Soc Indic Res (2010) 96:515–534
DOI 10.1007/s11205-009-9490-1

Determinants of Life Satisfaction Among Immigrants from Western Countries and from the FSU in Israel

Karin Amit

Accepted: 12 May 2009 / Published online: 23 May 2009

Abstract This study examines the integration of immigrants via their satisfaction with life in the new country. While most studies on immigrant integration have focused on objective integration parameters such as education, occupation and salary (e.g., Borjas in Friends or strangers: the impact of immigrants on the US economy. Basic Books, New York, 1990), subjective parameters have traditionally received less attention. However, in recent years it has become increasingly clear that subjective perceptions carry considerable weight in the social-integration process of immigrants (McMichael and Manderson in Human Organ 63(1):88–99, 2004; Massey and Redstone in Soc Sci Q 87(5):954–971, 2006). The study group consists of Jewish immigrants who arrived in Israel during the past two decades from two different regions of origin: Western countries, and the Former Soviet Union (FSU). All of these immigrants are generally highly educated and skilled, but they came to Israel from different societies and contrasting motives. The objective of this study is to learn about the integration of these immigrants via their satisfaction with life in Israel and to understand the factors that explain it, taking into account the differences between the immigrant groups. The findings, based on the 2007 Ruppin representative survey data (The data for this study was obtained with the support of the Israeli Ministry of Immigrant Absorption.), point to significant differences between the two immigrant groups under discussion. Western immigrants are more satisfied with their lives in Israel than FSU immigrants and have higher scores in most of the independent variables tested. The multivariate analyses for predicting an immigrant's life satisfaction reveal that those reporting the greatest satisfaction are women, religious, with a high standard of living, with no academic education, and stronger Israeli identity (personal and as perceived by others). In addition, different variables play a role in predicting the life satisfaction for each immigrant group. This knowledge may be of service to Israeli policymakers dealing with the immigration and integration of highly skilled immigrants in Israeli society.

Keywords Life satisfaction · Immigration · Social integration

K. Amit (✉)
The Institute for Immigration and Social Integration, Ruppin Academic Center, Emek Hefer, Israel
e-mail: karina@ruppin.ac.il

1 Introduction

The process of immigrant integration into a host society has been studied for many years, from many perspectives, and with relation to a multiplicity of factors and characteristics that influence the process. In addition to immigration characteristics (such as number of years since migration) and the demographic characteristics of the immigrant (such as gender and age), economic, social and psychological characteristics have also been found to be linked to the process. The current study examines these characteristics as predictors for subjective social integration, and addresses the question: what are the determinants of immigrants' life satisfaction at the destination country?

Satisfaction with life is one of the three components of subjective wellbeing, and refers to the cognitive judgment aspect of the concept, whereas the other two components refer to the emotional and affective aspects (Diener et al. 1985). Life satisfaction is defined as an overall assessment of an individual's quality of life according to his/her personal judgment and criteria (Shin and Johnson 1978; Diener 1984). According to Diener (1984), in order to capture the individual's judgment and not the researcher's, life satisfaction should be measured by asking individuals to rate their satisfaction with life as a whole, instead of summing their satisfaction across specific imposed areas. This understanding is shared by other researchers in the field (e.g., Kahneman and Krueger 2006; Litwin 2005; Bohnke 2008; Bonini 2008).

What are the determinants of an individual's life satisfaction? This question has been addressed in many studies (e.g., Bonini 2008; Bohnke 2008; Litwin 2005). Life satisfaction was found to be associated with a range of individual background characteristics. Studies show that increases in income are associated with increases in life satisfaction (Diener et al. 1993). In another recent study testing life satisfaction across countries in Europe, the standard of living was found to have a significant positive effect on life satisfaction in most countries, whereas social capital (represented by social contacts and social support) had a significant effect in only some of them (Bohnke 2008). Other studies indicate that education often results in improved social relationships and higher earnings, which in turn enhance satisfaction (Helliwell 2003). The results are not clear for gender and age, but for elderly people it was found that marital status, health conditions and social capital (contacts and social activities) are significant predictors of life satisfaction (Litwin 2005). It was recently found, in a cross-national study, that 81% of the variation in mean life satisfaction is due to individual attributes (such as gender, age, marital status, income and education), whereas 19% is due to country characteristics (GDP, human development and environmental indexes) (Bonini 2008). This finding emphasizes the importance of the country characteristics in predicting the life satisfaction of all individuals, but it may also imply that predictors of life satisfaction may be different among people that come from various countries of origin, or, in other words, among immigrants.

What can we learn from the literature about the life satisfaction of immigrants? In recent years, the subjective dimensions of immigrants' integration processes have received more research attention—mainly from psychologists and health researchers (for example: Anson et al. 1996; McMichael and Manderson 2004; Neto 1995, 2001). Lately, however, other social science researchers have started dealing with these domains in their studies of immigrant integration (for example: Ben Rafael et al. 1994; Massey and Redstone 2006; Vohra and Adir 2000). Massey and Redstone (2006) examined the integration of immigrants in the United States via a series of socioeconomic variables together with their satisfaction with life in the United States. Their research shows that immigrants who express higher levels of satisfaction are significantly more likely to intend to naturalize and

are more likely to want to stay in the United States. This study and others show that it is not enough to evaluate the integration of immigrants in a host society by objective parameters (such as level of income), but also necessary to examine the immigrants' own perception of their integration and satisfaction (Lester 2005).

One of the major aspects in immigrant integration literature is the economic aspect. The expectation of immigrants (who are not refugees) to succeed economically in the new country is usually a significant factor in their decisions to immigrate and in their willingness to pay the social and economic price involved in leaving their countries of origin. According to migration economists, 'economic integration' occurs when immigrants receive the same salaries as native-born residents possessing identical characteristics (Borjas 1990; Chiswick 1979). The evaluation of economic success is usually a long-term one which takes into account the number of years in the new country (years since migration: YSM). Thus, if the number of years in the destination country improves the economic position of immigrants, and we know from previous studies that economic conditions (represented by income, standard of living) are related to a higher level of life satisfaction (Diener et al. 1993; Bohnke 2008), we may hypothesize that the higher the immigrants' economic position the more satisfied they will be, and that the longer they have been in the destination country the more satisfied they will be.

However, while some studies show significant economic improvement with each year in the new country until the disappearance of the income-gap vis-à-vis the natives (Chiswick 1979), other studies indicate that certain immigrant groups have difficulties in narrowing this gap and even transmit this disparity to their children (Borjas 1994). The groups that succeed in closing the economic gap faster are those arriving from developed countries with higher technological levels and relevant skills applicable to the new country (Semyonov and Lerenthal 1991). Language plays a central role in the integration of the immigrant in the new labor market and his/her ability to narrow economic gaps vis-à-vis the natives (Chiswick 1998; 2002). The relevant skills and qualifications, together with the appropriate level of higher education and local language proficiency, all comprise the human capital of the immigrant. It has previously been found, in the general population, that education is related to life satisfaction (Helliwell 2003); thus we may hypothesize that the higher the immigrants' education level the higher their level of life satisfaction will be. Since language proficiency is a central and unique immigration variable related to economic success (Chiswick 1998, 2002), we may further hypothesize that language will also be positively related to life satisfaction.

Another aspect that might explain the integration of immigrants is the social aspect. The social integration of immigrants may be reflected in their level of social capital. Social capital was defined by Bordieu (1986) as the total resources, feasible or potential, that an individual or a group accumulates by means of constant maintenance of social networks or reciprocal social interactions. It is via social capital that individuals can more easily obtain economic and cultural resources, and ensure benefits via membership in organizations and social networks. Studies dealing with immigrant integration cite the relative deficit of social capital suffered by immigrants in a new country, as compared to the native-born. In order to compensate for this deficit, organizations and social networks are formed at both the family as well as the group level in order to assist and support the immigrant (Portes 1998).

There is a distinction in the literature between *bonding* social capital, based on social networks within the ethnic group, and *bridging* social capital, based on social networks that cross ethnic boundaries (Putnam 2000). Previous studies indicate that social capital, represented by social contacts and social activities, is a significant predictor of the life

satisfaction and of the quality of life among elderly people (Litwin 2005) and elderly immigrants (Amit 2008). These studies do not differentiate between the type of social capital (bonding or bridging). In another study among adolescents from immigrant families, it was found that those living in ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods reported a higher level of satisfaction with their lives than those living in heterogeneous neighborhoods (Neto 2001). This last finding contradicts the logical assumption that immigrants who are in social contact with local natives and live in heterogeneous neighborhoods should be more socially integrated and thus more satisfied. In light of this, it would be interesting to characterize the social networks of Israeli immigrants from different groups and examine whether immigrants who are members of bonding social networks (whose friends are primarily from their country of origin and who live in homogeneous neighborhoods) are more or less satisfied with life in Israel than immigrants with bridging social capital.

Another important parameter relating to social integration is the immigrants' identity perception. Questions relating to the self-definition of identity and to the sense of belonging to Israeli society have been examined mainly among FSU immigrants (Ben Rafael et al. 1994, 2006). These studies show that, for these immigrants, Russian identity and Jewish identity are more significant than Israeli identity (Ben Rafael et al. 1994). This issue has not been given the attention it deserves with regard to other groups of immigrants in Israel. The correlation between identity and satisfaction with life in the new country has been proven in studies, and it was found that the combination of a strong original ethnic identity together with strong local identification with the new country is the key to successful integration and adjustment (Phinney et al. 2001). However, among immigrant adolescents, ethnic identity had no effect on life satisfaction (Neto 2001). In light of the above, it would be interesting to examine whether a sense of local identity is positively related to life satisfaction.

In the current era of globalization, there is widespread agreement in industrialized societies that economic competitiveness is increasingly linked to the quality and quantity of skilled human resources available to any given economy. Consequently, countries compete among themselves in order to attract highly skilled immigrants, thereby increasing their "brain-gain" and accelerating their economic development (Iredale 1999; Mahroum 2001; Quaked 2002). Therefore, subjective aspects of integration assume great significance among many immigrants, and especially among highly skilled migrants who leave their countries of origin in order to improve their standard of living; these immigrants are likely to leave the new country if they are dissatisfied (Brandi 2001).

2 The Israeli Case

The migration of Jews to Israel can be classified as a 'returning Diaspora', quite a unique feature among migratory movements in general (Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein 2003). As a returning Diaspora, the Jewish immigrants (olim) who come to Israel feel an affinity with their new host society even before migrating and frequently exhibit warm feelings of homecoming upon arrival. Immigrants to Israel are driven by a complex mixture of various motives; alongside the religious and ideological motivation to immigrate there is also the fear of nationalist persecution, compounded by economic damage to the Jews' interests.

While there are many Israeli studies about immigrants that come from countries in distress, less effort has been devoted to investigating immigrants that hail from First-World Western countries. The present study focuses on Jewish immigrants who arrived in Israel

in the last decade from Western countries and compares them to immigrants who arrived from the FSU since 1989. A large proportion of both groups are comprised of highly skilled migrants. From 1990, about 85,000 immigrants arrived from Western countries—North America (United States 26,500 and Canada 3,000); Latin America (mainly Argentina 20,000); Western Europe (mainly France 22,000 and England 7,500)—and nearly one million immigrants arrived in Israel from the FSU after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2007). A comparison of these two immigrant groups is interesting because, although both are similarly comprised of a high proportion of the highly skilled, they come from very different parts of the world in cultural, political and economical terms (West-capitalist vs. East post-communist). In addition, the FSU immigrant group is the largest recent immigrant group in Israel, which accounts for about 20% of the total Jewish population.

The research on immigrants to Israel from Western countries is spare and not up-to-date (Waxman 1989; Bensimon and Della Pergula 1986). A study commissioned by the Jewish Agency among Jews from North America and France has investigated their motives for coming to Israel (Jewish Agency 2005) and sheds light on the religious motives of these communities, but it does not deal with the integration process in Israel. The immigration decision-making process undergone by North American immigrants prior to their arrival in Israel was recently studied by Amit and Riss (2007). This study demonstrates the importance of social networks in this process. In this respect it is important to note that whereas the immigration motives of North Americans are mainly religious (Amit and Riss 2006), those of other Western groups are more mixed and have been less researched. Publications of the Israeli Ministry of Absorption indicate that the contemporary French immigration is driven partially by religious and Zionist motives, but also by anti-Semitic concerns. Most of the recent Argentinean immigrants came as a result of the political and economic crisis that shook Argentina in the years 1999–2002 and dealt a heavy blow to the country's middle class, though they were also motivated by religious and Zionistic considerations (Dgani and Dgani 2004). Although there are differences between immigrants from North America, Western Europe and South America, those coming in the last decade are all officially treated as Western immigrants.

In contrast to the scanty research on Western migrants in Israel, many studies have been conducted on FSU immigrants. FSU immigrants arrived in Israel in mass numbers after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989. According to Rozenbaum-Tamari (2004), the economic and political uncertainty in the countries of origin led to an economic pattern of migration based on push factors. However, her study reveals that among the FSU immigrants, those that came from pull (Zionistic and religious) motives are more satisfied with their lives in Israel than the majority that were driven by push factors. Other studies point to the high levels of human capital with which these immigrants arrived in Israel relative to both the Soviet and Israeli populations (see e.g., Beenshtock and Ben Menahem 1997; Eckstein and Weiss 2002). Studies of FSU immigrant economic assimilation in Israel have documented impressive employment levels of immigrants, but partly at the cost of occupational downgrading compared with the occupations they held in the FSU (Raijman and Semyonov 1997, 1998; Eckstein and Weiss 2002). Evidence from studies examining social and subjective parameters indicates that FSU immigrants place greater emphasis on their Russian identity and language than on their Israeli identity (Ben Rafael et al. 1994). In another study, elderly FSU migrants reported a lower level of life satisfaction than elderly veteran Israelis (Litwin 2005).

In general, immigrants that come to Israel from Western countries (especially from North America and Western Europe) and from the FSU have high levels of human capital

in terms of education and profession. However, the language and professional skills of Western immigrants may be more transferable in the Israeli market than those of FSU immigrants. In light of economic models, one might be tempted to assume that the economic integration process of immigrants from more developed countries (Western countries) would be faster than the parallel integration process of FSU immigrants that come from less developed countries. However, the motives for immigration are not necessarily parallel among different groups of immigrants. While research evidence points to more religious motives among Western immigrants (especially from North America and Western Europe), the FSU immigration arose primarily from economic and political considerations. Therefore, it is likely that economic considerations will have different weight in terms of expectations and perceived satisfaction among immigrants from different groups. In addition, a significant portion of Western immigrants are religious (Amit and Riss 2006), whereas the majority of FSU immigrants are not (Remennick 2004). In light of these differences, it would be interesting to test the impact of social networks on the life satisfaction of each group. Finally, it is important to examine the perceived identity among immigrants, and determine whether immigrants who identify themselves with Israeli society are more satisfied with their lives in Israel. This last analysis is significant especially among immigrants of high human capital, who are sought after in many developed countries and likely to leave the new country if they are not satisfied (Brandi 2001).

In light of all the above, the present study examines the integration of immigrants from Western countries and from the FSU in Israel, via the prism of perceived satisfaction with life in Israel. The study analyzes a series of possible factors as predictors of satisfaction, while differentiating between immigrants that come from Western countries and those from the FSU.

General research hypotheses:

1. The level of satisfaction with life in Israel will be positively correlated to the number of years in Israel (YSM). The longer the immigrants have been in the country, the more satisfied they will be.
2. The immigrants' economic status (standard of living) will positively predict their satisfaction with life in Israel. This factor will be more significant among FSU immigrants than among Western immigrants due to their immigration motives.
3. The immigrants' human capital will positively predict their satisfaction with life in Israel. The higher the levels of education and Hebrew proficiency, the greater the sense of satisfaction.
4. Bonding social capital will predict satisfaction with life in Israel. The direction (positive or negative) of the relation between neighborhood homogeneity and ethnic social contacts is not defined in advance due to inconsistency in the literature.
5. A sense of identity will positively predict satisfaction with life in Israel. The more the immigrants identify themselves as Israelis, the more satisfied they will feel. Furthermore, the more they feel that native Israelis identify them as Israelis (rather than immigrants), the more satisfaction they will feel.
6. Motives for immigration will predict satisfaction with life in Israel. Immigrants who came because of an attraction to Israel (pull factors) will be more satisfied than those who felt rejected by their country of origin (push factors).

It is important to note that the present study, like many others in the field (e.g., Bohnke 2008; Bonini 2008; Litwin 2005; Neto 2001), tries to predict life satisfaction via a series of independent variables. However, it is possible that there are reciprocal relationships between some of these independent variables and satisfaction with life.

3 Methodology

3.1 The Data

This study is based on a representative sample of Western and FSU immigrants aged 20–60 years. The sample was taken from the 2007 Ruppin Survey data, carried out by the Dachaf Institute using the stratified sampling method. The criteria for determining layers among *Western immigrants* were country of origin (North America and Australia, South America, France and the rest of Western Europe) and year of immigration (arrived after 1996). The Western research sample consisted of a group of 386 immigrants aged 20–60, from Western countries, most of them from North America (60%), 15% from Argentina, 12% from France, and the rest from other European countries. The criteria for determining layers among *FSU immigrants* were republic of origin and year of immigration (arrived after 1989). The FSU research sample consisted of a group of 485 immigrants aged 20–60. For the calculation of the standard of living index, I used the representative sample of the entire Israeli population (1,000 people) in the Ruppin Survey data. It is important to note that the final data file (including Western and FSU immigrants as well as a representative sample of the Israeli population), provide information of the groups of immigrants without specifying the country of origin. Thus, it is impossible to conduct comparisons of specific countries of origin in the Western group using this file.

3.2 Variables

The 2007 Ruppin Survey was a telephone survey consisting of 62 closed questions which were translated into Russian, English, French and Spanish. The survey included questions on a broad variety of topics: socio-demographic questions, questions about employment and economic situation, questions relating to subjective social aspects as well as cultural and personal dimensions. These included: personal identity definition; cultural preferences; intercultural social networks; and psychological and personal situation as a result of immigration. The survey also included questions relating to the motives for immigration, and the immigrant's satisfaction with the integration procedure and life in Israel in general.

The dependent variable in this study is general satisfaction with life in Israel, rated on a scale of 1–6.[1]

The independent variables are as follows:

Country of origin (group)—distinction between the two major groups: immigrants from Western countries and FSU immigrants (1 = Western, 0 = FSU).

Number of years in Israel—number of years since immigrating to Israel.

Religiosity level—the extent to which the participant observes religious tradition (on a scale of 1–4).

[1] The dependent variable is one single variable representing the global satisfaction with life (1-6). The measurement of life satisfaction by the answer to a single global question was recently discussed by Kahneman and Krueger (2006). They cite surveys (e.g., American General Social Survey, GSS) using this form of question and emphasize that respondents had little trouble answering it. In addition, they report that the correlation obtained, in a survey in Texas, of life satisfaction scores (using a single question) after two weeks (test re-test reliability) was 0.59 (page 7). As mentioned by Kahneman and Krueger (2006), using an index comprised of more variables would be preferable, but only if the questions are defined in general terms (as specified in my introduction, page 3). In the Ruppin Survey there are other variables related to satisfaction, but concerning specific issues (such as satisfaction at work, satisfaction from income). The correlation between these variables and the general satisfaction with life was low and insignificant.

Academic education—dichotomous variable; has/has not an academic degree.

Economic status—index for evaluating the standard of living that is calculated from a series of four standardized variables that are compared to the mean of the entire Israeli population: household income per person; index of product consumption; ability to cover expenditures; and housing density. This index is used in the Ruppin Index (Amit and Chachashvili-Bollotin 2007). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was found to be high ($R = .783$).

Perception of personal identity—the extent to which the label 'Israeli' defines the participant (1–5).

Perceived identity (by others)—the extent to which native Israelis treat the participant as an Israeli (1–5).

Social capital—represented by two dichotomous variables. The first is a yes/no answer to the question whether most of the participant's friends are immigrants from the same country of origin. The second is a yes/no answer to the question whether more than half of the participant's neighborhood is comprised of immigrants from the same country of origin.

Hebrew language Proficiency—index calculated from four questions relating to speaking, reading and writing in Hebrew. This index is used in the Ruppin Index (Amit and Chachashvili-Bollotin 2007). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was found to be high ($R = .815$).

Push/pull immigration motives—dichotomous variable recoded out of a list of immigration motives (from which the respondent had to choose the most central); the respondent immigrated either because of being 'pushed' out of the country of origin (lack of personal security, anti-Semitism, economic or political distress in the country of origin, etc.) or because of a 'pull' to Israel (life in a Jewish state, secure the Jewish education of the children, Zionism, etc.).

In the multivariate analysis a series of interactions between the group variable and selected independent variables (based on differences in correlations) was added.

4 Results

The first section of the findings is descriptive. I examined a series of demographic characteristics while comparing the two immigrant groups. The findings are summarized in Table 1. The table shows that the groups do not significantly differ in their age and gender, but do differ regarding the rest of the demographic variables. There is a significant difference in the percentage of married couples in the different groups; 77% of the Western immigrants are married but only about 40% of FSU immigrants ($\chi^2 = 118.35$, Cramer's $V = -.368$, $p < .05$). There is a significant difference also in the average number of years since arrival in Israel; Western immigrants have been in Israel for 6 years on average whereas FSU immigrants have been in Israel for 14 years (t-test = 34.3, $df = 867$, $p < .05$). In addition, in accordance with the literature, Western immigrants are significantly more religious than their FSU counterparts (t-test = 18.81, $df = 864$, $p < .05$).

A significant variable in the immigration process of each of the groups is the major impetus for their immigration. The immigrants in the survey were asked to choose reasons for their immigration from a broad list, allowing them to choose more than one reason. These reasons were grouped into major categories. Below is a chart showing the distribution of the variable for the two groups (Fig. 1).

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of Western and FSU immigrants

Variables	Immigrants from Western countries	FSU immigrants
Average age (STD)	38.63 (10.31)	39.70 (12.19)
% men	57.4%	54.1%
% married	77.54%	40.69%
Average no. of years in Israel (STD)	6.19 (3.43)	14.0 (3.22)
Average level of religiosity (1–4)	3.02 (.92)	1.90 (.82)
No. of *N* cases	386	485

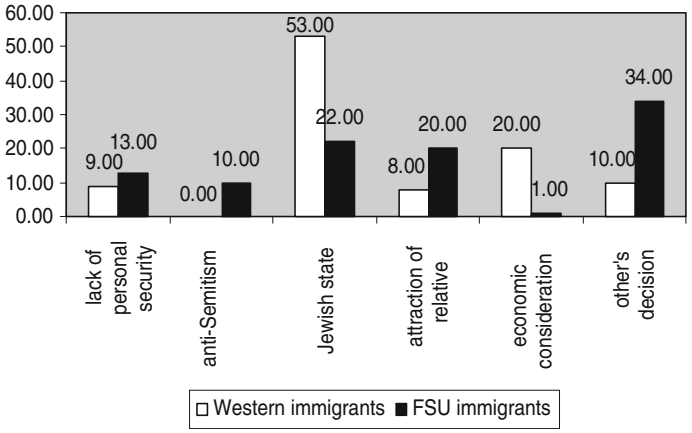

Fig. 1 Main motive for immigration for Western and FSU immigrants

We see from the chart that while the main immigration motive of the Western immigrants was religious (desire to live and raise one's children in the Jewish state), the motives among FSU immigrants were more diverse and included economic and personal considerations, and a large portion (34%) did not actually decide on their own. Both immigrant groups reported that they were influenced by the encouragement of relatives, although more among the FSU immigrants. The economic motivation was surprisingly not very low among Western immigrants. This may be explained by economic considerations related to the highly cost of privet Jewish education in the countries of origin, as was found in the case of North Americans in Israel (Amit and Riss 2007). This explanation will be further elaborated in the discussion. When the immigrants were asked to choose the first most important reason for their immigration the picture was clearer. For the purpose of the study (and based on the relevant professional literature), the reasons were grouped into pull (attraction to Israel) or push (rejection from the country of origin) motives. The comparison shows that about 75% of Western immigrants came to Israel because of "pull" (attraction) factors as compared to only 44% of FSU immigrants. The difference between the groups is significant ($\chi^2 = 82.2$, Cramer's $V = -.308$, $p < .05$).

Another required analysis treats of the differences between the groups regarding socioeconomic independent variables as well as the dependent variable. Tables 2 and 3 below demonstrate the differences in these variables.

Table 2 Socioeconomic characteristics of Western and FSU immigrants, testing significant differences using χ^2 and Cramer's V

Variables	Western immigrants	FSU immigrants	χ^2	Cramer's V
% holders of academic degrees	61%	43.9%	25.22**	.17**
% most friends are from country of origin	30.6%	61%	79.79**	.30**
% living in a neighborhood in which more than half are from their country of origin	20.5%	56.7%	116.4**	.37**
% pull immigration factors	74.7%	44.2%	82.2**	.31**

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 3 Socioeconomic characteristics of Western and FSU immigrants, testing for significant differences using t-test

Variables	Western immigrants	FSU immigrants	T test (df)
Standard of living index (standardized in comparison to the entire Israeli population)	.549 (3.05)	−.628 (2.76)	4.76** (590)
Perception of Israeli identity (1–4)	3.05 (1.00)	3.04 (1.25)	.177 (833)
Israeli identity as perceived by natives	3.24 (1.08)	3.03 (1.28)	2.63** (862)
Level of Hebrew proficiency (1–4)	3.30 (.83)	3.34 (1.00)	−.73 (865)
Level of satisfaction with life in Israel (1–6)	5.23 (.88)	4.36 (.98)	13.55** (868)

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 2 shows that both immigrant groups are highly educated, but among the Western immigrants there is a significantly higher percentage with an academic degree: 61% as opposed to 44% among FSU immigrants. Most of the social contacts that FSU immigrants have are with other FSU immigrants (61%, double the percentage among Western immigrants), and they tend to live in ethnically homogeneous neighborhoods (56.7%, more than double the percentage among Western immigrants). The two social capital variables emphasize the ethnic closure of the FSU immigrants, whose social capital is more of a bonding than bridging nature. In this respect, it is important to note that the FSU immigrants are a significantly larger group in the Israeli population than the Western immigrants, and thus it is more probable for them to live in more homogeneous neighborhoods than Western immigrants.

Table 3 shows that Western immigrants have a significantly higher standard of living than the FSU immigrants, which is higher than the average of the total Israeli population. This difference in the standard of living, exists even though FSU immigrants have been in Israel longer than the Western immigrants. There is no significant difference in the level of Hebrew of both groups. An examination of the identity variables reveals that immigrants from the West and from the FSU report a similar self-identity as Israelis. However, there is a significant difference between the groups in their assessment of how native Israelis perceive them. Western immigrants score higher in deeming other Israelis to perceive them as Israelis.

Finally, after reviewing the various independent variables, we can learn from analysis of the dependent variable that Western immigrants and FSU immigrants are rather satisfied with their lives in Israel. This finding is surprising due to the notable differences between

Table 4 Correlation matrix between the research variables for Western and FSU immigrants (total $N = 871$)

Variables	Number of years in Israel	Religiosity level	Standard of living	Personal identity	Perceived identity (by others)	Language proficiency	Life satisfaction
Age	.144**	−.051	.031	−.108**	−.254**	−.495**	−.121**
Number of years in Israel		−.386**	−.068	.000	.080*	.136**	−.258**
Religiosity level			022.	.025	055.	.004	.379**
Standard of living				.259**	.275**	.187**	.365**
Personal identity					.605**	.251**	.272**
Perceived identity (by others)						.387**	.287**
Language proficiency							.170**

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

the two immigrant groups. However, the comparison between the groups indicates that Western immigrants are significantly more satisfied than their FSU counterparts.

Before progressing to the multivariate analysis, Table 4 displays the linear correlation matrix between the research variables for the entire sample. It shows that the dependent variable—level of satisfaction with life in Israel—is significantly correlated with all the independent variables. The level of satisfaction is negatively correlated with age and years since migration (YSM), which means that the older the immigrants are and the longer they have been in Israel, the less satisfied they are. This finding concerning the YSM is in the opposite direction to our hypothesis and to the literature, but if we examine the correlation separately for the two immigrant groups, we find that it is positive and significant for FSU immigrants ($r = .136$, $p < .05$) and not significant for Western immigrants ($r = .058$, $p > .05$). This implies a need to take into account the differences between the groups and to add an interaction of the group variable with YSM in the multivariate analysis.

All other correlations are in accordance with the research hypotheses. The level of satisfaction rises with standard of living, personal and perceived Israeli identity, and religiosity level, as well as with Hebrew language proficiency. The most significant correlation is between the satisfaction level and the religiosity level. Separate examination of the correlations for the two immigrant groups indicates that they are higher and more significant for FSU than for Western immigrants: standard of living was found to be positively and significantly correlated with life satisfaction among FSU immigrants ($r = .424$, $p < .05$), but not significant for Western immigrants ($r = .106$, $p > .05$). This last finding is in accordance with our second research hypothesis. The correlation between life satisfaction and Israeli self-identity is high and significant for FSU immigrants ($r = .424$, $p < .05$), but not significant for Western immigrants; the correlation with perceived identity by Israelis is also higher for FSU immigrants ($r = .342$, $p < .05$) than for Western immigrants ($r = .119$, $p < .05$). These differences will be taken into account in the multivariate analysis.

Examination of the correlations between the independent variables in Table 4 reveals that the standard of living is positively and significantly correlated with personal and perceived sense of Israeli identity and Hebrew language proficiency. No significant relation was found between standard of living and the number of years in Israel (YSM) and religiosity level. The perception of personal identity is positively and significantly related to the perceived identity (by native Israelis). Thus it seems that immigrants tend to view themselves as Israeli when they feel that native Israelis relate to them as such. Hebrew proficiency is positively and significantly correlated with number of years in Israel and negatively and significantly correlated with age. Thus the younger the immigrants are and the longer they have been in Israel, the higher the level of their Hebrew.

In order to evaluate the importance of each variable in predicting satisfaction with life in Israel, a multivariate analysis was performed for the two groups under discussion. Four regression models were projected: Model 1 for Western immigrants, Model 2 for FSU immigrants, Model 3 for both groups (including a group variable), and Model 4 for both groups adding interactions. Models 3 and 4 explain more than 40% of the variance of the dependent variable (R^2 adj = .420; .434). Table 5 displays the findings from this analysis.

Table 5 shows that in all four models among the demographic variables, the level of religiosity is the one that significantly and positively predicts the level of satisfaction. Thus, the more religious the immigrant is, the more he or she is satisfied with life in Israel. Gender was found to have a significant effect among Western immigrants (Model 1) and for both groups in the last model (Model 4), indicating that women are more satisfied with their lives than men.

When we examine the findings vis-à-vis the hypotheses of the study, we see that contrary to Hypothesis 1, the number of years in Israel does not significantly predict life satisfaction in Israel. However, in accordance to Hypothesis 2, economic status as represented by the standard of living significantly predicts satisfaction with life in Israel. This variable appears to play a significant role in predicting life satisfaction for both groups of immigrants, but, as anticipated, it is more salient for the FSU immigrants. This is evident from a comparison of coefficients (Beta) in Models 1 and 2 and from the interaction between this variable and the group variable in Model 4. The negative and significant coefficient obtained from this interaction indicates that the correlation between standard of living and life satisfaction is weaker among Western immigrants than among FSU immigrants.

Hypothesis 3 is partially supported; the level of Hebrew proficiency positively predicts life satisfaction only for Western immigrants. This result is apparent in the Hebrew variable coefficient in Model 1 and in the interaction between Hebrew and the origin group in Model 4. As opposed to our hypothesis, academic education is negatively related to satisfaction (Models 3 and 4). This negative relation is significant for Western immigrants (Model 1). The immigrant's social network did not emerge as a significant predictor of satisfaction with life in Israel (Hypothesis 4). However, regarding ethnic neighborhoods (neighborhoods inhabited by more than 50% immigrants from the same ethnic group), this variable was positive and significant among Western immigrants (in Model 1 and in the relevant interaction in Model 4), indicating that Western immigrants living in ethnic neighborhoods are more satisfied with their lives than those living outside such neighborhoods. Regarding Hypothesis 5—sense of identity—the study's results support the claim that the more immigrants identify themselves as Israeli, the more satisfaction they feel with life in Israel. This finding was not obtained in the separate equation for Western immigrants. In addition, among all immigrants, the more they perceive native Israelis to identify them as Israelis, the more satisfied they are with life in Israel.

Table 5 Findings of the multivariate analysis: multivariate regression for predicting satisfaction with life in Israel

Variables	Model 1—Western immigrants		Model 2—FSU immigrants		Model 3 Both groups		Model 4—Both groups + interactions	
	b (SEB)	Beta	*b* (SEB)	Beta	*b* (SEB)	Beta	*b* (SEB)	Beta
Age	.050 (.007)	.065	−.01 (.006)	−.123	−.001 (.004)	−.012	−.004 (.004)	−.039
Gender (1 = women, 0 = men)	.313** (.115)	.178	.077 (.094)	.037	.135 (.074)	.061	.150* (.073)	.068
Years since migration (YSM)	.008 (.017)	.033	.027 (.017)	.079	.012 (.012)	.054	.019 (.016)	.083
Religiosity level	.160* (.073)	.163	.217** (.060)	.161	.214** (.045)	.195	.211** (.058)	.192
Married	.203 (.146)	.095	−.050 (.094)	−.024	.046 (.078)	.021	.025 (.079)	.011
Standard of living index	.054* (.022)	.192	.112** (.060)	.296	.089** (.014)	.238	.113** (.018)	.302
Academic education	−.035* (.137)	−.185	−.017 (.115)	−.008	−.192* (.086)	−.087	−.169* (.087)	−.077
Hebrew proficiency	.226** (.135)	.221	−.072 (.060)	−.069	.056 (.050)	.049	−.030 (.059)	−.026
Most friends from country of origin	−.058 (.135)	−.031	−.119 (.101)	−.053	−.075 (.080)	−.034	−.110 (.081)	−.050
50% + neighborhood from country of origin	.396* (.154)	.182	−.091 (.095)	−.042	.009 (.079)	.004	−.094 (.092)	−.043
Personal identity	.011 (.060)	.013	.122* (.055)	.149	.102** (.039)	.113	.122* (.053)	.135
Perceived identity (others)	.155* (.167)	.183	.180** (.058)	.215	.193** (.043)	.208	.191** (.056)	.205
Pull factors to Israel	.064 (.153)	.029	.055 (.100)	.026	.017 (.082)	.007	.025 (.096)	.011
Group (1 = west, 0 = FSU)	–	–	–	–	.647** (.144)	.281	.449 (.475)	.195
Interactions with country of origin								
YSM* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	−.002 (.023)	−.006
Standard of living index* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	−.071* (.027)	−.117
Personal identity* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	−.099 (.083)	−.158
Perceived identity* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	−.044 (.090)	−.064

Table 5 continued

Variables	Model 1—Western immigrants		Model 2—FSU immigrants		Model 3 Both groups		Model 4—Both groups + interactions	
	b (SEB)	Beta	*b* (SEB)	Beta	*b* (SEB)	Beta	*b* (SEB)	Beta
Pull factors to Israel* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	.023 (.189)	.009
Hebrew* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	.198* (.093)	.300
Religion* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	−.032 (.095)	−.045
50% + neighborhood* group	–	–	–	–	–	–	.544** (.185)	.124
Constant	**3.06	3.48**	2.82**	3.16**				
F value	**4.67	15.39**	29.77**	20.41**				
R^2 adj	.211	.340	.420	.434				
N no. of cases	193	363	556	556				

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Hypothesis 6, dealing with the immigration motive variable, was not supported in all four models. It is likely that the significant effect of the religiosity level captures some of the difference in the immigration motives; these two variables were found to be significantly correlated ($\chi^2 = 178.5$, Cramer's $V = .335$, $p < .05$). The group variable added in Models 3 and 4 was found to be significant and positive only in Model 3, indicating that Western immigrants have higher levels of life satisfaction than FSU immigrants (when all other variables are held constant). In Model 4 we added a series of interaction variables of the group variable with selected independent variables. This addition resulted in the disappearance of the significant impact of the group variable, but three interactions were found to be significant: the interaction of the group variable with standard of living, with Hebrew proficiency, and with ethnic neighborhood. This implies that the differences between the two groups of origin are captured by three main variables: economic position, language proficiency and ethnic segregation.

5 Discussion

The integration of immigrants via subjective parameters has not been sufficiently researched worldwide and has not received much attention in the Israeli context concerning highly skilled immigrants. The 2007 Ruppin Survey, which served as our database, made this analysis possible. In order to understand what explains an immigrant's satisfaction with life in Israel, a series of predictive variables was examined: immigration variables, human capital, economic and social variables—all while controlling for demographic variables. The analyses were performed comparing two groups of highly skilled immigrants: immigrants from Western countries and FSU immigrants.

The descriptive research findings reveal both similarities and differences between the two immigrant groups under discussion. The two groups do not significantly differ in their age, gender, level of Hebrew and self identity as Israelis. However, significant differences appeared in other characteristics when comparing Western immigrants to FSU immigrants: a higher percentage of Western immigrants are married, they are more religious, more educated, less ethnically segregated, have a higher standard of living, are likelier to consider native Israelis to perceive them as Israelis, have been in Israel fewer years, and are more satisfied with life than FSU immigrants. The immigration motives also differentiate between the two groups. Whereas most Western immigrants came to Israel due to "pull" factors, mainly religious reasons, the majority of FSU immigrants came because of "push" factors and other considerations. In this respect, it is important to note that the Western group includes immigrants from Argentina. These immigrants, and especially those coming after the year 2000, were mostly motivated by economic "push" factors (Dgani and Dgani 2004). It can be interesting to test in future studies the differences between the different countries in the Western group. In addition, some of the religious immigration considerations may be related to economic issues, as was found in previous studies concerning North American immigrants in Israel (Amit and Riss 2007). Using a qualitative research method, Amit and Riss (2007) detected these economic considerations, and pointed to the fact the privet Jewish education is very expensive in North America and thus religious immigrants (with children) decided to come to Israel after evaluating this cost.

The multivariate analyses for predicting immigrants' life satisfaction reveal that those reporting the greatest satisfaction are women, religious, with a high standard of living, non academic education, and a stronger Israeli identity (personal and as perceived by others). These findings indicate that Hypotheses 1 and 6 are not supported; the number of years in

Israel and the immigration motives do not have a significant effect on an immigrant's life satisfaction. Thus, the advantage that FSU immigrants have, as more veteran in Israel than Western immigrants, is irrelevant. Hypotheses 2 and 5 were fully supported, indicating that standard of living and a sense of local identity play a significant role in predicting life satisfaction. Hypotheses 3 and 4 were not supported for both immigrant groups. Contrary to our Hypothesis 3, academic education is negatively correlated to life satisfaction, but Hebrew proficiency plays a significant positive role for Western immigrants, as does living in an ethnically homogeneous neighborhood (Hypothesis 4). It seems that the most significant predictor for an immigrant's life satisfaction is standard of living. This finding highlights the importance of immigrants' economic position in the new country as a predictor of their life satisfaction, regardless of their immigration motives and other demographic and social characteristics. This finding is in congruence with other studies in the field (e.g., Bohnke 2008; Diener et al. 1993).

What can we learn from these findings? The literature contains mixed findings concerning the impact of gender on life satisfaction. In our study gender was found to be significant among Western immigrants, but not among FSU immigrants. This finding might lead us to the hypothesis that Western women were more involved in the decision to immigrate than their female counterparts from the FSU. Evidence of the participation of both sexes in the immigration decision is found in a study that examined the decision-making process of families who immigrated to Israel from North America (Amit and Riss 2007). However, in order to prove this theory and examine this process, another study is needed among FSU immigrants.

Our findings indicate that Western and FSU immigrants with an academic degree are less satisfied with their lives than those without a degree. This finding may indicate that these highly skilled migrants were offered jobs that did not match their skills. As has been previously found in studies concerning FSU immigrants, they experienced occupational downgrading in the Israeli market as compared with their occupations in the FSU (Raijman and Semyonov 1997, 1998; Eckstein and Weiss 2002). This occupational downgrading could result in lower levels of satisfaction with life.

The second part of our Hypothesis 3 anticipated that Hebrew proficiency would positively predict life satisfaction among immigrants. It is interesting that the language variable, which is salient in immigration studies (Chiswick 1998, 2002), emerged as significant only among Western immigrants. In addition, an interesting pattern of integration emerges from the findings concerning Western immigrants. On the one hand, Western immigrants feel more satisfied with their lives when their Hebrew level is higher; on the other hand, they feel more satisfied when living next to other Western immigrants. Whereas the first finding may point to greater integration into Israeli society, the second finding may point in the opposite direction. Moreover, although FSU immigrants are more ethnically segregated than Western immigrants (57% of FSU immigrants live in ethnic neighborhoods as compared to only 21% of Western immigrants), this factor has no impact on FSU immigrants' satisfaction with life but does positively affect the Westerners'. These findings call for further examination using qualitative research methods.

Another finding that emerges from the multivariate analyses, and is in line with our research Hypothesis 5, is that the more Israeli the immigrants feel, and the more they think that others perceive them as Israelis, the more satisfied they are. Most of the studies dealing with immigrants' identity focus on their self-definition of identity (for example, Phinney et al. 2001). The current study points also to the perceived identity by others; that is, how the immigrant feels he or she is viewed by the Israeli native-born. This last finding emphasizes the role of the natives who absorb the newcomers and their contribution to the

newcomers' sense of satisfaction. There are quite a few studies that examine the attitudes of the natives to the newcomer-immigrants. In the Israeli context, for example, a study by Schwarzwald and Tur-Kaspa (1997) tried to characterize the way native Israelis view immigrants from the FSU and Ethiopia, revealing the existence of stereotypical prejudices and fear of the cultural impact of the mass FSU migration (Schwarzwald and Tur-Kaspa 1997). The present study, on the other hand, examines the way immigrants view the attitudes of native Israelis toward them! This issue merits additional attention and should be investigated more thoroughly in the future.

Surprisingly, immigration motives (push or pull) were not found to have a significant effect on life satisfaction for both immigrant groups. This finding is not in accordance with recent studies emphasizing the significant impact that pull-push factors have on the integration process of immigrants (e.g., Doerschler and College 2006). However, it is likely that the motivation effect is moderated by the level of religiosity, which was found to be significant in all four models.

The multivariate analysis also reveals differences in the importance of several predicting variables among each immigrant group. Whereas for Western immigrants many variables significantly predict life satisfaction (gender, religiosity level, standard of living, academic degree, Hebrew proficiency, ethnic neighborhood, and perceived identity by others), fewer variables are significant among FSU immigrants (religiosity level, standard of living, self-identity, and perceived identity by others). In the joint model (Model 3) the group variable is positive and significant, indicating that Western immigrants are more satisfied with their lives than FSU immigrants, even after controlling for all the independent variables. However, when the interactions (of the group variable and selected independent variables for which there were correlation differences) are added (Model 4), the group effect disappears. This last finding indicates that the differences between Western and FSU immigrants in the prediction of life satisfaction are captured by three main variables: economic position, language proficiency, and ethnic segregation. In accordance with our Hypothesis 2, although the standard of living is an important predictor of life satisfaction for both immigrant groups, for Western immigrants it is a less important factor than for FSU immigrants. This finding is in accordance with the literature, indicating that most FSU immigrants can be defined as economic migrants (Rozenbaum-Tamari 2004) to whom economic considerations are central, whereas the majority of Western immigrants came from religious and Zionistic motives (Amit and Riss 2006, 2007) and thus attribute less importance to economic issues.

The present study evaluates the integration of adult immigrants in Israeli society via a subjective variable: their perception of satisfaction with life in Israel. But we must consider whether this is the best subjective indicator for analyzing the integration of immigrants. Immigration literature proposes additional subjective indicators, such as perceived quality of life (Amit 2008) or subjective welfare (Anson et al. 1996), which may predict the successful integration of immigrants. These additional subjective indicators are not apparent in the 2007 Ruppin Survey, on which this study is based. It would be advisable to enlarge the database of subjective and psychological variables in future surveys. In addition, in order to further understand the determinants of life satisfaction among immigrants, qualitative research methods may be used in future studies.

The two immigrant groups at the focus of this study have high socioeconomic profiles in terms of education and profession. In the current era of globalization, these immigrants, classified as highly skilled, are 'courted' by various countries interested in receiving them. These countries even make adaptations in their immigration policies in order to attract highly skilled immigrants, thereby increasing their "brain-gain" and accelerating their

economic development (Iredale 1999; Mahroum 2001; Quaked 2002). This issue is also relevant to the Israeli context. Although Jewish candidates for immigration to Israel do not undergo any kind of screening on the basis of socioeconomic considerations, the Israeli immigration authorities understand the potential of highly skilled immigration and its ability to enrich the human capital of Israeli society. Hopefully, the results of this study will shed light on the integration processes of these immigrants as reflected by their satisfaction with life in Israel.

A preliminary study of North American immigrants (Amit and Riss 2007) shows that social networks play a central role in encouraging other potential immigrants to make the move. In fact, the best 'advertising' for immigration in Jewish communities abroad is through satisfied immigrants in Israel. A clear understanding of the factors behind satisfaction with life in Israel can serve as an effective tool in the hands of organizations and institutions dealing with immigration and integration.

References

Amit, K. (2008). The social integration of immigrants aged 50+: Life quality as a function of ethnicity, years since migration, human, economic and social capital. *Social Security, 76*, 291–308. (Hebrew).

Amit, K., & Chachashvili-Bollotin, S. (Eds.). (2007). Ruppin index for immigrants' integration in Israel—2nd report, The Institute for Immigration and Social Integration, Israel: Ruppin Academic Center (Hebrew).

Amit, K., & Riss, I. (2006). *Current motifs in immigration: Interviews and contemporary literature*. Paper presented at a conference at Tel Aviv University, American Aliyah in literature and research.

Amit, K., & Riss, I. (2007). The role of social networks in the immigration decision-making process: The case of North American immigration to Israel. *Immigrants & Minorities, 25*(3), 290–313. doi:10.1080/02619280802407517.

Anson, O., Pilpel, D., & Rolnik, V. (1996). Physical and psychological well-being among immigrant referrals to colonoscopy. *Social Science and Medicine, 43*(9), 1309–1316. doi:10.1016/0277-9536(95)00401-7.

Beenshtock, M., & Ben Menahem, Y. (1997). The labor market absorption of CIS immigrants to Israel: 1989–1994. *International Migration (Geneva, Switzerland), 35*, 187–224. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00010.

Ben Rafael, E., Olshtain, O., & Geijst, I. (1994). Identity and language: The social insertion of Soviet Jews in Israel. In N. Lewin-Epstien, Y. Ro'i, & P. Ritterband (Eds.), *Russian Jews on three continents: Migration and resettlement* (pp. 364–388). London: Frank Cass.

Ben-Rafael, E., Yubansky, M. L., Glockner, O., & Harris, P. (2006). *Building a diaspora: Russian Jews in Israel. Germany and the USA*. Leiden: Brill.

Bensimon, D., & Della Pergula, S. (1986). *La population Juive de France: Socio-demogrraphie et identite*. Paris: Centre National De La Recherrche Scientifique.

Bohnke, P. (2008). Does society matter? Life satisfaction in enlarged Europe. *Social Indicators Research, 87*, 189–210. doi:10.1007/s11205-007-9169-4.

Bonini, A. N. (2008). Cross-national variation in individual life satisfaction: Effects of national wealth, human development, and environment conditions. *Social Indicators Research, 87*, 223–236. doi:10.1007/s11205-007-9167-6.

Bordieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). New York: Greenwood Press.

Borjas, J. G. (1990). *Friends or strangers: The impact of immigrants on the U.S economy*. New York: Basic Books.

Borjas, J. G. (1994). Long-run convergence of ethnic skill differentials: The children and grandchildren of the great migration. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review, 47*(4), 553–573. doi:10.2307/2524658.

Brandi, M. C. (2001). Skilled immigrants in Rome. *International Migration (Geneva, Switzerland), 39*(4), 101–131. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00164.

Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). (2007). *Statistical abstract of Israel* (Vol. 58, pp. 231–232). Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics.

Chiswick, B. (1979). The economic progress of immigrants: Some apparently universal patterns. In W. Fallner (Ed.), *Contemporary Economic Problems*. (pp. 357–399). Washington, DC.
Chiswick, B. (1998). Hebrew language usage: Determinants and effects on earnings among immigrants in Israel. *Journal of Population Economics, 11*(2), 253–371. doi:10.1007/s001480050068.
Chiswick, B. (2002). Immigrant earnings: Language skills, linguistic concentrations and the business cycle. *Journal of Population Economics, 15*(2), 31–57. doi:10.1007/PL00003838.
Dgani, A., & Dgani, R. (2004). *Argrntinian olims: Attitudes and beliefs towards the absorption process in Israel*. Tel-Aviv: The Israeli Ministry of Absorption and the Jewish Agency.
Diener, E. R. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin, 95*, 542–575. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.95.3.542.
Diener, E. R., Emmos, R., Larsen, R., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 49*(1), 71–75. doi:10.1207/s15327752jpa4901_13.
Diener, E., Sandvik, E., Seidlitz, L., & Deiner, M. (1993). The relationship between income and subjective well-being: Relative or absolute? *Social Indicators Research, 28*, 195–223. doi:10.1007/BF01079018.
Doerschler, P., & College, L. (2006). Pull-Push factors and immigrant political integration in Germany. *Social Science Quarterly, 87*(5), 1100–1116. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6237.2006.00418.x.
Eckstein, Z., & Weiss, Y. (2002). The integration of immigrants in the former Soviet Union in the Israeli labor market. In A. Ben-Bassat (Ed.), *The Israeli economy, 1985–1998: From government intervention to market economics*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Helliwell, J. F. (2003). How's life? Combining individual and national variables to explain subjective well-being. *Economic Modelling, 20*(2), 331–360. doi:10.1016/S0264-9993(02)00057-3.
Iredale, R. (1999). The need to import skilled personnel: Factors favoring and hindering its international mobility. *International Migration (Geneva, Switzerland), 37*(1), 89–123. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00067.
Jewish Agency for Israel (2005) *Immigration and absorption study*. Harris interactive.
Kahneman, D., & Krueger, A. B. (2006). Developments in the measurement of subjective well-being. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives, 20*(1), 3–24. doi:10.1257/089533006776526030.
Lester, L. H. (2005). Immigrants satisfaction: What is it? Does it matter? *NILS working paper, 154*, 2–103.
Litwin, H. (2005). Correlates of successful aging: Are they universal? *International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 61*(4), 313–333. doi:10.2190/DUGV-AQPU-PT28-B8D7.
Mahroum, S. (2001). Europe and the immigration of highly skilled labour. *International Migration (Geneva, Switzerland), 39*, 27–43. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00170.
Massey, D. S., & Redstone, A. I. (2006). Immigrant intentions and mobility in a global economy: The attitudes and behavior of recently arrived US immigrants. *Social Science Quarterly, 87*(5), 954–971.
McMichael, C., & Manderson, L. (2004). Somali women and well-being: Social networks and social capital among immigrant women in Australia. *Human Organization, 63*(1), 88–99.
Neto, F. (1995). Predictors of satisfaction with life among second generation migrants. *Social Indicators Research, 35*(1), 93–116. doi:10.1007/BF01079240.
Neto, F. (2001). Satisfaction with life among adolescents from immigrant families in Portugal. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 30*(1), 53–67. doi:10.1023/A:1005272805052.
Phinney, J. S., Horenczyk, G., Liebkind, K., & Vedder, P. (2001). Ethnic identity, immigration, and well-being: An interactional perspective. *The Journal of Social Issues, 57*(3), 493–510. doi:10.1111/0022-4537.00225.
Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *24*, 1–24.
Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone.* A Touchstone Book, New York: Simon & Schuster.
Quaked, S. (2002). Transatlantic roundtable on high skilled migration and sending countries issues. *International Migration (Geneva, Switzerland), 40*(4), 153–166.
Raijman, R., & Semyonov, M. (1997). Models of labor market incorporation and occupational cost among immigrants to Israel. *The International Migration Review, 29*, 375–393. doi:10.2307/2546786.
Raijman, R., & Semyonov, M. (1998). Best of times, worst of times of occupational mobility: The case of Russian immigrants in Israel. *International Migration (Geneva, Switzerland), 36*, 291–312. doi:10.1111/1468-2435.00048.
Remennick, L. (2004). Language acquisition, ethnicity and social integration among former Soviet immigrants of the 1990s in Israel. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 27*(3), 431–454. doi:10.1080/0149198704200018921 3.
Rozenbaum-Tamari, Y. (2004). Immigrants from the FSU: Motives for migration and commitment to Israel. The Israeli Ministry of Absorption, special issue no. 1.
Schwarzwald, J., & Tur-Kaspa, M. (1997). Perceived threat and social dominance as determinants of prejudice toward Russian and Ethiopian immigrants in Israel. *Megamot, 38*(4), 504–527. (Hebrew).

Semyonov, M., & Lerenthal, T. (1991). Country of origin, gender and the attainment of socioeconomic status: A study of stratification in the Jewish population of Israel. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, 10*, 325–345.

Semyonov, M., & Lewin-Epstein, N. (2003). Immigration and ethnicity in Israel: Returning diaspora and nation-building. In M. Rainer & O. Rainer (Eds.), *In diasporas and ethnic migrants* (pp. 327–337). London: Frank Cass.

Shin, D., & Johnson, D. (1978). Avowed happiness as an overall assessment of the quality of life. *Social Indicators Research, 5*, 474–492. doi:10.1007/BF00352944.

Vohra, N., & Adir, J. (2000). Life satisfaction of Indian immigrants in Canada. *Psychology and Developing Societies, 12*(2), 109–138. doi:10.1177/097133360001200201.

Waxman, C. I. (1989). *American aliyah: Portrait of an innovative migration movement*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press.