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## Study on the Level of Multicultural Acceptance and Perception About Multicultural Families Using the IPA Method

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### Abstract

This study examines how Koreans perceive multicultural families and how closely it relates to their social lives based on reliable statistics. This would reflect the attitude of Koreans when accepting multiple cultures. For social integration, it is essential to understand how Koreans feel about multicultural families, especially since such families have already become a part of the South Korean society.

This study identifies the level of multicultural acceptance of Koreans and explores the importance and achievement of multicultural acceptance components. Descriptive statistics and the IPA method were used to analyze raw data of the “2018 Multicultural Acceptance Survey” conducted by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family for a total of 4,000 Korean adults in 2018. By examining factors related to multicultural acceptance, we can identify factors that promote or suppress multicultural acceptance and can suggest policy implications. According to the results, it is necessary to continuously resolve preconceived notions and irrational negative emotions toward foreign migrants. The number of multicultural families is rapidly increasing, and the understanding of the “diverse” is changing positively in Korea where the overall understanding has become more favorable compared to the past.

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■ **Keywords** : multicultural family, multicultural acceptance, multicultural society, immigration, diversity

## Introduction

The perception about foreigners in Korea is rapidly changing. In 2019, about 18 million foreigners came to Korea for tours, businesses, or jobs, and the percentage of international marriages has risen by more than 10 percent. Hence, the present study cannot deny that Korea is a multicultural society. The Korean society turned into a multicultural society without getting a chance to think about what a multicultural society means, or what problems it may cause—comparing just a while ago when the fact that Koreans had much pride as a country with one ethnicity, our society is rapidly changing. The number of foreigners in the country is increasing steadily, and in November 2017, out of the 2.2 million foreigners in the country, 860,000 were immigrant workers. In addition, based on the 2017 standard, 7.8% of all marriages were international marriages (Ministry of Justice, 2018). As a result, there is a significant increase in multicultural families, and this shows that the Korean society is turning into a multicultural society.

The influx of foreigners into Korean society has many different characteristics of traditional American immigration. For example, a high percentage of foreigners came to Korea through trainee programs. These programs allow them to live in Korea for a while and go back when the time is up. Another critical factor is international marriage, but this is an unusual thing that mostly happens in a few Asian countries. Immigration by marriage is difficult to examine using data that were made for regular immigration. Therefore, there is a high probability that Korean citizens have a different attitude toward foreigners compared to other countries.

How do Koreans feel about the increase in multicultural families? Are they accepting them as part of society? This study seeks reliable

statistics to answer these questions. It examines how Koreans perceive multicultural families and their social connections with them. The results show how many Koreans accept multiple cultures. For social integration, it is essential to understand how Koreans feel about multicultural families that have already become a reality. Therefore, this study uses latest data to prepare an IPA matrix that separates the factors related to multicultural acceptance from achievement and importance, analyzes the factors affecting multicultural acceptance in detail, and provides policy implications for preparing for a multicultural society in Korea.

### Literature Review

The term multiple cultures is not valid unless many different groups have their own prominent individual cultures (Bae, 2010). In other words, multiple cultures can be defined as “people with different cultures leading a cooperative life.” In addition, this study calls these kinds of family a multicultural family. These include “a family that is made up of different types of ethnic groups with different cultures.” For example, international marriages, and the children born from these were called half-bloods. However, multiple cultures not only represent race, but also sex, culture, and ethnicity (Park, 2008). All of these together make up for what is called a multiple culture. Multicultural society refers to a society that is a mix of many different cultures (Park, 2008; Lücke, Kostova, & Roth, 2014).

There are three types of multiple culture societies: the European empire, the American new imperialism type, and the Asian decolonization type. First, the European empire type of multicultural society is found in countries, such as the UK and France, who captured other countries, and the exclusivism Europeans exhibit with regard to third world countries and their racism are good examples of their conflict (Park, 2015). The new American imperialism type of multicultural society is found in countries, such as the United States, Canada, and Australia. In this type of multicultural society, in the process of founding the government, the natives became a minority, and invaders became the majority (Hughes,

Rodriguez et al., 2006). Lastly, the Asian decolonization type of multicultural society is found in countries, such as Indonesia and Malaysia. They have experienced colonization by the conquest of other countries, resulting in damages to their culture. Even after the end of the colonization era, they continue bearing the brunt of these damages (Park, 2015).

Bae (2010) introduced multicultural theories in the following ways. First, the theory of the melting pot is a theory that looks at France as a big melting pot, and the foreigners that come to France are compared to metals that would dissolve in the melting pot and become French. The theory of mosaic states that the different colors of immigrants would all come together and become a mosaic. The theory of the salad bowl is similar to the mosaic theory but different because it focuses more on getting together than sticking out.

The acceptance of multiple cultures is an extremely complex matter that is defined as one term. The first person, Yang (2009), who used the word multicultural acceptance, labeled it as the attitude toward minorities. Yoon and Song (2011) defined it as the extent to which the minority is accepted into society and the dangers they have to deal with. It is how much the minorities' culture is accepted as equal throughout society, and how much of a cooperative relationship they have (Min, An et al., 2010).

Consideration of diversity and relationship in the definition of multicultural acceptance is a crucial factor (An, Min, & Kim, 2012). Therefore, when people look at foreigners, they do not discriminate against them based on where they were born or their social status, but instead view them as equal to the citizens of the world. Hwang (2010), who widened the concept of multicultural acceptance, interpreted that multicultural acceptance is not only accepting foreigners, but also recognizing the fact that every person has equal rights as well as the attitude of a good citizen. In other words, multicultural acceptance can be seen at two levels. It is about how much one accepts the foreigners' rights and what conflict can originate from it.

The previous definitions of multicultural acceptance focused on the attitude and understanding of it, while Kim (2010) considered how many

children accept multiple cultures. This is because the acceptance of multiple cultures is essential to living in a multicultural society, and children from non-multicultural families need to put just as much effort as a child from a multicultural family.

If this study considers this concretely, it recognizes the fact that culture and looks are different but not stereotypically viewed at the cognitive level. Understanding the thoughts and actions of a child from a multicultural family denotes the emotional level, and the ability to build a relationship with a child from a multicultural family denotes the action level (Kim, 2010). The multicultural acceptance standard made by Park (2013) states that the education about the attitude toward other cultures are crucial. This approach is used more in Western countries that have much experience with multicultural societies and is used as a base model in many different areas (Sarraj, Carter, & Burley, 2015). Nevertheless, research that uses panel data often uses data that do not have an exact definition of multicultural acceptance. This shows that in the latter kind of research, an exact definition of multicultural acceptance needs to be established, and the attitude, emotions, and actions should be considered in that process (Nesdale & Flessner, 2001).

Multicultural society should be understood as a process concept rather than a specific state of society. When racial composition becomes diversified and cultural diversity increases, it can be said to be a transformation of a multicultural society (Cho, Park et al., 2019). A multicultural society can be said to be one in which the proportion of foreigners has increased rapidly, as in Korea. A multicultural society is a society that enjoys social, economic, political, and cultural rights that can be enjoyed as citizens and is free from racial and ethnic discrimination (Cho, Park et al., 2019). Cultural prejudice against racial and underdeveloped countries leads to different social views depending on the nationality of the foreign spouse and slows the cultural absorption of foreign spouses by Korean society (Cho, Park et al., 2019).

With the increase of migrants, the demand for social cohesion increased, and along with the adaptation of socio-economic settlement, the

acceptance of migrants in mainstream society was set as a core agenda (Verkuyten, 2002). Korean society is special in the history of immigration and the development of a multicultural society. It can be seen that people's attitudes toward accepting migrants and the degree of development of a multicultural society contain considerable peculiarities. Moon (2015) argued that Korea expects that the number of foreign migrants will increase to 10% by 2030, reaching the level of some European countries, and it is necessary for the Korean society to prepare an active institutional mechanism to accommodate and integrate the diversity of multicultural society. When considering the reality of Korea's low fertility and aging society, it is quite likely that the number of multicultural families residing in Korea will increase (Choi, 2018).

According to the "2018 Multicultural Acceptance Survey" conducted by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, multicultural acceptance was composed of diversity, relationship, and universality, and the status of multicultural acceptance in Korean society was analyzed in detail, focusing on the multicultural acceptability index developed to capture multicultural acceptance in a direction suitable for the special multicultural aspect of the Korean society. This was conducted as an extension of the 2012–2015 National Multicultural Acceptance Survey, and the current status and trends of the nation's multicultural acceptability were identified. The main purpose was to provide a basis for setting future policy directions by understanding the direction in which multicultural acceptance of the Korean society has been developing recently.

Multicultural families, which started as a way to find women for marriage by rural bachelors and the rapid decline of the rural population in Korea, are rapidly becoming part of a multiracial and multicultural society with various nationalities, as the number of foreign students increases due to active exchanges with foreign countries. (Park, Lee, & Jun, 2020). Multicultural acceptance started from the perspective of multiculturalism, and in general, it can be understood as the degree of acceptance that recognizes social and cultural diversity as positive and valuable and accepts groups with different languages, cultures, ethnicities, and reli-

gions as members of a society. In other words, it can be defined as a multicultural-oriented attitude to recognize and respect a culture different from ours, and an attitude that recognizes migrants as objects of coexistence, that is, as part of the same mainstream instead of competitors (Baek & Kwon, 2019).

## Trends of Multicultural Change in Korea

### Foreign and Multicultural Population Trends in Korea

After the 1990s, the exchange between the worlds became active, and the line between countries and ethnicities started to disappear, leading to a global society. The most substantial reason Korea became a multicultural society is foreign workers. After the '88 Olympics, there was an increase in foreign workers, and at that point, the country changed from one that exports labor to one that imports labor. The overall wage increase and the Korean workers trying to avoid 3D labor attracted foreign workers. Koreans believed that they were a single ethnic country rather than accepting diversity, but right now, Korea is in a crucial transitional phase turning into becoming a multicultural society. As shown in Figure 1, Korea is rapidly becoming a multicultural society based on the statistics of foreigners entering the country.

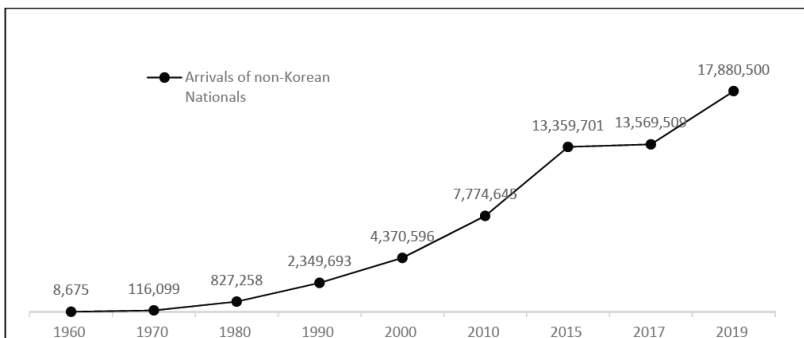


Figure 1. Overview of arrivals of non-Korean nationals.

Source: Korean Statistical Information Service, 2019, <http://kosis.kr/eng/>

Looking at this from a demographic point of view, the Korean society is quickly becoming a multicultural society. According to Figure 2, the number of foreigners in Korea was only 300,000 in 1998, but in 2004, there were 750,000; in 2008, there were 1.16 million; and in 2017, there were 2.18 million. The number of foreigners in Korea increased by 7 times in just 19 years. This is 4.21% of the population in Korea, according to the statistics of 2017. This implies that in 2020, the number of foreigners and their children was 5.5% of the population. Considering this, Korea is not far from becoming an immigration nation, with more than 10% foreigners.

The change in population distribution in the Korean society resulted in a long-term social change. Ethnic homogeneity is being challenged. There are many foreigners who are becoming Koreans by marriage, and accordingly, the term “international marriage” has changed to “multicultural marriage.” In the early 2000s, the proportion of Chinese and Filipino women was dominant among international marriages in Korea. Since then, the number to Korean men marrying Vietnamese women increased. There are many reasons why men who work in agriculture usually marry foreign women. However, the biggest reason is that the number of women in rural areas is drastically lower than men. In 2000, the ratio of the marriageable

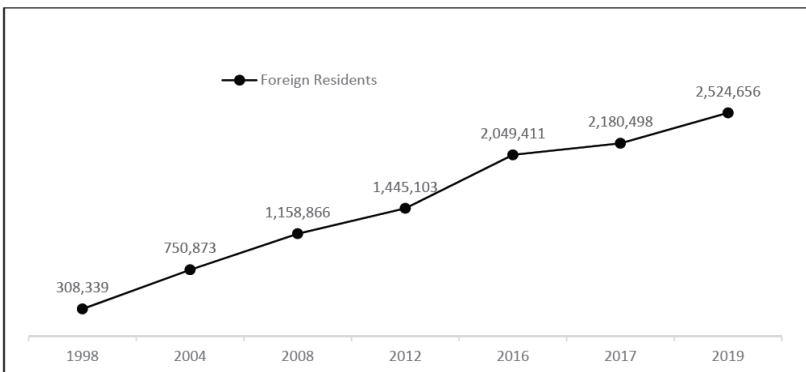


Figure 2. Overview of foreign residents.

Source: Korean Statistical Information Service, 2019, <http://kosis.kr/eng/>



age was 110.5. This shows that for 10.5 men, it would be difficult to find a partner. This had a direct effect on men in rural areas, and marriage companies promoted international marriages. Moreover, in 2006, 41% of men in rural areas married women from foreign countries. Therefore, Korea is becoming a multicultural society rapidly because of immigrants from marriages.

After 2005, more Korean men married foreign women than Korean women married foreign men. According to Figure 3, in 2000, the percentage of international marriages was only 3.49, but in 2019, it was 9.88%. Figure 4 shows that the number of immigrants from international marriages continues to increase. In 2019, it was estimated that 166,025 immigrants from international marriages were in Korea. Thus, the number of children from international families is rapidly increasing. The birth rate of Korea is 1.05 and compared to the average of 1.68 in other OECD countries, and it is one of the lowest birth-rate countries. Due to the low birth-rate in Korea, the proportion of children from multicultural families is increasing significantly.

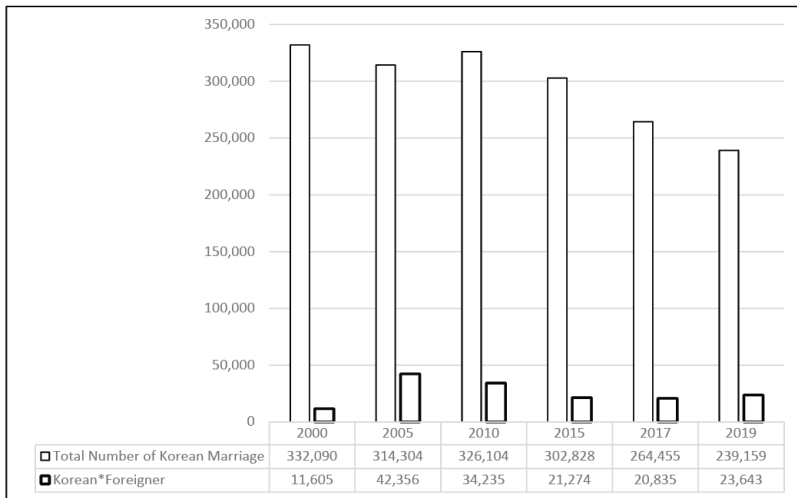


Figure 3. Korean international marriage.

Source: Korean Statistical Information Service, 2019, <http://kosis.kr/eng/>

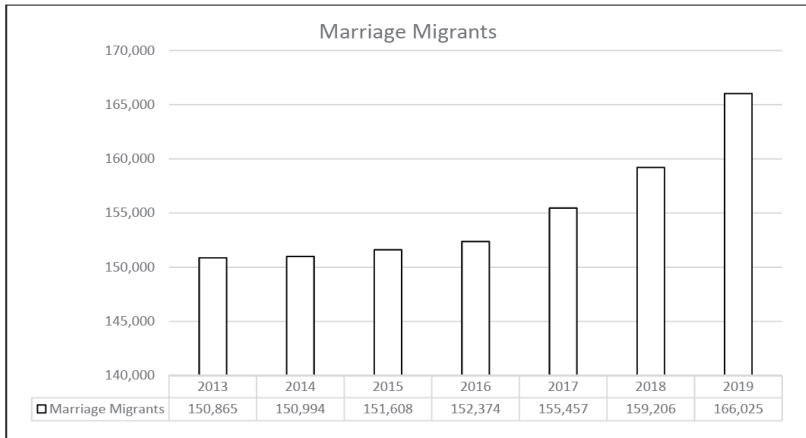


Figure 4. Status of marriage migrants by year.

Source: Korean Statistical Information Service, 2019, <http://kosis.kr/eng/>

### Korean Attitude Toward Multicultural Society

Table 1 shows how Korean citizens look at immigrants. In the overall society, Koreans view immigrants in a positive way, and 53.2% responded that the new ideas and cultures that immigrants bring are favorable to the country. Economists also showed positive results wherein 63.2% of them answered that immigrants help the economy, and the people who did not agree with this were 24.8%, not even close to half. Total 66% agreed that immigrants take away jobs from Koreans. This may be be-

Table 1.

*Koreans' perception of immigrants*

	Koreans see immigrants in a positive way	Immigrants help the economy	Immigrants are taking away the jobs from Koreans	Government was using too much money on immigrants
Agree	53.2%	63.2%	66.0%	37.5%
Don't Agree	33.1%	24.8%	26.5%	44.5%
Don't Know	13.7%	12%	7.5%	18%

Source: The Asan Public Opinion Brief, 2014, <http://www.asaninst.org/contents/>

Table 2.

*The attitude of Koreans toward the increase in the number of foreigners*

		An increase or maintenance is needed (%)	A decrease is needed (%)
Sex	Male	72.6	27.5
	Female	67.3	32.7
Age	20-29	77.2	22.8
	30-39	76.2	23.7
	40-49	67.6	32.4
	50-59	66.1	33.9
	Over 60	61.5	38.6
Monthly Income	Below \$1,000	59.9	40
	\$1,000-1,999	63.3	36.7
	\$2,000-2,999	66.0	34.1
	\$3,000-3,999	70.7	29.3
	\$4,000-4,999	75.8	24.2
	\$5,000-5,999	75.6	24.4
	Over \$6,000	67.7	32.3
Occupations	Manager	80.8	19.2
	Expert group	78.4	21.7
	Farmer	64.6	35.4
	Simple servicers	63.4	36.6

cause the jobs that Koreans have and the jobs that immigrants have are usually different; Koreans do not see immigrants as an economic threat. Another question concerns the government's policy regarding immigrants. Total 44.5% of them did not agree with the view that the government was using too much money on immigrants, but 37.5% did. Thus, some Korean citizens believe that there is reverse discrimination.

Table 2 can be considered an indicator of the attitude of Koreans toward an increase in the number of foreigners. Men have a more positive attitude toward multiple cultural families, and the attitude becomes negative as age increases. Older people are more reserved, and therefore fear the mixing of culture. In addition, the higher the income, the higher

Table 3.  
Korean multicultural acceptance

Year	Number of Survey	Total Multicultural Acceptance	Components of Multicultural Acceptance							
			Cultural Openness	National identity	Stereotypes and discrimination	One-sided assimilation expectations	Rejection or avoidance emotion	Willingness to exchange action	Double evaluation	World Citizen Action
2012	2500	51.17	48.08	48.84	61.73	49.91	55.17	43.61	46.96	53.00
2015	4000	53.95	49.36	50.32	64.60	46.44	66.01	45.81	48.88	56.98
2018	4000	52.81	49.34	48.78	62.58	45.69	64.46	42.48	48.25	58.13

Source: 2018 National Multicultural Acceptance, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 2018

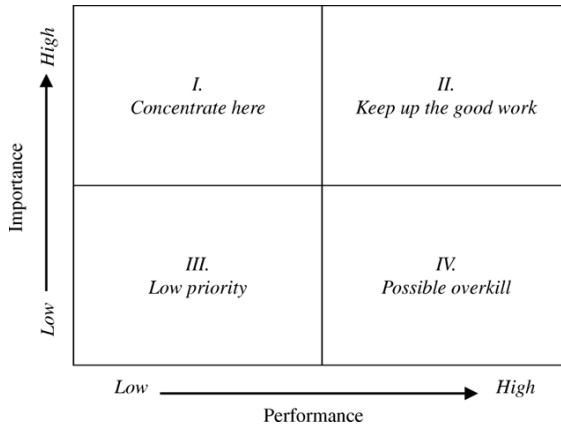


Figure 5. Importance-performance grid.

Source: Martilla & James (1977)

the chance of looking at multiple cultures more positively. This is because lower-income citizens must compete with immigrants. More than 35% of the people in agriculture and manual working force look at the increase of multiple cultures negatively.

According to Table 3, the annual trend of the National Multicultural Receptivity Index is as follows: In 2018, as in 2015, a total of 4,000 adult males and females nationwide were surveyed. Consequently, the results increased by 1.64 points compared to 2012 but decreased by 1.14

points compared to 2015. More specifically, as a result of examining the differences in each component, rejection or avoidance of emotion-related receptivity was the highest at 64.46 points, followed by stereotypes and discrimination, with 62.58 points. The following components appeared in the order of world citizen action, cultural openness, national identity, double evaluation, one-sided assimilation expectations, and will to exchange action (willingness to exchange action).

### **Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) of Multicultural Acceptance**

#### **Importance-Performance Analysis**

Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is a management strategy that evaluates the importance before and after use of each attribute to measure user satisfaction with a product or service and analyzes each attribute's relative importance and achievement at the same time. This is a valuable technique to apply such decision-making in policies. This makes government decision-making effective by classifying the elements that need to be improved at the policy level.

IPA analysis presents problems by simultaneously evaluating expectations and executions. It is easy to interpret the results, making it highly practical. Quadrant I is an area requiring intensive management because of its high importance but low satisfaction. Quadrant II has high importance and execution, so the strategy would be to maintain it continuously. In quadrant III, the importance and level of execution are low; therefore, it is okay to lower management priority. In quadrant IV, although the importance is low, the level of execution is high. The strategy would be to remove or improve unnecessary overmanagement.

#### **Research Method**

This study aims to suggest policy directions suitable for notable multicultural aspects of the Korean society. The National Multicultural

Acceptance Survey of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family (Kim, Choi et al., 2018) is a nationally approved statistic and has been measuring the multicultural acceptability of our society by area every three years since 2012. The National Multicultural Receptivity Survey identifies the current status of Korean people’s multicultural acceptance. It compares it with the existing multicultural acceptability survey results to determine the direction in which multicultural acceptability of the Korean society has been developing in recent years. However, to provide a basis for setting future policy directions, the necessary degree of implementation has not been measured. Therefore, this study aims to use the IPA method to measure the importance and degree of implementation of the components of multicultural receptivity to be helpful in multicultural policy. The survey data were collected from 4,000 men and women between the ages of 19 and 74 years who lived in Korea as of 2018. An interview method was implemented in which a surveyor directly visited and surveyed households by systematic sampling for each survey area. Table 4

Table 4.  
*Components of multicultural acceptance*

Items	Contents	References
<b>Cultural openness</b>	Recognition of inflow and settlement of migrants from various backgrounds	
<b>National identity</b>	Recognition of diversity in qualification standards	
<b>Stereotypes and discrimination</b>	Reduction of prejudice or negative knowledge about foreign migrants	
<b>One-sided assimilation expectations</b>	Expect migrants to assimilate and adapt to Korean culture	<i>2018 National Multicultural Acceptance</i>
<b>Rejection or avoidance emotion</b>	Reduction of irrational negative emotions in immigrant contact situations	
<b>Willingness to exchange action</b>	Willingness to establish friendship with migrants	
<b>Double evaluation</b>	Level of economic development, cultural background, etc.	
<b>World citizen action</b>	Willingness to pursue and practice universal values, such as love for humanity	

N=4000, (Age 19-74)

lists available items for multicultural acceptance.

### The IPA of Perception About Multicultural Acceptance

Table 5 shows the results of the IPA method for the descriptive statistics of multicultural acceptance in Korea. As a result of analyzing the importance of multicultural acceptance in Korea, the overall mean was 5.898 (maximum value of 7.02, minimum value 4.37), and the standard deviation was 0.922. The result of the achievement factor was the overall mean of 5.275 (maximum value 6.4, minimum value 4.3), and the standard deviation was 0.806.

Table 6 shows the importance of multicultural acceptance and achievement in Korea. As a result of analyzing priorities based on the average importance and achievement, the most crucial factors in multicultural ac-

Table 5.

*Results of Importance and Performance (N=4000, Age 19-74 years)*

	Importance	Performance
Mean	5.898	5.275
Max.	7.02	6.4
Min.	4.37	4.3
S.D.	0.922	0.806

Table 6.

*Importance-performance order of priority*

Order	Importance order of priority	Performance order of priority
1	Stereotypes and discrimination	Rejection or avoidance emotion
2	National identity	Stereotypes and discrimination
3	Rejection or avoidance emotion	World citizen action
4	Cultural openness	Cultural openness
5	One-sided assimilation expectations	National identity
6	Willingness to exchange action	Double evaluation
7	Double evaluation	One-sided assimilation expectations
8	World citizen action	Willingness to exchange action

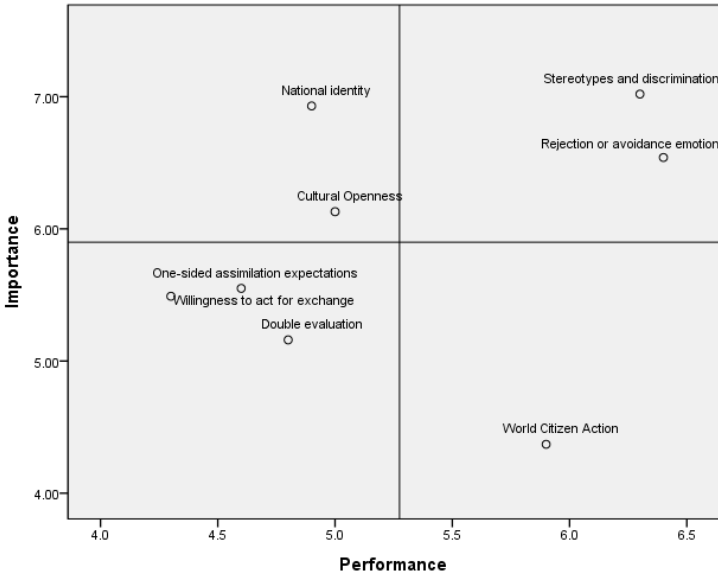


Figure 6. Result of IPA matrix on multicultural acceptance.

ceptance that Koreans considered were stereotypes and discrimination, followed by national identity, rejection or avoidance emotion, and cultural openness. On the other hand, as a result of the priority analysis of achievement, rejection or avoidance emotion was analyzed as the highest achievement, followed by stereotypes and discrimination, world citizen action, and cultural openness.

Figure 6 shows an IPA analysis matrix based on the average values of importance (5.898) and achievement (5.275) for multicultural acceptance in Korea according to the method of previous studies. With this, the X-axis was set to achievement and the Y-axis was set to importance, forming a quadrant. As a result of the IPA analysis, national identity and cultural openness in the first quadrant are the first corrective efforts. The evaluation items requiring continuous maintenance are stereotypes, discrimination, rejection, or avoidance emotions in the second quadrant. Meanwhile, one-sided assimilation expectations, willingness to exchange action, and double evaluation were in the low-priority quadrant 3, and



Table 7.  
*Result of importance-performance analysis*

Items	
I. Concentrate here	National identity, Cultural openness
II. Keep up the good work	Stereotypes and discrimination, Rejection or avoidance emotion
III. Low priority	One-sided assimilation expectations, Willingness to exchange action, Double evaluation
IV. Possible overkill	World citizen action

finally, world citizen action was included in the fourth quadrant, the over-effort avoidance quadrant.

### Conclusion

Based on population statistics, Korea is a multicultural society. Therefore, education about the understanding of multicultural societies for citizens is essential. In today’s global society, Koreans are grounded in the acceptance of other cultures. In Korea, the number of immigrants and international marriages is increasing rapidly. Considering the level of consciousness about multiple cultures among Koreans, they need to think about how to accept different cultures and support their coexistence. Koreans should not look at international families as people they should accept as Koreans. Instead, they should not only see them as new members of society, but also learn to accept a society that is made of different cultures.

According to this thesis, it looks like many Koreans are willing to accept international families. The number of multicultural families is rapidly increasing, and the understanding of immigrants is changing. However, there still are concerns about the social conflicts that they will lead to. Many Koreans accept immigrants as colleagues and friends, but not as families. In particular, the older, less educated, and less income groups do not want to accept immigrants. However, the overall under-

standing has become more favorable compared to the past. According to the results of the IPA, the prejudice and irrational negative emotions toward foreign migrants must be resolved. Furthermore, the global citizenship level is excessive. Classification according to economic level and cultural background, the will of migrants to assimilate and adapt to Korean culture, and the will to form friendships with migrants is a low priority in Korean society. The most urgent factor in resolving the increase in multicultural receptivity according to Koreans is to tolerate diversity in national identity, that is, accepting that national identity can change with the inflow and settlement of migrants from various backgrounds. Therefore, Koreans need to show that multiple cultures are a value that they experience every day. An ethnically homogenous county is changing into a multicultural country. Therefore, the society of Korea needs to think about how to accept multiple cultures that will enter the society. Education about differences and similarities of multiple cultures and living in a multicultural society is needed.

Many opinions are emerging out of the multicultural society of Korea. The opposition to multicultural society is based on the fact that all multicultural policies have failed and have undermined social cohesion. However, in Korea, multicultural policies have not yet been established, with the opposite position. The problem of multicultural acceptance in Korea is still a task that needs to be addressed. Regardless of the affirmation or denial of a multicultural society, the Korean society is already rapidly transforming into one. Although Korea's superficial understanding of multiculturalism has increased, multicultural acceptance still faces many difficulties. In other words, there is a deepening of biased preferences and discrimination against specific foreign and migrant groups. It is important to note that the key to multicultural acceptance is not simply contact with migrants, but a qualitative interaction. Multicultural acceptability will translate into Korea's future social integration of members from various backgrounds in order to live together in civil society. It is necessary to prevent conflicts that may arise when heterogeneous groups come into contact with each other in the Korean

society, which is becoming a multicultural society, and to promote social integration through mutual understanding. Future research must prepare for these social changes by focusing on multicultural education targeting young people who will lead future generations.

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