2016

Acculturation Orientations towards 'Valued' and 'Devalued' Immigrants in South Korea

Pascal Tisserant
University of Lorraine, France, pascal.tisserant@univ-lorraine.fr

Anne-Lorraine Wagner
University of Lorraine, France, al.wagner.guillermou@gmail.com

Jaegon Jung
University of Lorraine, France, seonhyangjae@gmail.com

Richard Y. Bourhis
University of Quebec, Canada, bourhis.richard@uqam.ca

Recommended Citation

Acculturation Orientations towards 'Valued' and 'Devalued' Immigrants in South Korea

Pascal Tisserant

University of Lorraine, France

(pascal.tisserant@univ-lorraine.fr)

Anne-Lorraine Wagner

University of Lorraine, France

(al.wagner.guillermou@gmail.com)

Jaegon Jung

University of Lorraine, France

(seonhyangjae@gmail.com)

Richard Y. Bourhis

University of Québec, Canada

(bourhis.richard@uqam.ca)

Abstract

This study, based on the Interactive Acculturation Model, investigates the acculturation orientations of undergraduates (n=279) in South Korea. Results show that Korean respondents considered South-East Asian immigrants to be less valued than Western immigrants. They were more welcoming towards 'valued' Western immigrants than they were towards 'devalued' South-East Asian immigrants. As in the case of undergraduates in North America & Europe, Korean undergraduates mainly endorsed integration and individualism towards both Western and South-East Asian immigrants, but they also strongly endorsed the segregationist orientations towards both 'valued' and 'devalued' immigrants reflecting the still contentious view of Korea as an immigration country.

Introduction

Acculturation can be defined as the process of bidirectional change that takes place when contrasting cultural groups experience sustained intercultural contact (Sam, 2006)"container-title":"The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology","publisher":"Cambridge University Press","publisher-place":"New York, NY","page":"11-26","archive_location":"Book: 2006-12832-002","event-place":"New York, NY","abstract":"(from the introduction. Acculturation implies that both cultural groups are influenced and transformed by their mutual intercultural contacts (Berry, 1997). In Western societies, much of the acculturation research focused on the adaptation strategies of non-dominant immigrant minorities as they interacted with dominant host majorities in countries of settlement. The Interactive Acculturation Model (IAM) offers a framework to account for intergroup processes that characterize relations be-

tween host majority members and non-dominant immigrant minorities (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997).

The IAM proposes that dominant host majorities by virtue of their control of state institutions have a major impact on the acculturation orientations of immigrant mi-norites (Bourhis, Montaruli, El Geledi, Harvey, & Barrette, 2010).

Since the Korean War, South Korea's economic development has attracted both a low-status immigrant workforce from the countries of South-East Asia and high-status foreigners, particularly North Americans holding positions of responsibility within inter-national business organizations. Following an overview of key features of the IAM mod-el, this paper provides a brief review of the socio-historic context of the foreign pres-ence in South Korea. Using the IAM model, the study then explores for the first time the acculturation orientations of South Korean students towards "valued" foreign resi-dents from the West in comparison with "devalued" immigrants from South-East Asia.

Acculturation Orientations of Immigrant and Host Community Members

Acculturation orientations are defined as a combination of attitudes, beliefs, and be-havioral intentions that guide the way people think and behave (Bourhis *et al.*, 1997). A basic premise of the IAM is that acculturation orientations are more stable and more strongly and deeply embedded cognitively and emotionally than intergroup attitudes (Bourhis *et al.*, 2010). The IAM proposes that members of the dominant host majority may endorse six acculturation orientations toward different immigrant groups.

Integrationism is endorsed by host community members who accept that immigrants maintain some aspects of their heritage culture, while wishing that immigrants also ad-opted important features of the host majority culture. Integrationism-transformation is endorsed by host majority members who not only endorse the integrationist accultura-tion orientation, but also wish to change aspects of their majority culture and customs to better accommodate the cultural needs of immigrant communities. Individualists define themselves and others as persons rather than as members of group categories. Because it is personal qualities and individual achievements that count most, individualists will tend to interact with immigrants in the same way they would with other individuals who hap-pen to be members of the host community. While these three orientations are welcom-ing towards immigrants, the following three acculturation orientations are less tolerant of immigrant group cultural diversity.

Assimilationism corresponds to the traditional concept of absorption whereby host community members expect immigrants to relinquish their language and cultural identi-ty for the sake of adopting the culture and language of the dominant host majority. Seg-regationism refers to host community members who accept that immigrants maintain their heritage culture as long as they keep their distance from host community members by staying apart within their own urban/regional enclaves, as they do not wish immi-grants to transform or dilute the host majority culture. Exclusionists deny immigrants

the right to adopt features of the host community culture. They also deny immigrants the choice to maintain their heritage culture or religion and believe that some immigrants have characteristics that can never be socially incorporated within the host majority mainstream. These welcoming and less welcoming acculturation orientations are measured using the validated Host Community Acculturation Scale (HCAS; Barrette, Bourhis, Capozza, & Hichy, 2005; Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001)we tested the validity of the Host Community Acculturation Scale (HCAS; Bourhis & Bougie, 1998; Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001.

Overall, research using the IAM shows that host community undergraduates in North America and Western Europe endorse Individualism and Integrationism more than Integrationism-Transformation, Assimilationism, Segregationism, and Exclusionism (Barrette, Bourhis, Personnaz, & Personnaz, 2004; Bourhis, Barrette, El-Geledi, & Schmidt, 2009). Most participants in these studies are undergraduate students for whom strong endorsement of Individualism and Integrationism is concordant with the meritocratic and individualistic organizational culture of higher education institutions. Similar endorsement of integrationism was obtained in other acculturation studies conducted with host community adolescents and adults towards immigrants and depending on the public vs. private settings in which acculturation issues were considered (*e.g.*, Navas, Rojas, Garcia, & Pumares, 2007; Zagefka & Brown, 2002).

Foreign influences and immigration issues in South Korea

Korea is a rocky peninsula attached to the east of the Asian continent by its land borders with China and Russia. North and South Korea were separated after the Korean War in 1953. A democracy since 1987, South Korea exists under the military threat of the current North Korean communist regime. South Korea has 50 million inhabitants and is the 11th highest densely populated country of the world with 492 inhabitants per square kilometer. Three major external influences have shaped South Korean identity across the centuries (Tisserant, 1998). First, Chinese influence endures since the institutionalization of Confucianism in the 16th century and China's occupation of the Korean peninsula until the Chinese defeat in 1894 (Kim, 1991). Second, the relationship between Japan and the Korean peninsula has been one of Japanese occupation and war especially during the thirty-five years of Japanese colonization and oppression from 1910 to 1945. Third, following the Korean War, South Korea became an anti-Communist bastion established by the Americans and open to capitalist Western multinational corporations. In a few decades of capitalist development, South Korea progressed from being one of the poorest countries in the world to one of the fifteen largest economic powers.

The South Korean unprecedented economic development challenges the country with a new type of external influence: the immigration of a more or less "devalued" foreign workforce from less-developed countries on the Asian continent and in particular from South-East Asia. South Korea now has 1.58 million foreign residents (Kang,

2014). According to figures from the Korea Immigration Service (2013), the Chinese (239,098) and the South-East Asians including Vietnamese, Filipinos, Thais, and Indonesians (279,165) are the two largest groups of foreigners residing in South Korea. These South-East Asians make-up the new wave of "devalued" immigrants occupying lower status jobs relative to 'valued' sojourners who come from North America (154,045) as administrators and CEOs in foreign multinational corporations established since the end of the Korean War. It is the arrival of 'devalued' South-Asian immigrants more than the presence of Western ones which sparked heated debates on cultural diversity and national identity for mainstream South Koreans in the last decade (Ruteere, 2014).

Hypotheses

Most studies exploring host majority acculturation orientations towards 'valued' and 'devalued' immigrants were conducted in North America and Europe (Barrette *et al.*, 2004; Bourhis *et al.*, 2009), while few studies were conducted in Asia and none in South Korea. Based on the Interactive Acculturation Model (IAM), this study investigated South Korean attitudes and host community acculturation orientations towards "valued" Western immigrants and 'devalued' South-East Asian immigrants. Two main hypotheses can be formulated:

Hypothesis 1: We expect that South Korean host majority members do distinguish between 'valued' and 'devalued' immigrants reflecting mainstream prejudices about the status and perceived utility of different categories of newcomers established in the receiving society. We expect that ethnic attitudes towards *'devalued'* South East Asian immigrants will be less favorable overall than those toward *'valued'* immigrants from North America (Froese, 2010).

Hypothesis 2: Several studies have shown that dominant host majorities tend to endorse more welcoming acculturation orientations towards "valued" than "devalued" immigrants (Bourhis, Barrette & Moriconi, 2008; Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001, 2004). That is why we propose that 'welcoming' acculturation orientations such as individualism, integrationist and integration-transformation are more likely to be endorsed toward *'valued'* Western immigrants than towards *'devalued'* South-East Asian immigrants. Conversely we expect that less welcoming orientations such as assimilation, segregation and exclusion are more likely to be endorsed for 'devalued' South East Asian than for 'valued' Western immigrants.

Method

Participants

Respondents were 279 undergraduates (61% male, 39% female) attending two major universities in Seoul and one in Inchon province. All participants were born in South Korea of South Korean ancestry with Hangul as a mother tongue. Undergraduate re-

spondents were studying management, political sciences or electronics and were 22 years old on average.

Procedures

The experimenter was a native of South Korea who gave fluent instructions in Hangul to complete the questionnaire written in Hangul. During class time undergraduates were asked to complete the anonymous questionnaire composed of the Host community Acculturation scale (HCAS) along with a battery of scales providing background information and attitudes held by the respondents. All items were rated on a 7 point scale and the internal consistency of each scale had satisfactory Cronbach-alpha scores.

Dependent measures

1. *Host community acculturation scale (HCAS)*: Respondents completed the HCAS twice: first toward 'valued' Western immigrants and second towards 'devalued' South East Asian immigrants (Montreuil & Bourhis, 2004). Host community acculturation orientations were assessed in the private domains of culture, values, and customs, which were computed as a single score for each acculturation orientations including individualism, integration, integration-transformation, assimilation and segregation. The exclusion orientation was dropped from our analyses because of its poor internal consistency.

2. *The Multiple Identification Scale* measured self-rated belonging to the following groups: "To what extent do you identify yourself as: Korean / Asian / Korean speaker / Asian / Western / South East Asian / immigrant (Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001).

3. *The Thermometer Scale* was used to measure ethnic attitudes towards relevant ethnic groups in Korea (Esses, Haddock, & Zanna, 1993). Ethnic target groups were rated on a favorability scale ranging from totally unfavorable (0 ∘) to neutral (50 ∘) to very favorable (100 ∘).

4. *The Desire for Social Proximity Scale* monitored to what extent respondents wanted close relations with Westerners and with South East Asian as: clerk at your corner store/your colleague at work/your neighbor/your best friend?" (Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001).

5. *The Security Scale* monitored how secure participants felt as Koreans in the following domains: cultural, linguistic, political, and economic (Montreuil & Bourhis, 2004).

6. *An ethnic threat scale* monitored to what extent participants felt threatened by the presence of Western immigrants and South East Asian immigrants (Bourhis *et al.*, 2008).

7. *The Social Dominance Orientation Scale (SDO)* was used to assess participant beliefs in social hierarchy and their tendency to value power over other groups (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994).

Results

Results obtained on the multiple identification scale (Figure 1) show that respondents identified most strongly as Korean, Korean speakers and Asians, while they identified least as Western, South East Asian or immigrants. ($F(5,271) = 208,995$; $p < .000$). These results validate our sample of respondents as Koreans.
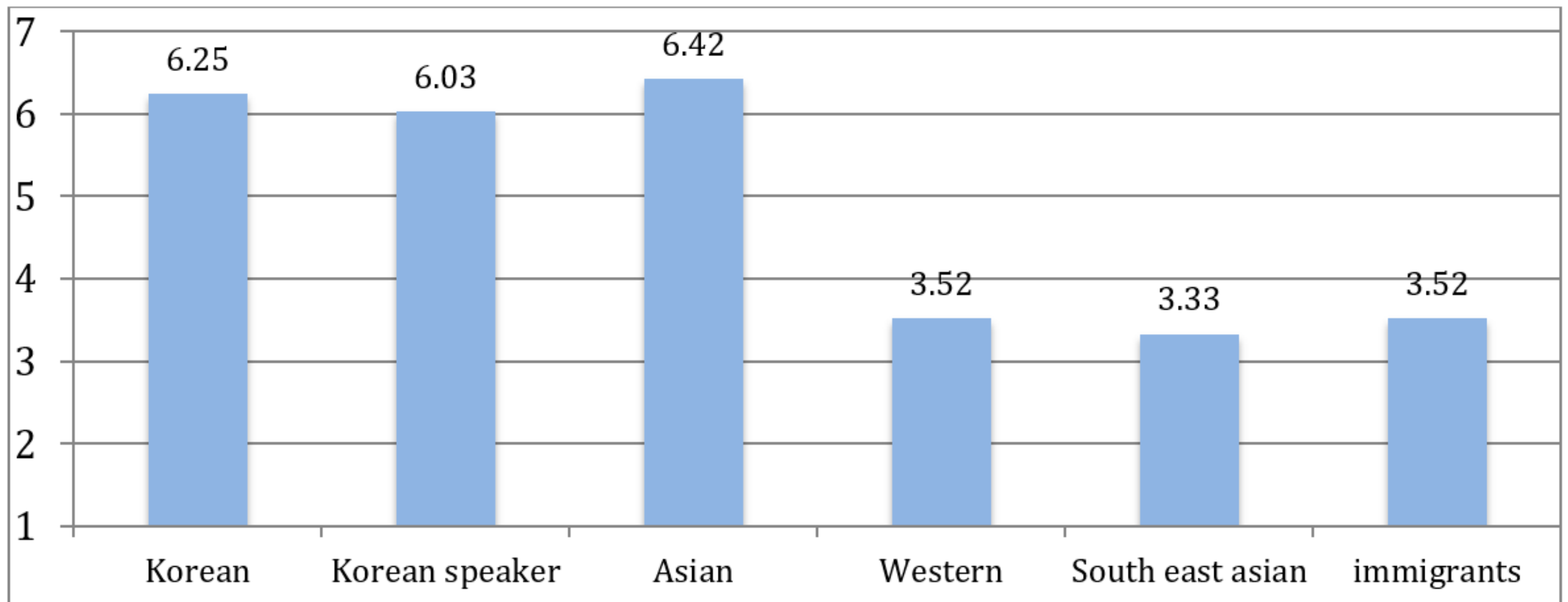

Figure 1
Korean Multiple Identification Profile (N=275)

Results obtained on the ethnic thermometer scale (Figure 2) show the classic in-group favoritism effect: Korean undergraduates rated members of their own group more favorably than all the other out-groups. Korean undergraduates also clearly distinguished between 'valued' and "devalued" out-groups. Respondents rated Europeans, Americans, North Koreans and Japanese more favorably than "devalued" immigrants from Central Asia, Africa and South East Asia, while Chinese immigrants were rated least favorably ($F(8,269) = 110,354; p < .001$).
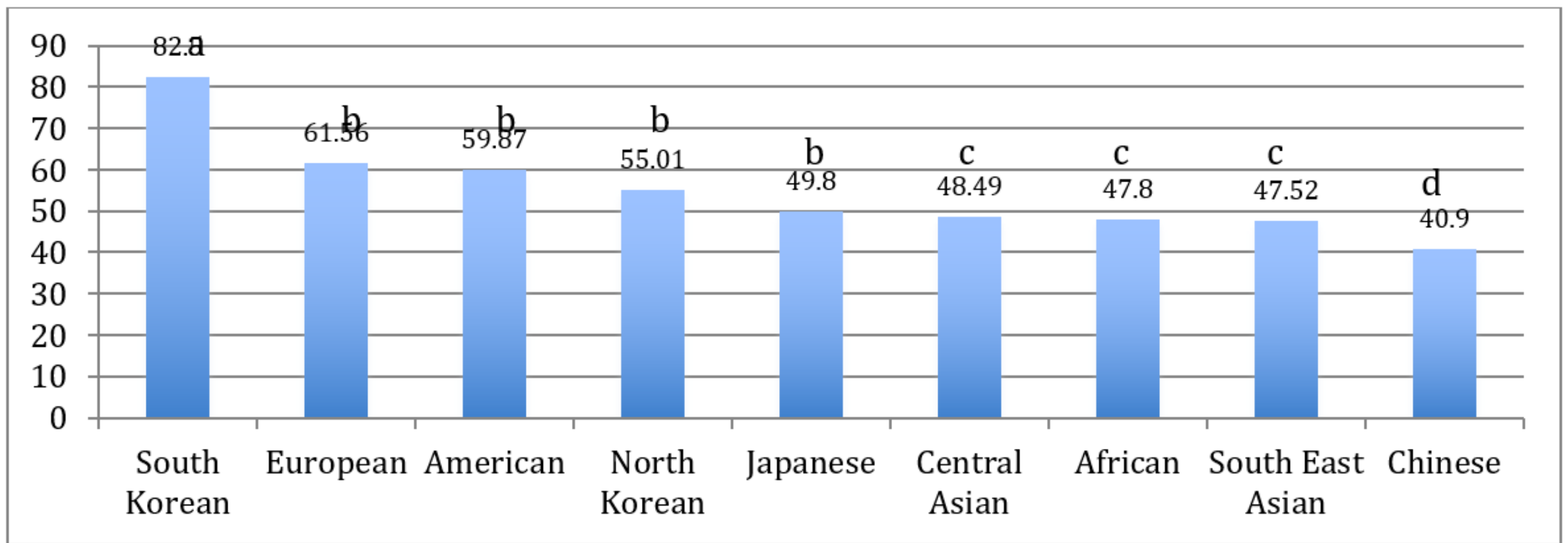
Figure 2
Ethnic Thermometer Scale
Note: Means that do not share a common superscript are significantly different at *p*<.05, a>b>c>d.

As seen in Figure 3, Korean undergraduates expressed clear preferences for future immigrants depending on their region of origin ($F(7,269) = 41.561$; $p < .000$). The regions of greatest preference for immigrants to Korea were Europe and America reflecting the "valued" status of immigrants from these two regions as hypothesized. Immigrants from North Korea were also preferred reflecting kinship links between South and North Koreans. Immigrants from South-East Asia, Africa and Japan were less preferred while immigrants from China were least preferred as immigrants to Korea. Taken together, these results support hypothesis H1 to the effect that South Korean undergraduates do distinguish between 'valued' and 'devalued' immigrants.
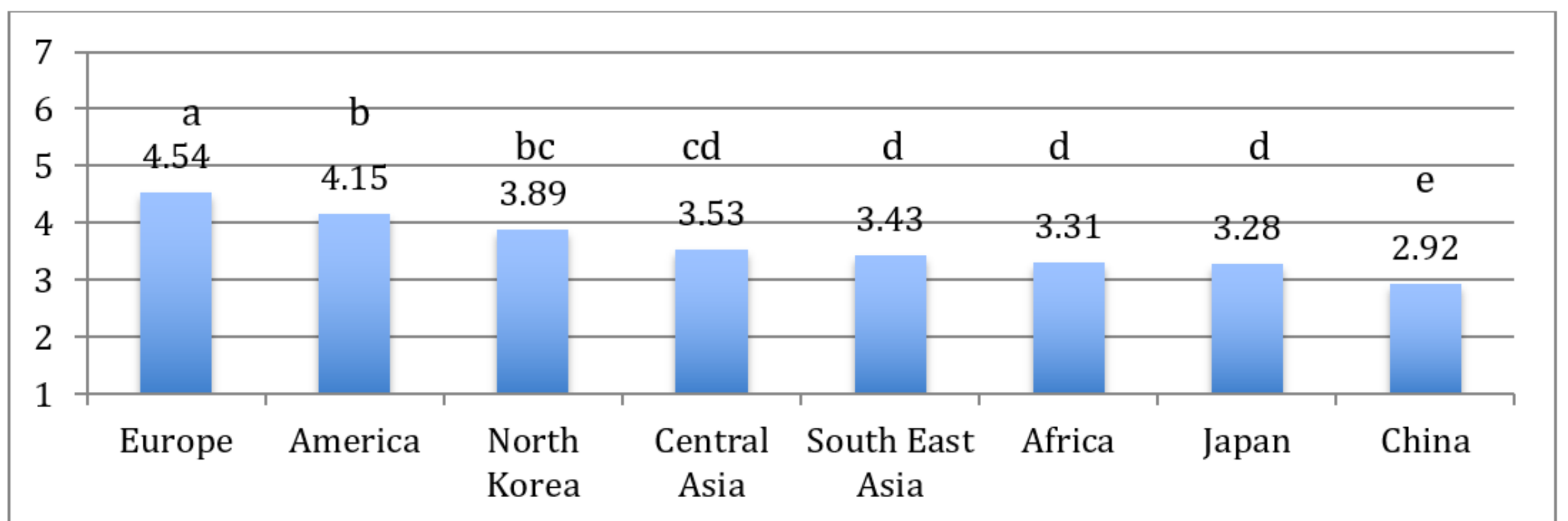

Figure 3
Country of Origin of preferred future Immigrants for Korea
Note: means that do not share a common superscript are significantly different at *p* <.05, a>b>c>d>e.

As seen in Figure 4, Korean undergraduate scores on the social dominance orientation (SDO) were low ($M = 2.89$) and comparable to those obtained with undergraduates in North America and Europe (Bourhis *et.al.*, 2009). In line with our expectations,

Korean undergraduates expressed a stronger desire to have social relations with Western than with South East Asian immigrants ($t(278) = 9.995$; $p < .001$). Overall, Korean undergraduates felt moderately secure culturally, linguistically, politically and economically ($M = 3.8$). Korean undergraduates also felt that their identity was only moderately threatened by the presence of Western immigrants while they felt least threatened by the presence of South East Asian immigrants ($t(276) = 7$; $p < .001$).
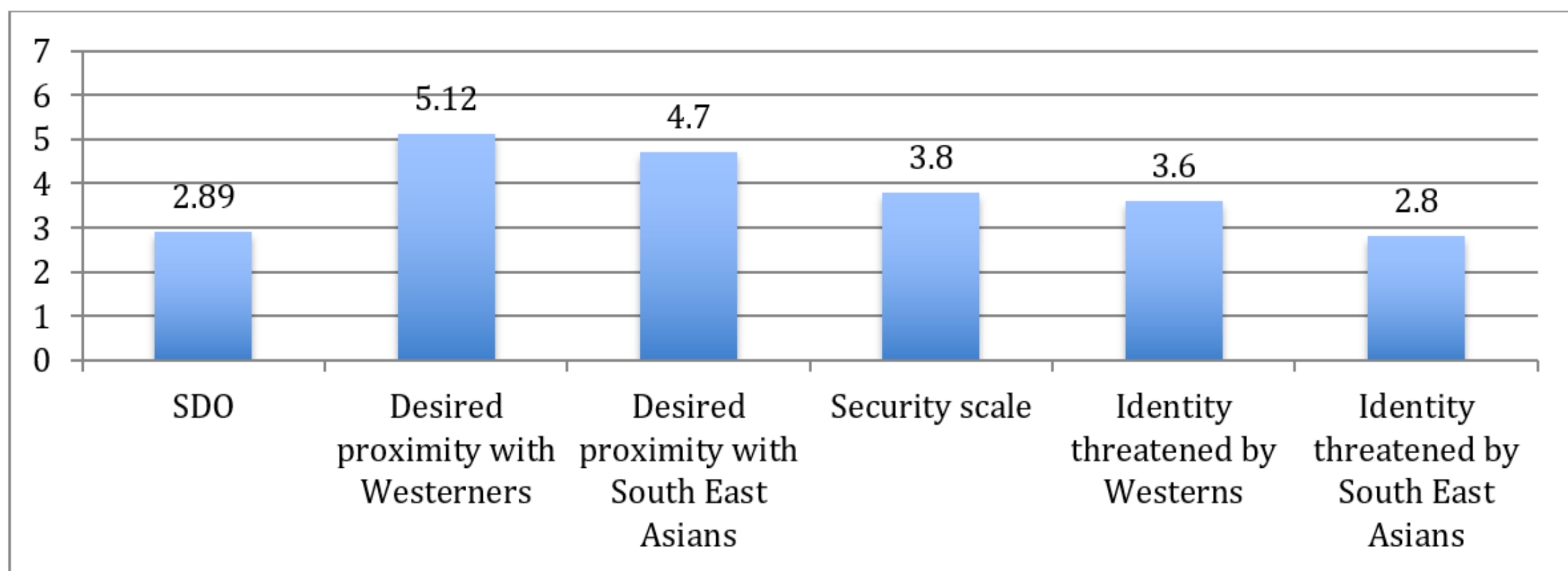

Figure 4
SDO ideology, desire for social relations, feeling of threat and security

Figure 5 displays the five acculturation orientations endorsed by Korean undergraduates towards "valued" Western immigrants and "devalued" South East Asian immigrants. Our repeated measure MANOVA (2x5) showed that all the acculturation orientations endorsed towards "valued" and "devalued" immigrants differed significantly from each other with the exception of individualism which did not differ ($F(5, 274) = 11.66$; $p < .001$). In line with hypothesis 2, Korean undergraduates more strongly endorsed integration ($F(1,278) = 30.01$; $p < .001$) and integration - transformation ($F(1,278) = 15.12$; $p < .001$) towards Western immigrants than towards South East Asian immigrants. Conversely, respondents more strongly endorsed segregationism ($F(1,278) = 4,77$; $p < .05$) and assimilationism ($F(1,278) = 5.17$; $p < .05$) towards South East Asian immigrants than towards "valued" Western immigrants. Overall results showed that integrationism ($M = 5.1$) and segregationism (5.38) were the two most strongly endorsed acculturation orientations towards the two groups of immigrants followed by individualism ($M = 4.66$). The least endorsed acculturation orientations were integration-transformation ($M = 3.02$) and assimilationism ($M = 2.55$).
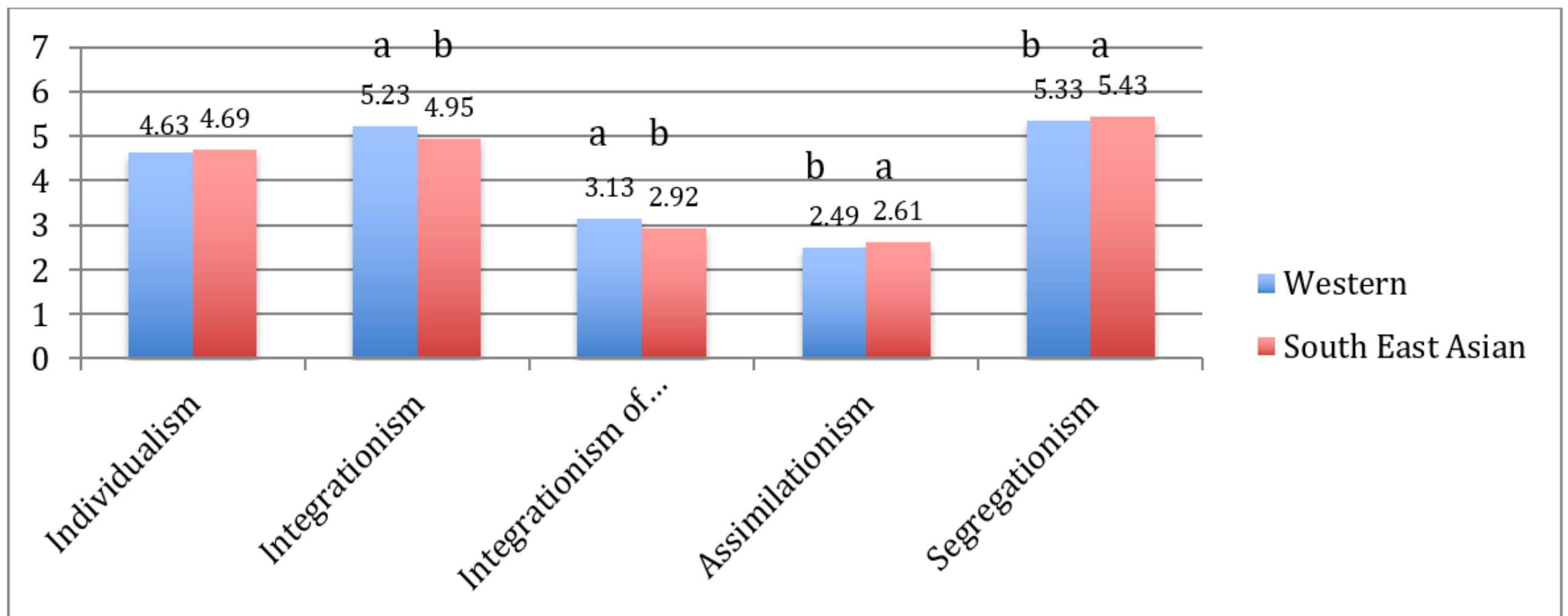
Figure 5
Acculturation orientations towards Western vs. South East Asian Immigrants
Note: For each acculturation orientation, means that do not share a common superscript are significantly different at p < .05, a > b.

Discussion

Korean undergraduates identified strongly as Korean and Asian and much less as Western or South-East Asian immigrants. As in the case of undergraduates in North America and Europe, Korean undergraduates mainly endorsed integration and individualism towards both Western and South East Asian immigrants possibly reflecting the individualist and meritocratic organizational culture of their westernized University setting. But Korean undergraduates also strongly endorsed the segregationist orientations towards both 'valued' and 'devalued' out-group immigrants reflecting the still contentious view of Korea as an emerging multicultural immigration country rather than as an ethnically homogeneous state.

Supporting hypothesis 1, Korean respondents considered South-East Asian immigrants to be less valued than Western immigrants. Korean undergraduates held less favorable attitudes toward South-East Asian immigrants on the Ethnic Thermometer scale, expressed less desire to engage in close relations with South-East Asians and considered such people to be less desirable as future immigrants to Korea. However, undergraduates felt that their cultural security as Koreans was less threatened by the presence of South-East Asian than by Western immigrants perhaps reflecting South Korea's relationship of economic and military dependence on the United States (Finan, 1992; Leveau, 2013).

Hypothesis 2 was supported weakly but significantly: Korean undergraduates were more welcoming towards 'valued' Western immigrants than they were towards 'devalued' South-East Asian immigrants. Conversely, Korean respondents were weakly but significantly more assimilationist and segregationist towards 'devalued' South-East Asian than 'valued' western immigrants. Taken together these results support key premises of the Interactive Acculturation Model in this Korean Asian setting (IAM, Bourhis *et al.*,

1997, 2010).

This is one of the first empirical studies investigating host majority acculturation orientations towards "valued" and "devalued" immigrants settled in an Asian Country. This study also offers future studies the possibility of using the acculturation questionnaire translated into Hangul and adapted for the South Korean setting. This empirical study begins a public policy dialogue about issues of segregationism and prejudices towards "devalued" immigrants in Korea and ways to combat existing or developing discrimination against such vulnerable minorities. As future decision makers, undergraduate Koreans preferred future immigrants to come from Europe and America, were less welcoming towards immigrants from South East Asia and were least welcoming towards immigrants from China. The relationship of South Koreans with "valued" and "devalued" immigrants as well as with other historical minorities such as North Korean refugees and Chinese of Korean origin are avenues of future research and of much needed public policy debate in Korea today.

References

Barrette, G., Bourhis, R. Y., Capozza, D., & Hichy, Z. (2005). HCAS: The Host Community Acculturation Scale. Testing the validity in the Italian context. *Testing Psicometria Metodologia, 12*(3), 221–240.

Barrette, G., Bourhis, R. Y., Personnaz, M., & Personnaz, B. (2004). Acculturation orientations of French and North African undergraduates in Paris. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 28*(5), 415–438. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2004.08.003

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 41*, 5–68.

Bourhis, R. Y., Barrette, G., El-Geledi, S., & Schmidt, R. (2009). Acculturation Orientations and Social Relations Between Immigrant and Host Community Members in California. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 40*(3), 443–467.

Bourhis, R. Y., Barrette, G., & Moriconi, P.-A. (2008). Appartenances nationales et orientations d'acculturation au Québec. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue Canadienne Des Sciences Du Comportement, 40*(2), 90–103. doi:10.1037/0008-400X.40.2.90

Bourhis, R. Y., Moise, L. C., Perreault, S., & Senecal, S. (1997). Towards an interactive acculturation model: A social psychological approach. *International Journal of Psychology, 32*(6), 369–386. doi:10.1080/002075997400629

Bourhis, R. Y., Montaruli, E., El Geledi, S., Harvey, S. P., & Barrette, G. (2010). Acculturation in multiple host community settings. *Journal of Social Issues, 66*(4), 780–802.

Esses, V. M., Haddock, G., & Zanna, M. P. (1993). Values, stereotypes, and emotions as determinants of intergroup attitudes. In D. M. Mackie & D. L. Hamilton (Eds.), *Affect, cognition, and stereotyping: Interactive processes in group perception* (pp. 137–166). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Finan, A. (1992). *Autonomie et dépendance: analyse historique des relations entre les USA et la Corée du sud.*

Froese, F. J. (2010). Acculturation Experiences in Korea and Japan. *Culture & Psychology, 16*(3), 333–348. doi:10.1177/1354067X10371138

Kang, M. J. (2014). North Korean defector as South Korea's main immigration problem. Globalisation 101. The Lewin insititute. Retrieved from http://www.globalization101.org/min-jae-kang-of-south-korea/

Kim, J. (1991). *The Koreans : their mind and behavior.* Seoul: Kyobo book center.

Leveau, A. (2013). Corée du Sud-États-Unis. Une relation sous influence. *Outre-Terre, 37*(3), 327–342. doi:10.3917/oute1.037.0327

Montreuil, A., & Bourhis, R. Y. (2001). Majority acculturation orientations toward "valued" and "devalued" immigrants. *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology, 32*(6), 698–719. doi:10.1177/0022022101032006004

Montreuil, A., & Bourhis, R. Y. (2004). Acculturation orientations of competing host communities toward valued and devalued immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 28*(6), 507–532. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.01.002

Navas, M., Rojas, A. J., Garcia, M., & Pumares, P. (2007). Acculturation strategies and attitudes according to the Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM): The perspectives of natives versus immigrants. I*nternational Journal of Intercultural Relations, 31*(1), 67–86.

Pratto, F., Sidanius, J., Stallworth, L. M., & Malle, B. F. (1994). Social dominance orientation: A personality variable predicting social and political attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*(4), 741–763. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.67.4.741

Ruteere, M. (2014). *Statement of preliminary observations delivered by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. United Nations Human Rights.* Retrieved from http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15140&LangID=E#sthash.QsHRZIsu.dpuf

Sam, D. L. (2006). Acculturation: Conceptual background and core components. In D. L. Sam & J. W. Berry (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology* (pp. 11–26). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Tisserant, P. (1998). *L'identité interculturelle dans l'organisation de salariés lorrains d'une multinationale sud-coréenne implantée en Lorraine.* Université de Metz, Metz.

Zagefka, H., & Brown, R. (2002). The relationship between acculturation strategies, relative fit and intergroup relations: Immigrant-majority relations in Germany. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 32*(2), 171–188. doi:10.1002/ejsp.73