goes in it - not serious now, he just going to have his kicks... a woman's reputation is spoiled by -very easy and then she becomes you know, Lost, confused, don't trust no man although she's looking for a companion, she still don't want to trust anybody (11).*

Typically, the women in the study did not describe themselves as being worse off than the men after immigration. However, I wondered how involved women usually are in the immigration decision. In two of the three examples where intact family units migrated, the women had little or no input in the decision-making process. A male interviewee was asked why he didn't first move to Canada and then send for his family after he had decided he would leave his native country. His reply indicated it was understood his spouse would share his aspirations:

> *Why didn't I come first? The thought never crossed my mind. (laugh) That's not altogether true. One of the conditions of vacation at the time, was that the government, in addition to paying your passage, would also pay the passage for your wife and children... And I guess I wanted to take advantage of that opportunity so I said, ok, everybody pack up and let's all go kind of thing, right? I didn't really - I didn't really stop to consider in depth the advantages or disadvantages of going alone and then sending for them. I just made a decision based on the fact that I wasn't coming back so let's do it all one time- (21).*

Three female respondents, all in Toronto, spoke in mainly negative terms of their commitment to, or the impact of the immigration process. As an example, acculturative stress for one female spouse was exacerbated because she felt little or no commitment to immigration, including lack of goals or long-term plans: "the only thing, there were more opportunities for my daughter, but for me, personally, I don't see where, how much of a better life I am having since I have come to Canada." Another described Toronto as where she was almost forced to be. These feelings were associated with her not fully committing to the acculturation experience. For example, she started school a couple of times but got distracted and dropped out. Finally, a financial professional spoke about the personal drift that coincided with her marriage:

> *Well in the ten years I was married, I don't think I did not do a thing, like in terms- if I wasn't married, I'm pretty sure I would have gone on further, in terms*

> *of schooling, things like that. I didn't do that. I went - again I neglected what I should have been more for met (29).*

Intersection of race and gender

Generally, the female participants did not directly address the intersection of race and gender, although some like this Toronto resident was aware of the possibility:

> *Well, for example, when I worked at --- and I got the position of Chief Accountant I remember when we went to the boardroom and the comptroller made the announcement and not a single person congratulated me. As a matter of fact, the only comment was one person piped up and said, "Well, why is the position called 'Chief Accountant?' Basically, I was never accepted in that position. Because it's twofold, I was Black and I was a woman and there were some men who'd been there longer who thought that perhaps they should have been in that position... But the point is that it's a double whammy and I mean, I don't know where one stops and the other begins, but I know that it was there, because the fact is that you can just imagine, you get a promotion and you're there with a bunch of your peers and nobody congratulates you. You have to be pretty stupid not to realize that something is wrong, right (25)?*

Additionally, in evaluating the possibility of success in academia, a New York City resident believed that although it was difficult to separate the two, being a woman made it more difficult, "--it's a competitive, you know world in general. But being Black and being a woman, is more competitive, because ---That's the thing. It's difficult to separate from- but if I had a choice, it would be being a woman."

In summary, acculturative stress is one of a number of stressors with which the sample had to cope. But racism and discrimination were the two most frequently mentioned stressors, and the impact was both direct and indirect. The second most frequently mentioned category of stressors was family-related stress. In a number of situations, the acculturative stress was the catalyst for these stressful events. For example, different cultural values were seen as impinging on the parents' ability to effectively discipline their children. One additional aspect of family-related stress was gender

relationship. Either contingent to the acculturative experience generally, or specific to family-related stress, immigration's impact on gender-relationship was seen as far reaching. In the next section, I will examine how these stressors individually or collectively, affect the physical and psychological health of these immigrant individuals.

Physical and Psychological Health

I had anticipated differences in physical and psychological health outcomes, in part because of the differences in human and cultural capital in the two groups. The Toronto groups on average have higher skilled occupations – all with medical coverage - which translates to higher overall family income, and this makes access to health care more readily available. Moreover, the health systems in the two countries were factors to be considered. There is state-subsidized medical care and lower drug costs in Canada, and a free-market, higher costs system in the U.S. Thus, based on the demographic information the wellness care for the New York sample is less available, because of cost, and status, both socioeconomic and immigration.

Symptoms of acculturative stress include confusion, anxiety, depression, alienation, hopelessness, identity confusion, and heightened psychosomatic symptoms. Most of these symptoms, all associated with impaired psychological health, were present in the participants' narratives. For example, this New York resident spoke of her lowered physical and mental health:

> *Sleeping problems...when I feel stress, or when I'm being stressed, again, I don't sleep well. It affects my sleeping. Two, I'm always feeling tired. I, I don't even think properly, clearly, when I'm stressed. I know I don't have interest in certain things anymore, like sometimes I just have like a Blank feeling, like no emotions. I have used all my emotions, when I'm stressed I feel that. And sometimes, - I have*

> *a very short fuse. I can get angry very fast. When I'm stressed, I'm all of those things in one (19).*

Family-related stress, environmental stress, and racism and discrimination, either alone or in combination with other factors, were some of the issues frequently mentioned by the study's participants. Therefore, one would deduce these would negatively impact the health status of the immigrants in the study. One participant provides support for my speculation. She believes, as I do, that there are carry-over effects:

> *I would hate to think - let me put it this way. I very often feel sorry for people who leave Barbados, leave the Caribbean in general and come to the States to the Newkirk's and Church Avenues, and the you know, the crowded, dirty, awful conditions. The sickly looking trees, and that kind of thing. And that is their experience of America. Even if they accomplish something or buy a home. If that's the experience they've had, I think it is really sad (15).*

But some participants did admit the possibility their mental health was negatively affected by some of the stresses they faced. For example, two Canadian participants - one male, one female; one a recent immigrant, the other a long-term resident - identified work-related racism and discrimination as being acutely stressful. More to the point, one respondent stated:

> *I try not to let it get to me but I would think that -I would think that regardless of how you think things do not affect you, that they probably do have some effect. I would think that in the environment, in which I work, I wouldn't feel - I don't feel that the impact of other groups on my well-being is really serious or detrimental. Not to the extent where one could lose one's job or anything like that. It may just be little petty grievances that may not be something that would be lasting, but I mean, they do have their immediate impact because you may think that some things are trivial but in the long-run, little things have impact that we're not even aware of. And it could be a negative impact too (25).*

In the case of a female New York City resident, neighborhood or crime-related environmental stress had a bigger impact on her health status than racism. She became nervous and jumpy when anyone came close to her, imagining that she would be a victim

of crime. Nevertheless, a majority of respondents believed their physical and psychological health was unaffected by their immigrant experiences.

Typically, the participants relied on personal resources or social support rather than professional help in dealing with acculturative stress or immigrant adjustment issues. However, at the end of the interview some respondents shared that they found talking about the topics, and their experiences dealing with them, to be cathartic. One individual stated he was glad he had someone to finally tell his story because his wife had stopped listening.

One explanation for the low response to seeking professional help is found in research (Franklin, 2004) which suggests that Blacks, particularly Black West Indian immigrants, are resistant, even hostile, to the idea of seeking professional help for mental health issues, often equating such actions as fundamental character flaws. This was a view supported by a number of the interviewees. Besides, the participants placed more reliance on other strategies and resources in dealing with the risk factors associated with living in the host countries. Some of the protective factors, which rely on personal agency or social support, will be dealt with in the next section. But I will illustrate one strategy used by an out-of-status immigrant. Living as an undocumented immigrant evokes strong emotional and psychological reactions, and blanking out and avoidance seemed useful in protecting this interviewee's ego:

> *... But I try not to think about it after, - I just blank it out. Because, if I continue to think about it, how I'm living in this country, sometimes I would just be - I would go off... Go crazy or (laugh) that's not the right word. I want to put it right. I don't mean 'go crazy' I shouldn't say 'go crazy.' I don't mean 'go crazy', really, but I could become fairly depressed thinking about it. And to think that something like that could happen to me...it has an emotional - Yes it does (19).*

To summarize, typically the participants do not consider that their immigration experiences have affected their physical or mental health. However, there were occasions when I believed that topics relating to their immigration experiences were not being dealt with openly. For example, one male resident of New York, who has lived in the City for twenty-five years, in my opinion deliberately misrepresented his motivation and means of immigration. The discrepancies were noticed when I reviewed the transcript of the interview and compared it to the demographic information he had provided. When asked to clarify this and another issue he then set the record straight. Our off the record conversation leads me to speculate that he is embarrassed or disappointed by his immigrant experiences. In addition, he suffers from chronic health problems, which have developed since his arrival in New York City.

Protective Factors

What roles do protective factors or knowledge of protective factors play in the immigrants' experiences?

Acculturative stress is an inevitable feature of the immigration process. Nonetheless, because so many immigrants are able to successfully cope with the stress of relocating and adjusting to a new society and culture, it is crucial to explore the relationships between protective factors and acculturative stress. Successful psychological acculturation is related to the strategies used, as well as constructs such as social, and immigration status, and ethnicity. As Patricia Pessar argues," for immigrants who experience multiple forms of discrimination and exploitation, the ability to maintain a unified household is an accomplishment, not simply a mundane fact of immigrant life" (1999, p.60).

The research literature found that the successes of resilient immigrants derive from many of the following protective factors: personality-related factors, educational and cognitive abilities, ethnic identity, social support, social capital, and religious beliefs. Rokach (1999) reported West Indian and South Asian immigrants used reflection more often than North American immigrants when coping with loneliness and alienation. Unlike the North Americans, West Indian and South Asian immigrants are influenced by religions, cultural norms, and personal lifestyles that are intertwined with an increased sensibility and awareness of one's state of being, needs, and resources. This study's results show support for Rokach's (1999) findings, because these immigrants relied more on personal agency, ethnic identity, and social support.

Personality-related factors

Factors such as tenacity, motivation, hardiness, and self-esteem as well as mastery of the environment were identified as protective factors in this immigrant sample. For example, the majority of the respondents agreed with the proposition that: "being successful is a matter of hard work. Luck has little or nothing to do with it." The response options were: Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree? On average the New York City residents and women felt more strongly that success is related to hard work than the Toronto sample and men. (Table 1) As one participant saw it, you have to plant the seeds for success:

> *... If you don't (work hard) other kinds of things happen and people say 'oh that was luck,' but if you don't - opportunities come but once and you have to -you have to work to position yourself so that when opportunities arise, they can make use of it - you can make use of it. But if you don't position yourself, to make use of these opportunities – then. A lot of things that we see as luck are just opportunities. And you have to position yourself to make use of these opportunities (28).*

Generally, the participants credited their parents, or a secure attachment figure, for instilling or modeling the work ethic. In part they credited them for teaching them that, "in order to be successful, to achieve anything, there's a certain amount of commitment, dedication, and hard work that just brings it about, that goes into being successful. No one is successful overnight."

Some like this Toronto respondent, while agreeing with the proposition that hardwork is key to success, also saw how external events may influence outcomes:

> *I believe we're masters of our own destiny and mistresses of our own destiny, however, I think in North America that to a large extent, we may not be Totally in control of our situation, because we do have external factors that help us or impede us as the case may be (25).*

It was worth noting that there was a lack of unanimity as to what constitutes success, or how it should be measured. For instance, a female respondent questioned the assumption that success was the big house, a car, and a white picket fence, since you could be living a miserable life. Or as a male Toronto resident argued, success is not a matter of material wealth or possessions or who you are or where you came from. Success for him "is the degree to which you have accomplished the goals you have set for yourself." In some respects this was a repudiation of the North American capitalist or acquisitive culture, and accords with similar findings previously reported by the researcher, that success for this immigrant group is multi-dimensional (Gilkes, 2002).

Self-esteem is another important aspect of the protective process. The higher the level of self-esteem the immigrant possesses, the less damaging will be aspects of acculturation. Further, because integration requires competence in both cultures, it is associated with higher levels of immigrant self-esteem than assimilation, separation, and

marginalization. Self-esteem's importance as a protective factor is highlighted by this representative quote from one of the female participants:

> *You need to have a very strong sense of self- who you are. You're not looking for anybody for validation. I have a lot of fun when, let me put an inverted comment - Kids like to say to you, "I don't like you," If I am upset a day and a child says to me they don't like me, that's a reason for a good belly laugh. And they think I'm crazy. And I tell them, 'I like me. Whether or not you like me don't count. You just don't count. I was liking me before I even know there was a you. That has no impact on my life. So Who Cares? It would be nice if you liked me and we'd get along better and I'll be able to do more for you but the fact that you don't like me is neither here nor there because I like me. In this country it's very important to know who you are and to like you; to love you. I don't mean to be narcissistic about it but just to Know who you are, so in spite of the negatives you still set yourself to step over the obstacles when you can, and get on with life (15).*

Education and cognitive abilities

Educated immigrants are more accepted in American society because education can overcome cultural (Lieberson & Waters, 1988) and occupational barriers. However, some researchers (e.g. Christopher, 2000) question the effectiveness of higher education in reducing the level of distress in immigrants. Nonetheless, education is strongly correlated with cultural capital and the development of cognitive abilities.

West Indian immigrants are known for their high value of educational attainment and high rates of literacy (Kasinitz, 2001). The results of the study provide support for Kasinitz's (2001) findings. For example, the participants were asked what advice they would have for a prospective immigrant planning to move to Canada or the U.S. The majority of the responses stressed the need to have or acquire an education. One New York City participant reasoned:

> *The main thing is if you don't have an education, or if you started at home and isn't done; try to get -finish your education up. Do what you can. Do what you can. It's already difficult to get jobs. Without an education it's more difficult to get a job so always try to be educated (17)*

A Toronto resident was equally sure in her view of education's value and utility:

> *I would suggest that you learn as much as possible, education-wise before you come here. Have an education before you come to this country. Because of the economically difficult world under which we are living now. It's better to have something that compares on the same level as the system here because... they're taking advantage that you might be Black and they don't want you, but at least if you're qualified - at least you have something to show 'I have this...Just be equipped to be part of the society when you get here...If you want to become equipped to be part of the society, - whatever is going on here education-wise, it's all over the West Indies, it's in other countries, and that's why I say 'equipped," - by having a good educational background before you get here (26).*

The unanimous conclusion is that education is a necessary factor for any immigrant, not just Black immigrants. Some believe that the process of education is as important as the outcome, i.e., a degree, because as one interviewee believes, "...education is its own process." However, its not education for education's sake, it has to be for a practical purpose:

> *I would say the only thing that can help you get ahead is education. Is have a skill. At least a skill. If you don't have a skill, you're going to suffer here. You're to continue to be working in the factory for the rest of your life. You know what I'm saying? And you're going to be stuck there. If that's what you want, sure! If that's not what you want, get a skill quickly...whether that be education in the university or just go to a college and get a skill - even for a year or six months. (22).*

Planning ability

The respondents' narratives indicated they used planning ability, a corollary of educational ability, to cope with generalized acculturative stress, and race-related stress specifically. Some strategies were designed for short-term use but most were designed to confer an advantage over the long-term. For example, a Toronto resident related his wife's belief she was by-passed for promotion because of her race. They both identified avenues for redress, but reasoned, "they (employers) use the system against you, you have to be careful how you deal with them – you have to wait until you're really in a

position to fight for yourself. You have to pick your wars." This Toronto male resident was philosophical about the barriers, including racism and discrimination, immigrants face, "so when and if that happens, you just move on. You know it's there. And you know this is reality- you can't fight it, so you move on. I mean, you look at the record and everything; you don't fight losing battles. You have to move on."

Others were strategic in their approaches. A Toronto interviewee recounted her experiences of being repeatedly rejected in attempts to gain a management position at her former company. She described how she kept reapplying, "but I am coming again there would be another. This time you can turn me down, but I'm coming again. And again, until somebody will say---she needs a break..." She reasoned persistence and determination were better than being confrontational or combative. This way she would avoid making workplace enemies as well as forestalling the conclusion she was not a team player.

The capacity for cognitive appraisal of resources and ability proved an essential in many of the stories recounted. After being disappointed at her level of underemployment, a female revised her plans and decided to emulate successful strategies she had seen:

> *Well, I honestly thought I would have gotten a better job than I did. When I just came. I didn't know it was so difficult to get something - I was expecting to get a position here - even at a mid-way point but that was difficult- not even at the mid-way point. So that was - that was a bit disappointing, because I had expected I would have gotten a better position than I got. You know what? After I finally decided that - I'm here already, and I might as well make use of it...after being at the bank, I realized the courses people take to get into certain positions. The position I wanted to get into, I started doing the courses that I had to take. So once I got the courses, I got the job that I wanted (29).*

Ethnic identity

Ethnic identity has been described as a sense of belonging and commitment to one's ethnic group (Tzuriel and Klein, 1977), having components including shared values and attitudes (White and Burke, 1987), and being involved with cultural activities (Phinney, 1995). Because of (a) the complexity associated with defining the construct, and (b) prior research with this immigrant group, I utilized a tripartite investigation of ethnic identity's role in the immigrant experience. Each interviewee was asked to: describe his or her ethnic identity, and explain the significance of the chosen descriptor. Previous research with this cultural group has indicated that ethnic identity is both changeable and negotiable (Gilkes, 2002). Therefore, as an additional step I asked participants to discuss how his or her identity had changed or consolidated since immigration, and reasons for the changes.

Describing and classifying ethnic identity in this population continues to problematize the social constructivist nature of the concept of ethnic identity. However, the study's findings support the view that ethnic identity is an effective protective factor against race-related barriers or exclusions. It is argued that choosing one's original culture while rejecting the host culture is a separation strategy, but we may have to rethink the role or importance of ethnic identity as a cultural variable in the acculturation model.

The evidence suggests the participants conceptualized ethnic identity in a number of fashions. Interviewees' reflections and descriptions suggested that ethnic identity, the subjective sense of group membership, served two discrete functions; first as a cognitive measure of cultural identity (ethnic self-identification) – where culture is defined as

customs, language - including vocabulary or style of speaking, food, clothing, religion, music etc., and second, as a measure of social identity – the identity ascribed by society, and or as determined by parents' ethnic heritage. Sometimes the two overlapped.

Half the respondents described their ethnic identity in relation to their cultural or national identities – West Indian, Trinidadian, Dominican. This female New York resident feels that she is connected to, and identified with, her cultural roots for obvious reasons:

> *Because I don't think - I don't care what- how long I've been here. I mean, once people hear your accent, you're West Indian, I don't care what you do, you Are a West Indian. That doesn't change. You're a naturalized citizen; you're still a West Indian with that accent. That doesn't change, you know. And to me, I don't - no matter what I do, I don't think I'll ever- To America, I would not change. I am a West Indian (16).*

A third of the respondents' ethnic identity fit what I call an ascribed social identity category; they described themselves as Black, which although a racial categorization, served a protective function. As many as sixty percent of the participants consider themselves West Indian in terms of their ethnic identity. But from this respondent's perception the reality is that:

> *The West Indian culture in Canada is really segregated. It's all - I mean, we can all call ourselves Black people but we're Black people from different nations, right - with varying cultures, and still segregated within Toronto. So, you have your Trinidadians, you have your Bajans, your Jamaicans, your Guyanese, everybody is separated. So, and everybody considers themselves a separate entity... so that was the most surprising thing - the segregation up here (20).*

None of the participants identified as American or Canadian. We will explore the significance of this later.

When asked to explain why being West Indian was important to him, this individual allowed:

> *---I think that although we may have our little differences, like each island may have things that are peculiar to each -we may even have ways that, you know, for each little niche, but when it comes to our common history, that makes us all West Indians. So we basically can laugh at the same jokes, you know. Or, like, if you're discussing - talking to another West Indian you know, growing up, the similarities are there you know, things like that. It's why you're West Indian. You share a common experience (22).*

Being Black was significant to a recent immigrant to Toronto, "Because I'm proud to be Black! West Indian, if I'm in Canada, 'West Indian can be anybody' but I'm Black... You know, when you're in Canada, you have so much difference. Indian, White, Caucasian, so I guess, I just identify with being Black." She was later asked if her description of her ethnic identity had changed since she arrived in the country. She replied that it had evolved from Jamaican to Black, "because Canada makes you more aware of being Black."

As in a previous research conducted by the author (Gilkes, 2002), ethnic identity was seen to be situationally determined. A Toronto female said her description of her identity depends whom she is talking to; if she is talking to other West Indians she is Barbadian, but as general rule she is West Indian because there is a shared common experience. One interviewee indicated that since arriving in New York City her ethnic identity changed from Black to West Indian. This was of special significance to her because the label West Indian implied values such as, "respect for yourself, for older people, for older relatives, a sense of responsibility, and care for your children." She argued that living in New York City, removed from the larger West Indian sphere, it was important to underscore those cultural values.

Some answers combine social and cultural identity, for example, a male Toronto respondent answered, "I like to say Black West Indian. I say 'Black' first of all, but I do

have to say that there's a big difference between a Black African and a Black West Indian. There's a whole big difference."

The New York respondents' range of descriptors included some of the terms used by the Toronto sample. A male participant expressed his skepticism about the need for all these descriptors of ethnic identity:

> *-- I consider myself Black because I don't know if this is the forum to discuss that, but I think that we as a Black people, that should be our identity, despite where we are. You are just a Black person displaced in a different region. That's how white people are, displaced in different regions. I'm a white person whether I'm from Europe or from North America. White...When you ask them, they're white. It's only us and the Indians that try to have a million different categories. We're Black people and the first time, the quicker we realize that, Black people are just misplaced or displaced in this place and that, it's better for us as a people. You have to stop that stereotype- West Indian Americans, you know Canadians, whatever. You're Black (11).*

Although this Toronto participant used a different rational, he was equally skeptical of the need to have to state the obvious:

> *Well, I find it's a positive way to describe yourself as "Black," that's what you are. I don't know. Italians are Italians. They don't say 'white' they say "Italian," first and foremost. So I say I'm a Black. I don't think anything about it. I just - my identity is Black. And that's why we have the Black Business and Professional Association. Black, you know, so you want to say you're Black first (24).*

Transnationalism as an addendum of ethnic identity

Naturalization, the process through which one becomes a citizen of the host country – is the considered the final official step in integration into the social and cultural realms of society. With this belief in mind, I sought to determine the number of participants who were naturalized citizens of the respective countries.

More than half the participants are citizens of their respective host countries – seven Canadian citizens, and five American citizens. The reasons for exercising, or not exercising, citizenship rights varied, but few indicated a true commitment to being

Canadian or American. The emphasis was on the instrumental value as opposed to the civic rights and cultural responsibilities of citizenship, which held only marginal social, symbolic, or cultural value. As an example, this Toronto resident saw citizenship as necessary for, "the security it affords – I can't bother with the hassle, each time I'm traveling. If I want to go to the States, if there is an emergency and I have to go to the States, if you are not a citizen, it's a struggle – especially with the new rules they have now." Similarly, a New York participant offered two instrumental reasons why she became a citizen:

> *The main reason--so that I would be able to apply for my daughter, because - we were having some difficulties to get her naturalized in time. So I was apprised By the Immigration officer - to get my naturalization as soon as possible so that I could - apply to get her. And the other reason is that it basically would help me to get more aid in the sense that, like Federal aid because I've heard so many horror stories that you can get better health if you're a citizen of the country (17).*

As noted earlier, none of the participants identified as Canadian. This was significant in the Canadian context because the 2001 Census indicated that a greater majority of the foreign-born population are now identifying as Canadian. One reason for the failure to identify with the host culture relates to the notion of public acceptance. A Toronto female exposed the fickle nature of social acceptance:

> *They are Jamaicans here who have done really great. The thing is that the press doesn't necessarily publish all the good news. For instance, when the guy who just gave a whole set of money to the ROM, that was millions of dollars. The big thing on the top of that headline maybe should have been 'Jamaican makes good in Canada donates all this money to the ROM.' But if it was like Just Desserts, you see Jamaicans, or like Ben Johnson, You know the Ben Johnson incident -he was no longer Canadian, he was then Jamaican (29).*

This long-term Toronto resident minimized the influence of psychological acculturation in her decision to become a Canadian citizen:

> *No, I don't think that I did it because I said, "I am Canadian!" Over the years, I have assimilated more into the environment and I think that now I do feel - have some feelings about being Canadian, but I wouldn't say at the time I did it that I did it because I was all fired up and I was proud to be Canadian. I wouldn't say that.*

I then asked her to explain what she meant when she has assimilated into the country?

> *It means that it has grown on me. You become accustomed, you have grown accustomed to the pace. I've grown accustomed to the skyline. I've lived here now more years than I lived in Jamaica and I've never yet forgotten my Jamaican roots but you fall into the habit of doing certain things -doing certain things a certain way and you may find that when you visit your home country, all those things are very different from things your family's doing now, and things that you used to do (25).*

A male respondent's reply also indicated this lack of connection at the psychological level. He was asked why not American, and he replied:

> *I don't know. I don't look at that. "American" I don't consider myself American. American to me is a person who is actually born here in America. Like you said, I'm a naturalized American but somehow I don't feel connected to be an American. I don't have a real explanation of why not American. I never looked at it that way. I never looked at it and tried to analyze it. I never did analyze why not "American." I don't even say "African American" or " Caribbean American" I really don't. "West Indian."(10)*

A minority of the New York City interviewees discussed the civic nature of citizenship, a distinction not present in the Toronto narratives. For example, citizenship means the ability to cast a ballot to vote, i.e., a political right. To the participant this was an important process because, " you cannot sit down, you cannot rely on other people and, you know, well, you've got to do this; you've got to do that. You have to- you have to show your - cast your vote, or whatever, because you have the right to do that." Another New York City resident saw an added benefit to citizenship for members of the Caribbean community:

> *If we had had every one of those people on Eastern Parkway citizens, we could elect maybe a Black District Attorney, for one. We could elect our own mayor, but*

> *as a community of people from the Caribbean we don't have no representation and whether the Senate or Congress or the state senate or the council seat, we don't have no representation (11).*

Typically, the participants in both cities participated in Caribbean or West Indian Day festivals, often visiting the respective cities, as well as Boston and Miami, to be part of the activities. However, only one of the twenty-one individuals participated or attended Canada Day activities or U.S. Independence Day celebrations. This reinforces the finding of legal, but not psychological integration. These results supported Nesdale and Mak (2000) findings that acculturation attitudes in the host country were a strong predictor of host country identification. Conversely, the extent of ethnic involvement was a significant negative predictor of host country identification.

Failure to endorse a Canadian or an American identity may be a deliberate attempt to maintain a positive public ethnic identity; "I don't put 'American' onto it. I don't know why. Maybe some of the negative connotation that goes on Black Americans - I don't want to get myself involved." Not endorsing the host identity may also be related to pragmatism – choosing one citizenship option over the other. However, in most situations the participants exercised their dual citizenship rights. I suspect the failure to embrace the new national identity and the concomitant cultural responsibility has as much to do with equality and acceptance as with ideology and community.

Support systems and networks

In order to cope effectively with the negative influence of stressors, individuals need social support from the environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Social support emerged as a critically important resource and protective mechanism in the study. The extent and valence of support provided varied by individual, source and occasion, but

three external sources were identified -- family, friends, and religion or spirituality. Nevertheless, the most potent source of support was personal agency. Since there were no major differences found between the samples in the two cities, where possible I will report these findings as general findings.

Personal Agency

Personal agency, or personal growth, appeared in the majority of the participants' narratives. Individual agency, experience, knowledge, etc., either alone or in combination with other factors, proved effective in managing the stress of adjusting to a new society. Mental toughness as a necessary attribute was also a recurring theme. A female Toronto resident shared, "-I'm always a loner, I'm always by myself. I did things by myself - and I have this strength and I draw from this strength --." Reliance on personal agency was particularly true for New York City residents, because the City is described as a place lacking in compassion, where you have to be tough to survive.

Social Support

Social networks including friends and relatives proved beneficial to a number of participants. Still, I had anticipated the respondents to identify family as more important to them in successfully adjusting to the new societies and combating acculturative stress. This wasn't present in the narratives of this group of immigrants. Perhaps (a) the family, and relatives, contributions were taken for granted, or (b) they did not play as significant a post-immigration role as I speculated they might.

Where family support was positively mentioned, the participants identified a range of support services. These include providing home and shelter, financial assistance, advice, or help finding employment. However, few interviewees reported receiving

advice and or direct assistance in their job search. Most, like the woman below, relied on their network for shelter but reported self-sufficiency in the area of employment.

> *I gave myself maybe six months (to find work), but then I was coming to a situation where, for instance, my first month the others told me don't even look for a job, ...I had an aunt here, and you know the kind of thing, 'cause when you start work, you have to work a whole year before you get holidays' - I took a holiday for a month, right? I think I looked for a job for two days, ...the woman at Scotia called me so I went - and she hired me the same day (29).*

Support provided by friends came at various times and in various forms. One factor mentioned frequently in association with personal agency was the support of friends. On other occasions support took on tangible expressions; sometimes this support came as talk therapy. For example, a male respondent believed that if you need someone to talk to, "it doesn't have to be a psychologist- a person that can sit and talk to. Somebody that is not deceitful or just malicious."

Friends were identified as a source of support at times of medical crisis; help finding jobs, housing, educational opportunities, transportation, and emotional support. A recent immigrant to Toronto was particularly moved by the support she received on one occasion:

> *So, as I was trying to find somewhere to live, you don't have any credit, and nobody would rent you anywhere. Actually, we started talking because we have- she was born a day before me, and it was her birthday and somebody took her out and I said, "...I said tomorrow is my birthday and I not going anywhere because I didn't know anybody." And she said, 'why not allow me to take you.' And we out for lunch, and I started explaining to her I really needed somewhere to live, but it was difficult and she - didn't know me from Anywhere, apart from there, and she actually got an apartment for me. It was great. It considered that such a big thing; I don't even know if she knows what she has done, because you don't do that for people (28).*

In many situations, friends were more highly prized confidants than family or relatives. This New York City resident was explicit as to why she chose friends:

> *I consider my friends, the reason why I see them more often than I see my relatives, my friends and I have a lot more in common than I do with my relatives, in relationship. And if I want someone to talk to, I really feel more comfortable speaking to some of my friends than I do with my relatives. Even, talking about - visiting with them and going out with them. I can do that much more, and feel more comfortable than I actually do with my relatives (19).*

Interestingly, this attitude was seen most often among the female participants:

> *I have one friend, a good friend that I would probably talk to, you know. You see I don't bottle things up. I just talk them - through, and I have two good friends or so, I don't really discuss stuff with my brothers, things like that. I handle it. I have two very good friends I talk stuff through with, but yet, they don't really tell me what to do. I just sort of work things out myself (29).*

The efficiency of social networks extends to business opportunities and neighborhood effects. This Toronto businessman says he does not advertise, but gets business because of the social capital he has accrued:

> *I'm in the community and you do things, and every time something come up, they think about you. So it's like the word is out in the community that this guy is a Black printer. Nothing to do like about racism or anything like that. He's just a printer, he does a good job, so we'll try to direct - just the same thing as the Italian community tries and the Vietnamese (24).*

Ideology of return

One recurring theme in the sample's narratives was the idea of moving back to their native countries. Immigration was in part an avenue to social mobility; the immigrant would go abroad to study and or work, but ultimately move back to the native country, usually within ten years. Recent arrivals, long-term residents, citizens and non-citizens all shared the ideology of return (Levine, 1987), which I believe plays dual roles in the acculturation experience. This plan to reintegrate into the home society buffers the immigrant's self-concept from the daily assaults. This is not a fictional paradise they can

escape to, but a place most have returned to since moving to North America. For example, this Toronto resident describes his reaction to being back in his home country:

> *I was home in 2000 - after twenty years and there is - there is a feeling of being home, a feeling of being privileged to be in the place where you remember growing up and the place where you lived when you were growing up and I think it's more- it's more an affinity with my country and a sense of being where - somewhere I can call home. I still don't call Canada home. It's still my adopted country. Guyana, on the other hand, is like you've been away for a long time and you finally go back to your house, and that's the feeling I get when I'm there. I still have hopes of resettling in Guyana (21).*

On average New York City participants had not visited their home countries as often as those in Toronto. There are a number of reasons, immigration status, availability of funds, lack of relatives in home country, etc. However, an ideology of return and its implied retrospective focus may have the effect of limiting psychological acculturation, "because they're looking back, right. Some of them have this romanticized idea that things are still the same and they aren't. I think a lot of them don't realize that it is not the same Barbados that they left." A Toronto participant who had spent some time back in his native country before going back to Toronto shared his first-hand knowledge of this situation, "But the only trouble is, when you go back to the island it's not the same. They don't think - you've been away for all these years so your concept and ideas are a little different than theirs.

An ideology of return is also associated with acculturative stress and diminished physical and psychological health. For example, there are individuals who are still in the respective host countries, not because they are acculturated or assimilated, but because they cannot or are ashamed to go back to their native countries having, failed to realize the full promise of the immigrant experience.

It should be noted that a minority of the respondents stated they have no intention of resettling in their native countries, because of the social and political uncertainty in their home countries. As an example, this Toronto resident would love to resettle in her home country, "the only problem is I'm afraid of the crime. I'm afraid of the crime. Other than that, I would definitely settle there...It would be a conditional 'yes' if the crime was definitely tolerable, I would live there."

Politics: The danger of idealizing their home country is that the immigrant does not fully commit to the host country. This lack of commitment is often reflected in non-participation in the political process. Some view political and social involvement as a resource West Indian immigrants must use because it provides the opportunities to set or influence the agenda. As one Toronto-based participant offered, "many of us are living in a vacuum – we don't know today or tomorrow, what's around us, and we have to stop that and know what is around and what's going on." A New York resident was more direct in making the case for political involvement:

> *Why is politics so important? I think that you have to be - You Have to know the political environment, because politics - these decisions are the basis of everything that happens in a society, whether it's education, whether it's housing, whether it's transportation all those decisions are based on political decisions. So if you're not aware of what's going on politically, and certain things happen, you aren't any wiser. So I feel that you need to know (18).*

Religion

Religion, or spirituality, is another component of the support systems respondents identified. Most of the interviewees specifically the men admitted they are not frequent churchgoers. However, they argue their early religious exposures continue to be

beneficial in times of trouble. Religion's utility may be its ability to put the individual in touch with his or her pious or spiritual self:

> *It plays a very big role in my life. When I'm down and out, when I go to church, it always gives me - it gives me that zeal to go on further. If I'm depressed and I go to church, there is somebody there to cheer me up. At least after a long week, (little laugh) church is what you need. After a long, hard depressing week, church is what you need to keep on going (28).*

On the other hand, religion may be used as a social facilitator and reinforcer of cultural values: "when we moved here, the social aspect became more obvious to us than it was before. You're in an environment, - you came here and the first people you get to associate with were in your church. The first people who sat to – show – some love to you." What was interesting was that for a number of participants, while religion was still important to them, the relationship with religion had evolved. As one female New Yorker speculated, it may be a function of the development:

> *I think it plays a similar role, but I think that as you get older you're really able to decipher things more rationally. That your intellect comes into play a lot more than it did when you were younger, and just going on emotions. I think the combination of being able to be rational and still having that quiet, spiritual side of you - it helps. A lot as you get older (18).*

SUMMARY

The research suggests that the Toronto participants in this sample of West Indian Diaspora immigrants are better equipped to access the available resources than their New York City counterparts. This may be a function of the individual's immigration status, human, cultural and social capital, and the social and cultural systems of the two cities and countries. Personal agency premised on cognitive abilities, and social support networks all have an effect on the immigrants' ability to deal with the acculturative stress

associated with immigration. At different times the participants indicated they had to deal with different aspects of the social environment and this elicited the use of different protective factors. What follows is a summary of the major themes that emerged on the domains of interest across sites.

Pre-migration

The narratives of the two samples do not differ on the issue of pre-migration experiences; the majority had economically difficult childhoods. However, the negative effects of these early stressors were lessened by the presence of a parent or parent-like figure that made life easier for the participants. Moreover, the stories regarding career and migration plans are also remarkably similar; typically the individuals report no urge to settle overseas, although almost all had traveled to one or both of the host countries in the study.

Motivations for immigration

However, when the immigration decision was made, a majority of those who chose Toronto and Canada indicate it was their number one destination. In fact, some spoke of rejecting earlier entreaties by family and friends to move or come to the United States. Interestingly, approximately half of those now living in New York City find Canada and by default Toronto a more environmentally and socially attractive location than New York City. The immigration social network, primarily composed of family and relatives, was stronger in Toronto than in New York. Therefore, more Toronto participants said family reunification was one motivating factor in their decision to immigrate.

The dominant themes emerging from the interviews with the New York City sample was materialism – almost all indicated their moving to the United States was with the sole intention of improving their economic and social mobility. In contrast, the significant narrative in Toronto was self-development, and to a lesser extent preservation – keeping social, psychological and security reasons as important. However, most of the New York City respondents indicated they were disappointed by lack of congruence between expectations and reality. The feeling of disappointment extended to the living, environmental, and employment conditions. Somewhat surprisingly, even those who had visited the U.S. previously expressed disappointment with the conditions in which they found themselves.

Acculturation

The narratives of the two groups indicate that on their first acculturation attempts the New York participants experienced greater differences between the native countries and the host countries than did the Toronto sample. There may be a number of explanations; for example, there is the rugged individualism in U.S., the inherent difference between the samples in regard to human and cultural capital, the difference in the effectiveness of the social network, to name a few. Also, there is no structured program, in either city, to aid the immigrant in the adjustment process.

While differences between the two groups persist after the initial period, these were fashioned by a combination of structural forces and individual choice. For example, both groups report minimal contact with the majority culture in the respective host societies. In Toronto, where all the participants live in racial and ethnically diverse neighborhoods, lack of cross-cultural contact appears to be by personal choice. In New

York, there are racially segregated neighborhoods. Therefore, the strategy(s) adopted in Toronto may be characterized as separation/integration, while in New York separation, some may argue segregation, is the default mode of response to intercultural contact and differences.

Acculturative stress

Two consistent themes in the in the participants' narratives in both cities were status reduction and role-playing. Moreover, with more past and current undocumented immigrants, the New York City sample spoke more about humiliation and diminished self-worth. Racism and discrimination was clearly a stressor in both cities, but more of the Toronto participants, as compared those in New York City, recounted first-person experiences. This may result from a greater degree of person-to-person interracial contact in Toronto. Nevertheless, an unspoken expectation in both groups was the belief that skin color would not be a hindrance to social mobility and or success. However, racism and discrimination in jobs, housing, and other areas of interpersonal contacts was the normative reality.

Focusing on race and the larger social scene, the results suggested that the participants in the two groups share similar opinions on race. Not surprisingly, this disaffection with racism and discrimination was strong across all immigrant categories. The more recently arrived immigrants were as vocal in their opposition as those who had been in the respective countries for many years.

Underemployment was persistent in both cities, as was family-related stress. Family-related stress was most often associated with parent-child interaction. However, in Toronto there is the added feature of employment-related discrimination, which is

usually directed at the Black males. Despite these stressors, there is no evidence of a direct effect on the immigrants' physical or mental health status.

Protective factors

The lack of direct evidence of a direct effect of acculturative stress on the health status of the immigrants in the samples may be associated with protective factors or mechanisms. For example, personal agency was the prominent theme in both samples. However, cognitive ability and persistence were more consistent features in the narratives of the Toronto group. Social networks were available in both cities but their effectiveness appears to vary by site. For example, they appear to be more of a factor in New York in assisting the immigrants with housing and employment opportunities. Conversely, in Toronto social networks had greatest utility prior to and during the migration process.

In relation to ethnic identity, the results show no significant differences in its function as a protective factor for the individuals in the two groups. Participants in both groups described their identity in its ascribed form – Black or West Indian, as well as in terms of its personal meaning to the individuals in the group. Another similarity between the two groups was the lack of identification with the host country - American or Canadian - by those who were citizens of the respective country. However, the citizens in the New York City sample all discussed the instrumental feature of their citizenship decisions.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests there are differences between the two groups of adult West Indian Diaspora immigrants living in New York City and Toronto. However, there are no major differences in the acculturative outcome of the two groups. Individuals in both samples speak of being constrained by group characteristics – race

and ethnicity, from fully integrating into the respective societies. This appears more problematic in Toronto because of Canada's official multicultural policy. This policy's philosophical position holds that all cultures are equally valued. But the Toronto group would be the first to point out that policy is not practice.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Migration is selective; in some cases there is positive selection, with highly educated, ambitious, adventurous, and adaptive migrants. In other cases, migrants may be considered failures or social deviants in their countries of origins, with low education and or lack of occupational skills being the prominent characteristics. Nevertheless, how immigrants acculturate and the degree of stress associated with transition to a new culture depends on the reaction of the larger society to their presence (Berry, 2001), and the person's response to it.

Based on a review of the theoretical and empirical literature, I identified six questions to be addressed in a sample of adult English-speaking West Indian Diaspora immigrants living in New York City and Toronto. This research had three goals: (1) to examine the relationships between acculturation, acculturative stress, and resilience; (2) to investigate how acculturation strategies, specific acculturation factors (e.g., pre-migration history, cultural differences) and protective factors influence acculturative stress; and (3) to explore the interrelationships of ethnic identity, gender, social capital, racism and discrimination, and motivation for immigration to determine how these relate to resilience, acculturation and acculturative stress. In presenting these views I will rely primarily on the data developed in the study, but these will be supplemented by personal knowledge and insights into the immigrant experience.

The results suggest there are societal and structural differences between the two cities, and small but significant individual and group level differences. Canada and the U.S. are similar in a number of respects, but the social and cultural values present two

areas of fundamental differences. In the U.S., there is a ruggedness, survival of the fittest, pioneering spirit that overlay the social and cultural spheres. This is particularly true in New York City, which is described as lacking in compassion. In comparison Canadians tend to be less adventurous and have more of a European feel to social policy and social issues. The social welfare system, a critical aspect of physical and psychological well-being, is one feature specifically identified. As one participant remarked, "there are more opportunities there [United States], but the health system is better in Canada."

The data, including the groups' reactions to racial issues, show interrelationships between the social, structural, and individual differences. For example, human and cultural capital differentiated the two groups from each other. The evidence suggests these two variables, both critical to the acculturation process, were higher in the Toronto group than in the New York City group. This dissimilarity is likely related to the immigrant selection process, where education, skills, and training are heavily factored into who gets into Canada. Thus, among the Toronto participants there is a sense of being part of a special or select group:

> *... Canada took the cream of the crop from the Caribbean. So when we came here, we were not by any means stupid. So they were getting pretty well educated immigrants who could then - once they were given the opportunities and they got the jobs, they did very well.*

How the participants engaged the topics was aligned with differences in human and cultural capital. Participants, without obvious reservations, discussed the formative years in their native countries. Both groups were equally forthcoming on their motivations for immigration, and the expectations they held for and from their intended destinations. However, when the topics changed to social issues individuals in the New

York group were reticent to fully engage these topics; most notably as regards racism and discrimination.

For the most part, published immigration-related literature has focused on refugees or displaced persons (e.g., Aroian & Norris, 2000; Brody, 1994; Liebkind, 1996). By comparison, this study looked at immigrant individuals, or families, who voluntarily left their native countries. Therefore, they are generally free of restrictions regarding visiting or resettling in their native countries, and are free to embrace, or not embrace, their ethnic and cultural identities. This is often not true among ethnic groups split by warfare and ideology (e.g., Koreans, Vietnamese). With negative immigration experiences (e.g., long periods of unemployment) voluntary immigrants could elect to return to their home countries. Personal, and related experiences, plus the narratives, underscore how tremendously valuable this psychological 'escape clause' is in making the adjustment to a new society less problematic.

As a heritage group, Black immigrants from the West Indies have a history of migration - whether involuntary or voluntary – and this archetypal or phylogenetic history may explain the group's adaptive disposition. Unlike most published studies, which usually failed to account for the pre-migration period, this study examined recollections of the early developmental and pre-migration periods. The participants' reflections on the socio-cultural, socio-historical, and political contexts in both their native and the host countries indicate most had early lives of diminished economic prospects, but high ambition. Despite the high risk for negative outcomes, a majority of the participants are well educated, and typically had productive pre-migration labor market experiences.

Research findings that rely solely on retrospective memory are often open to question, because of the passage of time and social desirability. However, analyses of the narratives show that the pre-migration period proved fundamental to the participants' post-migration experiences and adjustment. Those participants whose narratives described positive secure attachments in their pre-migration experiences consistently reported less problematic acculturation. Presumably, the resources, including coping and life skills, each individual brought to the host countries became a major component of the post-immigration acculturation process.

Generational differences exist as to the need and motivation to immigrate. Older respondents felt they had to leave their home countries to achieve success and social mobility, but this feeling did not prevail among the younger respondents. Tartakovsky and Schwartz (2001) proposed three distinct motivations to emigrate: preservation (physical, social, and psychological security), self-development (personal growth in abilities, knowledge, and skills), and materialism (financial well-being, wealth). There is support for each typology among this group, and there is evidence some immigrants show more than one of these motivations. This sample of English-speaking immigrants is far from representative, but self-development and materialism motivations appear to be more salient than preservation motivation. There is obvious overlap between these two motivations, but the materialism motive is stronger in the New York City sample, while self-development appears to be the key motivator in the Toronto sample. Incidentally, the materialism motive is primarily centered on the native country and, secondarily in the host country.

Goal 1 of the study was an examination of the relationships between acculturation, acculturative stress and resilience. In this study the major risk factors for immigrant-related stress were shaped by racial and social stratification. These were racism and discrimination, family-related stressors, and occupational concerns.

The results show significant correlation between the motivations for immigration and how these groups of adult immigrants deal with the changes in behaviors, attitudes, and values implicit in their moving to Canada and the United States. For example, when materialism is the primary motivation factor, the individuals seemed prepared to accept more stressful situations in order to achieve their set goals

Roysircar-Sodowsky and Maestas (2000) argued acculturation is a continuum that describes the degree to which immigrants adopt the values, attitudes, beliefs, practices, and behaviors of the new culture. Berry et al. (1987) believe people who resist acculturation or who feel marginalized by the process tend to be most stressed. Psychological acculturation (Graves, 1967) is the changes in behavior, values, attitudes, and identities an individual experience. Each participant reported a number of value, attitudinal, and behavioral changes. But changes in racial attitudes were the biggest adjustment these immigrants had to overcome. Coming from cultures where race is not the defining factor, individuals had to adjust to realities where racism is all encompassing. Race impacts every facet of these immigrants' experiences, e.g., housing, employment, and social interactions.

Racism's effect as a stressor in the immigrant experience has often been dealt with at a cursory level. In the area of psychological research a few studies have tried to understand how non-White immigrants strive to make it in a place that denigrates their

existence, and contributions, based on color. Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000a) are among the few researchers who have specifically explored the role of racial discrimination and its impact on immigrants' psychological health. Typically, however, they used measures of anxiety, depression and generalized stress to assess the experiences of racism and discrimination on psychological well-being. In contrast, I examined race as a specific stressor in the immigrant experience of these immigrants.

Both groups of individuals refused to internalize the racialized nature of the respective societies. But the Toronto group voiced their opposition to this cultural shift more passionately than the New York City group. At the social level, the occurrence can be explained by differences in the groups' characteristics. At the psychological level, the Toronto group may not be prepared to accept, or at least have been most affected by, racism because the multiculturalism policy, which was designed to negate ethnic and cultural differences, has failed in this objective.

The contrasting cultural philosophies referred to earlier orient the participants' styles in discussing racial issues. Racism and discrimination may be more problematic for the Toronto participants because at the group level West Indian immigrants in Toronto are the largest African descent immigrant group. Moreover, they are the second largest visible minority group, second only to Asians. The same is not true in New York, where because of their smaller group number, as compared to the African American community, and the prevailing social representations of the group, West Indian Diaspora immigrants are partially shielded from the full brunt of the racialized attitudes.

The U.S. participants seemed less quixotic – less likely to tilt at windmills. This is a contradiction since the data suggest the New York City sample believe racism is a

major hindrance to their success, however defined. This reticence to discuss race, seen in the New York City group, appears to be a general feature of existence in New York, and in the U.S. It is a predisposition seen in both the majority and the minority racial groups, including African Americans.

The general attitude in the U.S. minority racial groups appears to be one of fatalism: racism and discrimination exists because America was built on racism, there is very little we can do about, we cannot get rid of it, so why get more stressed than we already are over the matter. Ironically, this may serve as a coping or protective mechanism. Burke (1985) found that West Indians in England, facing high degrees of institutional and individual racism, often presented with psychological symptoms of sensitivity and fearfulness, denial, despair, and withdrawal or agitation. On the other hand, for the majority racial group, the reluctance to speak about race is based on pragmatism; if I don't speak about it then I don't have to do anything about it.

There are a number of other plausible explanations for the differences between the two groups as it related to their opposition to the effect of racism. These include the ethnic resilience perspective, differences in human and cultural capital, and time spent in the host country. The ethnic resilience perspective (Hannan, 1979; Portes, 1984) posits the more inter-group contact there is the more racial and discriminatory practices are highlighted. In this study more participants in Toronto, compared to New York City, work in multiethnic and multiracial environments and see or have experienced the effect of racists or discriminatory practices. Additionally, the Toronto group has lived in the city an average of eight years longer than the New York City group and would in all likelihood have experienced more racism (Nwadirao, 1995)

The question then becomes, how do immigrants who are not welcomed, discriminated against, and stratified on the basis of race adjust to the majority culture, and cope with the changed values and attitudes? Typically, the respondents indicate they deliberately choose to maintain and reinforce the culture of their native country, or the wider West Indian region.

Part of the difficulty faced by researchers in the area of resilience generally, and its relationship to immigration specifically, is the number of conceptual and definitional meanings. Researchers of immigrant resilience have used self-esteem, psychological well-being, subjective well-being, and feeling of hopefulness as measures of resilience (Berry & Kim, 1988; Christopher, 2000; Hovey, 2000; Sam, 2000). In this study resilience was defined as the ability to identify, access, activate, and utilize available resources. Key to activating and utilizing these resources was an ability to identify a stressful situation, determine what resources are available, and how best to use them. This requires a cognitive and decision-making skills derived from human capital or based on previous experience.

The issue isn't which individual or group would be more stressed. The question becomes, given the level of stress, who is better equipped to identify, access, and utilize the resources to deal with the stress? How do they cope, or what resources to the individuals access and utilize? Findings were they sought social support and used personality-related resources such as self-esteem and self-efficacy. But the key resource was the strength they drew from among ethnically and culturally similar others, thereby rejecting the majority culture in the process. Although Berry's model would characterize

this as a separation strategy, which should increase acculturative stress, the participants use this mode of response as a protective factor.

Part of the benefit derived from the conceptual definition of resilience was that the research established that the process of resilience is an individual phenomenon, as opposed to a group experience. Individuals at different levels of the acculturation continuum identified, accessed, and utilized personal, social network, and social and cultural resources differently, but complementarily.

Counterintuitively, participants who had lived in the host countries the shortest periods demonstrated the broadest possible ranges of ability to access and utilize resources. Key to this finding was recent immigrants had access to a wider social network and previous exposure to the host country's culture, thus less unrealistic expectations. Newer immigrants knew more about what to expect vis-à-vis racism and discrimination. Two interrelated protective factors, education and cognitive ability, helped explicate the different outcomes between those participants who exhibited the ability to access a broader range of protective factors and those who did not. Therefore, I would conclude that the outcomes were based more on human and cultural capital than on native ability.

Individuals who exhibit strong cognitive and decision-making abilities were disciplined, focused yet flexible, intrinsically motivated, and believed they can exercise control over their environments; they consistently reported more positive immigration outcomes. Generally, those who failed to consistently demonstrate determination, goal-centeredness, and adopted a passive attitude, reported more difficulties making the attitudinal and behavioral adjustments necessary to effectively manage the cultural differences. Not surprisingly, these individuals also have difficulty identifying and

accessing the resources needed to cope with the stressors associated with living in the respective cities.

The second goal of the study was an investigation of how acculturation strategies, acculturation factors, and protective factors influence acculturative stress. A number of researchers have theorized integration as the optimal acculturation strategy (e.g., Berry, 1980; LaFramboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). The integration of immigrants is seen as a crucial investment in the social and cultural capital of a community. Moreover, the integrative process may be viewed as a series of stages an immigrant passes through from integration first within a family or extended family, into a subgroup of their ethnic group, into the wider communal group and finally into the broader society.

Blanket theoretical acculturation models, (e.g., Berry, 1970, 1980, 1997) are useful heuristics, but inhibit detailed examination of the immigrant's lived experiences. These models fail to properly account for (a) personal agency, or (b) alternative cultural forms or groups. Neither does the model anticipate large groups of immigrants who voluntarily left their native countries, and intend to resettle in these countries. They left so they could return.

It is assumed multiculturalism – as a policy – will aid the integration process because it permits each immigrant group to keep its own unique culture (Berry, 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, and Vedder, 2001). Berry (2001) lists a number of preconditions that must exist in multicultural societies for an integration strategy to succeed, e.g., acceptance of cultural diversity, low levels of prejudice and discrimination, positive mutual attitudes among ethnocultural groups, and a sense of attachment or identification with larger society. For the purposes of this discussion, both New York

City and Toronto are considered multicultural cities; both by population characteristics and Toronto, additionally by official policy. It is clear that most, if not all, of these preconditions do not exist in either city.

Berry (2001) should be commended for his efforts to recast not only the assimilationist perspective, but also his earlier theorizing on the topic. However, the results bring into sharp focus the theoretical underpinnings of the acculturation model. It focuses on cultural diversity, but leaves unanswered the questions of racial differences.

Thus the Toronto group were expected to report more positive immigration experiences; with lower levels of acculturative stress and modes of responses that represent an integrationist perspective. These results did not support this conclusion. As one Toronto participant remarked, "I would say for the most part, there is little integration and intermingling in Canada. It's a fallacy. People think there is, but there isn't." The idea that integration can be legislated is naïve, because as one participant noted, governments can legislate from now on until eternity, but it doesn't solve the problem.

Further, multiculturalism is believed to lead to separatism, cultural intolerance, and a marginalized status and devalued cultural norms. For example, in Toronto the Government has adapted institutions (e.g., bilingual education in English and Chinese come to mind) to accommodate this immigrant group. Whereas, Black West Indians, the second largest ethnocultural group in the City, have largely been ignored. However, the social, cultural, and political systems are used to underscore the racial differences, e.g., the disparity in criminal justice system. Therefore, a cynic might suggest multiculturalism focuses on cultural equality, but not racial equality.

The results indicate these groups of immigrants, either by choice or consequence, are not integrated into their respective host societies. The findings suggest a degree of bi-cultural competence (See Crispin, 1999), but this should not and cannot be mistaken for cultural, social or behavioral integration in the host societies. Using Berry's (1997) model the integration process typically halts at the ethnic group level, or the wider communal group, where there is a constantly negotiated and renegotiated interplay with the majority cultural group. Integration rarely progresses to the wider society. The need for this constant interplay is made necessary by the profound feelings of exclusion predicated on racial categorization. Those individuals who have lived longest in the respective host countries are the most guarded about ultimately integrating.

An immigrant who focuses his or her attention on their ethnic or cultural group to the exclusion of other groups, including the majority group, is assumed to be pursuing a separation strategy. This should be associated with various symptoms of acculturative stress, e.g., depression, and anxiety. The results show these adult immigrants from the West Indian Diaspora choose, both individually and as members of a distinctive and contested ethnic group, to focus their social interaction within their group. Moreover, there is enough ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity within the West Indian Diasporic community, in both Canada and the United States, that each member can interact with cultural norms not associated with their native country.

Protective factors are highly robust predictors of resilience and "likely to play a key role in the processes involved in people's response to risk circumstances.... The search is not for broadly defined protective factors, but rather, for the developmental and situational mechanisms involved in protective processes" (Rutter, 1987, 316-317).

Participants, consistently exercising control over their lives and events, show an improved ability to identify, access, and utilize the resources necessary for better outcomes. A number of available resources or protective processes were mentioned. These included social support, personal agency, and cognitive and planning ability and they were often combined to attain maximum effect. But ethnic identity was consistently identified.

Ethnic identity, whatever these identities might be, is identified as a major protective mechanism. What these identities are not is American or Canadian. The data show a majority of the participants are naturalized citizens of their respective host countries, but typically this is for instrumental reasons. These choices are not surprising: they are predicted by (a) the motivations for immigration, and (b) Symbolic Interactionism (Herbert Blumer, 1969). Canada and the U.S. are primarily viewed as avenues to social mobility – materialism, or self-improvement. Additionally, for Black immigrants from the West Indies there is no symbolic value in being American. Being American is equated with Black- or African-American, and associated with negative attitudes and outcomes.

The reasons for the failure to embrace their host cultures also relate to feelings of non-acceptance and exclusion. Moreover, there appears to be a fundamental incompatibility with the strengthening of ethnic identities and ties to the native culture, and the idea that immigrants can and will assimilate to the host countries. For newer immigrants, abandoning their native culture may not be an option. Rejection of the native culture may result in a lack of rootedness, which only increases the stress of immigration.

Furthermore, most of the participants failed to mention, or fail to connect, that the exercise of citizenship rights and responsibilities carry with it the ability to integrate into the political realm where decisions are made that affect them and future immigrants from the West Indies. This again might be predicted by the preeminent desire to resettle in their homelands. The desire to maintain links with, or resettle, in their homelands may be covered under the umbrella of transnationalism, but in this group it may be viewed as a lack of commitment to the host countries.

What were the interrelationships of ethnic identity, gender, social capital, racism, and motivation for immigration and how these relate to resilience, acculturation, and acculturative stress? Along with ethnic identity, an ideology of return is a crucial element in the day-to-day existence of immigrants in both cities. The desire to return to their native countries is tempered only by the social and political realities existing presently. Typically, these participants who have been in the host countries longest appear the most desirous of reestablishing residency, although recent immigrants also talk about returning to their native countries, often irrespective of whether their plans have been realized. Obviously, these immigrant experiences are affected by the experiences of adaptation, including racialization, which adds to the stress of staying. But going back without visible signs of significant achievement is psychologically damaging because the immigrant is seen as a failure.

Transnationalism, broadly defined, is the multiple ties and interactions that link, in this case, people across national borders (See Vertovec, 1999). Implicit in the term Diaspora, as in West Indian Diaspora, are the links, interactions, and interconnections

between the individuals scattered throughout the world, specifically within the Canadian and American borders, and finally in the home countries.

Therefore diasporic movement, or transnationalism has been redefining the concept of immigration and citizenship for a number of years. The provision of dual citizenship has further weakened the view of absolute commitment to the host country and maybe called into question the whole acculturation model of assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. Before the provision of this facility large proportion of the West Indian immigrant community, in both countries, refused to become citizens of those countries.

Social standing in the native countries was not measured, and individuals' reflections did not establish a clear link between social standing, immigration experience, and the resilience process. However, one component of social economic standing - educational background – made a significant contribution to psychological health:

> *I would probably say that we were- I guess I would say that because we weren't middle class in terms of money, but I don't think the Bajan middle class was a money middle class anyway. It was a middle class that was middle class mainly because of its education.*

This crucial component of SES provides the participants with a flexibility of choices and portability of skills. These benefits were more apparent in the Toronto sample, particularly among those who have professional degrees or training. However, the perceived advantage has much to do with the Canadian immigration process, which selects immigrants on the basis of education, language, and skills

Broadly speaking the results indicate the Canadian immigrant's motivations were by and large focused on self-development, and racism and discrimination was preventing them from fully achieving this goal. On the other hand, New York City's group

motivation was materialism. They agreed racism exists, but there are ways we can work with it, or work around the restrictions.

An examination of the third goal shows mixed effects for gender on resilience and stress, and the immigrant experience. Contrary to findings by other researchers (e.g., Aroian & Norris, 2000; Noh, et al, 1992), the results indicate that on human, cultural, and social capital female immigrants did not fare worse after immigration. For example, in the sample more women had higher status and presumably, higher paying jobs as compared to the men. This was directly and indirectly derived from the self-development motivation. It also corrected a trend where the men in the pre-1965 wave of immigrants were on average better educated than the women. Whereas women appeared to have done better economically from their immigrant experience, the same was not true with their personal relationships. There is no evidence to support these women's changed roles and outlook after immigration impacted their family relationships. However, eight of the eleven women in the study are single – two were never married – the others were separated or divorced.

On the other hand there is a significant relationship between gender and race-related stress as it applies to the men in the sample. In the areas of ethnic identity and race-related stress there appears to be significant relationships between gender and the immigrant experience outcomes as it relates to men. Men were generally more motivated by materialism and adventure to immigrate. Although they have had their fill of adventure, the material advancement they sought has been slow in coming. Additionally, both men and women used first person accounts to describe how race, and to a lesser extent ethnic identity, have worked to frustrate the acculturative outcomes for the

immigrant male in the host societies. The men in order to provide for their families and themselves have often been chronically and exploitatively underemployed.

Policy Implications

The effects of cultural differences on acculturative stress may be mediated by the immigrant's identity – social and ethnic. For example, middle-class immigrants come with skills, qualifications and training (e.g., the recent hiring of teachers by the New York City Board of Education) that are needed in host countries. On the other hand, working-class immigrants with access to a network of contacts get information about jobs, housing, and educational advancement. But there is no central repository that West Indian immigrants, both recent and long-term, can access should there be a need for information relating to services, (e.g., government, social, medical), or to be in touch with others from their homeland.

Governments on both sides of the border have major roles to play in combating racism and intolerance. Since September 11, 2001, there has been an alarming rise in the political rhetoric, with related policy implications. Not only is there the perception that certain ethnic groups are being targeted for increased scrutiny, but ethnocultural and racial difference has now become the touchstone for insensitivity. The venal attacks by Alan Keyes, Republican candidate for the State of Illinois against the Democratic candidate Barak Obama, whose father is an immigrant Black Nigerian and mother, a White American, again highlight the unease with bestowing the title American on those who are perceived to be outside the cultural mainstream. It's worth noting that as Esses et al. (2001) posit, when immigrants succeed (economically), "they may also be viewed negatively by members of the receiving society" (p.391).

In another move with significant implications for immigrants, the U.S. government has made it much more difficult for resident Canadian immigrants, who are not citizens, to cross its borders. Further, the U. S. government is widely seen as seeking to punish those Caribbean nations who failed to support their decision to invade Iraq in the spring 2003. This sends a message, not only to the political leaders of the respective countries, but to the citizens and nationals of those countries about their value and worth to United States.

On the Canadian side, recent Immigration and Citizenship reforms enacted (i.e., changes in the point-system allocation, increased naturalization costs) have been subject to critical scrutiny. These changes have been characterized as designed to keep certain minorities out, and make it difficult for those already in to exercise their citizenship rights. This may be hyperbole, but to the uninformed perception is everything.

Previous research has established that the positive immigrant health effect advantage, as compared to the non-immigrant population, diminishes over time. The study indicates that whereas most of the immigrants make regular health visits these were to primary care providers. The participants seemed unaware that some of their presenting conditions may be related to their immigrant experiences. Two policy related questions arise: what conditions contribute to changes in health status of immigrants over time, and how can government programs and services help maintain and promote the health status of immigrants, over time? These questions are vital to the wellness of all immigrants who must deal with the stress of constantly adjusting to social and cultural changes. But these are questions are of critical importance to this population of immigrants, who live in these two racially polarized and racialized environments.

Limitations of the study

This study has provided useful information on the immigration experience of West Indian Diaspora immigrants living in two cities with large number of immigrants. However, the small sample does not permit generalization of these findings to the larger group of immigrants from the West Indian Diaspora. Efforts were made to include participants from various and varied backgrounds and segments of the communities. These efforts were only partially successful. A specific limitation was the inability to recruit a larger sample of newer immigrants those who had been in the respective countries less than two years. This would have allowed for a more detailed comparison of current strategies versus modes of responses that have been in place for sometime. The study was restricted in geographical range in New York City; all but one of the participants was drawn from the Central Brooklyn area. Future studies should look at African descent West Indian immigrants' immigration and acculturation experiences in a wider settlement area.

Although the study asked questions about where the participants grew up in their native countries and their family composition, the investigation and analysis of social class, and rural versus urban socialization, was not fully developed as factors in the pre-migration experiences of the participants. The West Indian social and cultural systems are primarily based on class differences rather than racial divisions. Some of these patterns inure in both cities, to the detriment of the community. Thus, closing the class gap endemic in West Indian societies may prove to be one useful survival or acculturative strategy for Black West Indian Diaspora immigrants in New York City and Toronto.

This study included participants who came as intact family units. Initial results indicate the immigration experience was different for men and women, as well as those who wanted to immigrate versus those who wanted to remain in the home country. Thus, future research should include a detailed investigation of families who immigrated as an intact family unit.

The majority of the participants said they had experienced no physical or psychological health difficulties from their experience. However, during and after some of the interviews it was clear both from body language and disposition, and from reading the transcripts, that the participants did not associate some of their physical or mental health changes with their immigration experiences.

Finally, the analysis protocol presented twin challenges. First, content analysis does not adequately capture, as would narrative or discourse analysis, the nuances and possible underlying dispositions associated with participants' statements and comments. Secondly, I was not qualified to perform discourse or narrative analysis, neither was I trained or qualified to adequately analyze or diagnose situations of psychological distress. As a corollary, this may be one of the criticisms of content analysis. While it allows an analysis of what's said and the context in which it is said, it does not naturally lend itself to an examination of the deeper meanings of participants' narratives.

APPENDIX A

I.D # _____

Demographic Survey

1. Date of birth: Month_____ Day _____ Year_____ Age: _____

2. Gender: [ ] Male [ ] Female

3. Marital Status: Check (**X**) one.
   [ ] Married [ ] Single [ ] Divorced/Separated
   [ ] Widow(er) [ ] Cohabiting [ ] Other _____

4. Where did you grow up? (Name the country): _____

5. What year did you move to NYC/Toronto? _____

6. How old were you when you moved to (NYC/Toronto)? _____ years old

7. After leaving your country, and before moving to New York/Toronto, did you live in any other cities?
   [ ] (0) N0
   [ ] (1) Yes → Where else have you lived? (list cities and length of time you resided there):
   City: _____ Period: From_____ to _____
   City: _____ Period: From_____ to _____
   City: _____ Period: From_____ to _____

8. Current immigration status: Check (**X**) one.
   [ ] Naturalized citizen [ ] Legal alien (Green card holder/Landed immigrant)
   [ ] Undocumented [ ] Other ---------- (e.g., status pending; etc.)

9. Highest level of education completed: Check (**X**) one
   [ ] Less than high school [ ] Some high school [ ] Completed high school
   [ ] Some College (incomplete) [ ] Associate Degree
   [ ] Completed College (Major): _____ [ ] Graduate/professional degree

10. Employment status: Check (**X**) one.
    [ ] Self-employed [ ] Employed (job title) _____
    [ ] Student [ ] Unemployed
    [ ] Retired [ ] Other _____(e.g., disabled, etc)

11. Type of Residence: Check (**X**) one.
    [ ] (1) House: Single family [ ] (2) House: Multi-family
    [ ] (3) Apartment: Walk-in/up [ ] (4) Apartment:: High-rise

12. Occupancy status: Check (**X**) one.
    [ ] Own [ ] Rent

13. Length of time at current address: _____ years

14. What percentage of your monthly income is paid in rent or mortgage _____%

15. How would you describe your neighborhood? Check (**X**) all that apply.

    [ ] Untidy [ ] Tidy
    [ ] Noisy [ ] Quiet
    [ ] Crime-ridden [ ] Some Crime
    Other: _____

16. Have you always lived at your current location?
    [ ] (0) Yes
    [ ] (1) N0 → Where else have you lived in NYC/Toronto? (list last three addresses, time spent there, and type of residence):

    1. Address_____Type _____Time _____ (yrs)
    2. Address_____ Type _____Time _____ (yrs)
    3. Address_____ Type _____ Time _____ (yrs)

17. Give reasons for moving from last these three residences

_____

_____

_____

_____

18. Which of the following do you have living in the U.S./Canada: family members, relatives, or close friends? Check (**X**) all that apply.
    [ ] (3) Family [ ] (2) Relatives [ ] (1) Friends [ ] (0) None

19. When was the last time you communicated (e.g., letter, phone, or email), with any of the above? (Give most recent contact).

    1. Communicated by: _____with _____ when _____
    2. Communicated with _____with_____when _____
    3. Communicated with _____ with_____when_____

20. When was the last time you spent time with (e.g., visited their house, or yours) with any of the persons mentioned above? (Give most recent contact).

    1. Spent time with: _____ where _____ when _____
    2. Spent time with: _____ where _____ when _____
    3. Spent time with _____ where_____ when_____

21. How many brothers and sisters do you have living in home country who have never immigrated?

    Sister(s) _____ Brother(s) ____

22. Do you, or anyone with whom you reside, own any of the following in your home country? Check (**X**) all that apply.

    [ ] House(s) [ ] Land [ ] Business
    [ ] Bank account(s) [ ] Investments [ ] None

23: During the last five years, how often have you visited your home country? _____. When was the last time? _____

24. Do you know anyone who has come from your home country, within the last twelve months?

    [ ] (0) No [ ] (1) Yes

25. Would you live in your home country again?

    [ ] (0) No [ ] (1) Yes

Give reason for choice

_____

_____

_____

Thank You.

APPENDIX B

IMMIGRATION AND RESILIENCE STUDY

Interview Guide

Thank you, for agreeing to participate further in this study. We will be talking today about your experiences as an immigrant living in Toronto/New York City, and what that has been like for you.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Before we start, let me check some basic information:
Your name is_____?
What's your marital status, (never married); (married); (separated); (divorced); (widowed); (living with someone)?
What is your work status (full-time); (part-time); (working off the books); (homemaker); (unemployed/looking for work); (unemployed not looking for work); (disabled) (retired)?
Where did you grow up_____?
What year did you come to Canada/U.S._____?
How old were you when you came to Canada/U.S._____?

HOME COUNTRY/PRE-MIGRATION

1. I want you to describe for me what life was like for you growing up in (country). What were the best and the worst parts about it? [**PROBE**: Did you live in a rural (country) or urban (city/town) area? What was the dominant cultural tradition when you were growing up? (English, American, African, West Indian, etc.). What is the dominant cultural tradition now? (In your opinion, has it changed? Why has it not changed?)]

2. What was it like growing up in your household? Who was responsible for your care? (Were both parents present?) (One parent? Which parent was absent)? Family, or family friend? Which parent was absent? **[PROBE**: How many brothers and sisters? Did any other relative live in the same house? (e.g., aunts, uncles etc.). How would you describe your household's economic and social status? (e.g. highest level of education, employment status). Did you attend school in your home area, or did you travel to school?]

3. As a girl/boy growing up in .....did you think a lot about what your life would be like when you grew up? (What types of things did you think about)?

4. What role did religion/spirituality play in your household, and in your upbringing? What role would you say religion/spirituality plays in your (or your family's) life now?

5. *I*ndicate the degree to which you agree with the following: *"being successful is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it."*

Strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

MIGRATION HISTORY

6. Tell me the story of why you came to the US/Canada, and why you chose NYC/Toronto. [**PROBE**: Did you travel alone, or did you come with parents, spouse, child or children? Did you have friends, family, or relatives who lived here and who encouraged you to come? What were your plans (timetable) for self, spouse, or children? How satisfied are you with progress to-date? Tell me how your plans may have changed or any setbacks you may have had.] How old were you when you left (country)? Were you working before you left (country)? [IF EMPLOYED BEFORE LEAVING HOME COUNTRY] What job did you have before you left your home country? Was it easy or difficult to find jobs in your area/country when you were growing up? Has that changed? Why do you say that?

7. Think about when your first arrived in the country/city. What was living here like for you? Was it similar or different from what you expected? In what ways where they similar or different? [**PROBE:** Tell me about your knowledge, or impressions, of the country/city before you moved here. How did you get this knowledge or impressions? What about previous visit(s)?]

8. Thinking about your time living in Toronto/New York City, what has surprised you the most? What accomplishments are you most proud of? What are you least proud of? [PROBE: Is there something you wanted to achieve but did not, or did not expect to achieve, but did?]

ETHNIC IDENTITY

9. What terms would you use to describe your ethnic identity? (e.g., Black, West Indian, Barbadian) Why did you choose that term? Has this description changed since you arrived in this country? [**PROBE**: What's good and what's bad about being from (country)? Do you think American - /Canadian-born people see it that way? Do you think other (country) would agree with you?]

10. As a (country) living in US/Canada, do you think and feel accepted in this society? Why did you said? Have you always felt that way? [**PROBE:** How are you treated in NYC/Toronto (U.S./Canada)? Do people in NYC/Toronto (US/Canada) treat you differently, or the same, as people do in your home country?]

11. Which of the following is true of this statement: " While living in New York City/ Toronto I have ---------- been subjected to insults and harassment because of my foreign background."

Frequently	infrequently	rarely	never	don't know
5	4	3	2	1

12. Do you have a really good friend from a different race &/or ethnic group? [**PROBE**: If no, why do you think that is? If yes, how did it happen? How often do you see/talk to each other? What about other West Indian countries?]

13. When was the last time you went to the West Indian (Caribbean) Day Parade/Caribana? Why did you go, or not go? Did going make you feel more, or less, connected to your roots and culture?}

LIVING (NEIGHBORHOOD) CONDITIONS

14. Where do you live in NYC/Toronto (what neighborhood)? What are your reasons for living in this neighborhood? What do like most? What do you like least and how do you deal with it?
[IF LIVED ELSEWHERE] [**PROBE**: Why did you leave your former neighborhood in NY/TOR.? How is this neighborhood different? How is it different from the neighborhood in the US/Canada you lived in longest? Why do you say that?]

15. How well do you know your neighbors?
[**PROBE**: Are they co-ethnics? Do you socialize together? Have you gone to their house/apartment? Have they come to yours? When was the last time?]

16. Do you have children? How many? Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following: *"it is easier to raise children in Canada/U.S. than in (home country)."*

Strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

17. If you could live in another part of the city/country, would you? Why/why not? Where would you live? Where would you not live? Why or why not?

18. Has your race and or ethnicity ever prevented you from getting housing you wanted? **[If YES,** What did you do about it?]

EMPLOYMENT

19. Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following: "getting a job depends on being in the right place at the right time."

Strongly agree	agree	neither agree nor disagree	disagree	strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

20. [IF WORKING] Now let's talk about your job. What one word would you use to describe your job? Why did you choose that word? **[PROBE**: Tell me about your job? Have the things you do (responsibilities/functions) changed since you started there? Is this your ideal job? If not, what job/career would you most want to have? What's preventing you from getting that job? How many jobs have you had since you have been in NYC/TOR? How did you get you this job? Did you know anyone at the job before you started there? [IF RETIRED: Tell me about your first and last job here in the city.]

21. What was your highest level of education in your home country? What is your current highest level of education? What is the highest level of education you will ultimately like to get? Why do you say that? Why is that important?

22. (If EMPLOYED) Do you feel that you are under-qualified or over-qualified for your position? Why do you say that? Thinking about your salary, is it fair? Is it enough to live on? **[PROBE**: (If graduated from college), Do you think your college degree prepared you for your current position? Do you think any of your former jobs/positions prepared you for your current position? Why/why not?]

23. Have you ever been unemployed for longer than four weeks? What was that like? Was it easy to get help finding work or retraining?

24. Has your race and or ethnicity ever prevented you from getting a job you wanted? Tell me about that. What did you do about it?

25. (IF EMPLOYED) Now I want you to talk about your co-workers. What are they like? [PROBE: Are they the same ethnic background as you? How about your supervisor/manager and top management?]. Do you socialize with people from work? How often and what kinds of things do you do together?

26. Do you feel your race and/or ethnicity makes it harder for you to succeed in your company?

SOCIAL NETWORKS

27. How many of your family, relatives or friends live in the same city or neighborhood as you do? How often do you talk to or see any of these individuals?

28. You told me earlier that friends and/or family helped (did not help) you find your job? Was this the only time they helped (did not help)? What about housing, transportation, schools for your children, doctors, lawyers? [PROBE: Tell me about a specific time in which they helped (or did not help) in one of these situations. What was that like for you? What were you thinking and feeling?]

29. Do you belong to any clubs, organizations, etc? Tell me about them, (or why don't you?)
30. If you needed help getting social, medical or other assistance would you know where to go or who to ask? Would your friends or relatives know? Why do you say that?

31. Indicate the degree to which you agree with the following: "in this country race or skin color does not limit the ability to succeed."

Strongly disagree	disagree	neither disagree nor agree	agree	strongly agree
5	4	3	2	1

32. In the wake of 9/11, how do you feel immigrants are viewed in the U.S/Canada? Do you think they are less welcomed? Do you feel less welcomed because of your ethnicity? Why do you say that?

PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

33. Have any of the following things happened to you recently?
    You saw a doctor, social worker, or psychologist? You were seriously ill or hospitalized? You had a major injury? A friend or family member died?

34. Has anything especially stressful happened to you in the last year?
    [**PROBE**: What was it and how did it affect you?]

35. In this interview we have been talking about some difficult topics. Some people talk about these as being stressful. Do you think that any of the topics we have covered (e.g. work, racism, neighborhood etc.) have made any differences for your health status?

36. People believe that female immigrants have a more difficult time adjusting to life away from their home country, and after they move to Canada/U.S. Do you agree with that statement?

TRANSNATIONALISM

37. What is your current immigration status? **(If a legal alien i.e. green-card holder.)** Do you intend to become a citizen? Why do you say that?

38. Have you sent money to anyone in (country) in the past year?

39. Can you imagine resettling in (country)? Why or why not?

40. Do you go to or participate in Independence Day/Canada Day celebrations? Have you ever gone? Why did you stop?

41. We have talked about how things were when you first came to New York City/Toronto. I want to know what things are like for you now.

42. Reflecting on your experiences in New York City/Toronto, what might you have done differently, or been better prepared for? In short, if I was moving here from (country) and wanted advice, what advice would you give me?

43. Finally, thank you for taking the time to talk to me about your experiences as an immigrant living in New York City/Toronto. Is there anything you think I missed, or did not ask you about?

APPENDIX C

Interview coding scheme

Premigration Historical and cultural - colonialism - foreign cultural orientation - lack of race mixing - multicultural - risk and protective factor	Acculturation strategies - assimilation - marginalization - integration - separation	Employment - employed - underemployed - unemployed - satisfaction
Premigration Socialization - urban - rural - role of religion - SES (family/self) - educational level - social capital	Integration - political (citizenship) - Social (networks) - structural (education, labor market) - cultural (norms & values) - cognitive (linguistic, problem-solving)	Type of employment - knowledge - service industry - information - manufacturing - governmental - banking/financial services
Reasons for immigration (choices) - personal (for self) - family (children, spouse) - other - social network	Ethnic relations - tolerance vs. intolerance - intergroup vs. intragroup - ingroup vs. outgroup - public vs. private regard	Social networks (capital) - embedded - loose - size - members (family/friends) - same neighborhood vs. dispersed
Specific motivations/goals - better job - more money - education - cultural exposure) - geographical change - technological advancements	Racism and discrimination: - personal - institutional - social/cultural (group) - direct (housing, employment) - indirect (daily hassles)	Protective factors - family - personality-related - social capital - cognitive ability - decision making skills - identity (social/ethnic) - religion/spirituality
Prior cultural exposure - previous visits - media (television etc.) - returning friends/relatives - contact with natives of host country	Housing and environment: - favorable (quite, clean, safe) - unfavorable (noisy, unsafe) - plans to move - rent/own - cheap/expensive	Gender roles - traditional roles vs. new roles - childrearing - family organization

Ethnic identity - regional/ national - heritability (African) - other/racial - negotiated	Education (Human capital) - graduate - college - high school - future	Transnationalism - return visits - repatriation - contact with co-ethnics
	Stressors - impact on psychological health, physical health - environmental - family - social - employment	Potential discrepancies - lack of motivation - cultural rejection - social misfits (outcasts) - criminality - hopelessness - helplessness - nonexistent social capital

APPENDIX D

Identification Coding

I D	Site	Years in country	Gender	Education	Employed
10	NY	20	M	College/university	Information Systems
11	NY	31	M	High school	Construction
12	NY	5	M	High school	Shipping
13	NY	2	M	High school	Unemployed
14	NY	25	M	High school	Sales and service
15	NY	2	F	College/university	Education
16	NY	25	F	College	Hospitality
17	NY	15	F	College	Education
18	NY	7	F	College/university	Child care
19	NY	6	F	High school	Child care
20	TOR	13	M	College	Sales and service
21	TOR	32	M	High school	Retired
22	TOR	14	M	College	Art design
23	TOR	4	M	College/university	Financial services
24	TOR	33	M	College	Business owner
25	TOR	33	F	College/university	Business/finance
26	TOR	44	F	College/university	Retired
27	TOR	15	F	College	Health care
28	TOR	4	F	College/university	Financial services
29	TOR	27	F	College/university	Financial services
30	TOR	24	F	College/university	Security

Table 1

Means of immigration history by gender and site

Gender	Current Age	Age on Arrival	Years in Country	Years at Address
		Toronto		
Male	45.20	26.40	19.20	4.60
Female	51.17	26.50	24.50	6.67
Total	48.45	26.45	22.00	5.73
		New York		
Male	44.60	28.00	16.60	10.40
Female	45.20	34.20	11.00	6.00
Total	44.90	31.10	13.80	8.20

Table 2

Means of interview guide items by gender and site *

Gender	Hard Work	Right Place	Insults	Child Rearing	Race
		Toronto			
Male	4.40	3.40	3.00	2.00	2.36
Female	4.33	3.33	2.50	2.00	2.67
Total	4.36	3.36	2.73	2.00	2.36
		New York			
Male	4.60	3.80	2.40	2.75	2.75
Female	4.80	3.00	2.60	2.25	3.00
Total	4.70	3.40	2.50	2.50	2.89

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