



A Multi-level Analysis Of the Failure of Social Integration on Mental Health Status of Migrant Workers in Thailand



Aphichat Chamrathirong, Charmporn Holumyong, Sureeporn Punpuing, and Sirinya Kaikeaw
Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University

Introduction:

In Thailand, the majority of migrant workers from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR are either found to have been living in Thailand for an extended period of time or are expected to become long-term residents in the long run. They are vulnerable and live in socially-marginalized setting.

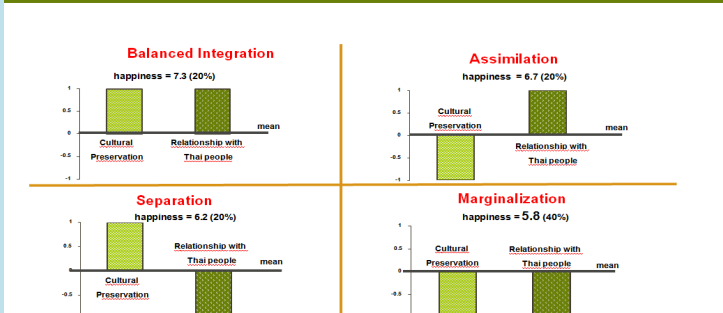
Objective:

This study investigates the impact of success or failure of the four typologies of social integration of immigrants (balanced integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization) in the context of migrant workers in Thailand.

Method:

The 2014 Survey of Cross Border of Migrant Workers in Thailand among 3,958 workers from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR is used. Information on migrants' social association with Thais and/or their own communities is examined. A multi-level approach is applied to investigate the impact of the social integration processes in 28 districts of the 14 study provinces on the happiness scale and mental health risk of the sample of migrants.

Social Integration of Migrant Workers in Thailand
(based on the typology by Berry, 1992, 1997 and 2002)



Finding:

It is found that migrants in the balanced integration areas have a significantly better state of mental health. Failure to be properly integrated into the host society—categorized by the undesirable typologies of assimilation, separation and especially marginalization—is found to be strongly associated with mental health problems.

Conclusion:

Policy implication on the integration programs and the promotion of a sound and healthy multi-cultural and inclusive society are discussed.



The multiple regression analysis of **happiness scores** among cross-border migrant worker in Thailand

Individual and contextual level characteristics	(β)	std.err.
Duration of residence in Thailand	-0.035***	0.005
Ability to speak Thai (ref: cannot speak Thai)		
- Can speak Thai	0.124*	0.054
Residence permit (ref: no residence permit)		
- Having residence permit	-0.06	0.067
Occupation (ref: fishery)		
- Related fishery activities	-0.162	0.095
- Factory worker	-0.055	0.094
- General wage earners, sale, service	0.017	0.112
- Construction worker	-0.076	0.115
Income per day	0.000	0.000
Contextual level		
Typology of integration (ref: balanced integration)		
- Assimilation	-1.052***	0.130
- Separation	-0.498***	0.096
- Marginalization	-1.195***	0.113
R ²	0.185	
Degree of freedom	19	