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## **Socio-economic life style of Bangladeshi man married to Russian girl: An analysis of migration and integration perspective**

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### **Abstract**

*The number of Bangladeshi immigrants is still very small in Russia. In this article the social and economic integration of immigrant male from Bangladesh into Russian society was explored, with reference to the concept of segmented integration. The results show that intermarried immigrant male seem to be quite successful in finding access to the Russia and co-ethnic networks and at the same time they were economically integrated. In-married immigrants experienced economic limitations more often than those who were intermarried. A noticeable part of in-married men actually integrate into the networks of co-ethnics, while integration into Russian networks is weak or non-existent. Intermarried immigrant men, on the other hand, integrate more often only into the Russian community. This indicates that integration has become segmented and that marriage type was an important element - but only one among other factors - in the process of segmented integration.*

**Keywords:** intermarriage, immigrants, integration, Moscow, Russia, Soviet Union

## 1.1 Introduction

After the establishment of the state of Pakistan in 1947, the Soviet Union did not have good relations with Pakistan at first. However, although the Soviets did not have good relations with West Pakistan, the Soviet Union had close relations with East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The Soviet Union had close ties with the Communist Party of Pakistan, and the party had more popular support in East Pakistan than in West Pakistan. The democratic movement and anti-American sentiment in East Pakistan was stronger than in West Pakistan, which indirectly benefited the Soviet Union. When Pakistan signed a military agreement with the United States in 1954, there was a backlash in East Pakistan. There were widespread protests in East Pakistan against the agreement, and 182 newly elected members of the East Pakistan Provincial Council issued a joint statement condemning Pakistan's military agreement with the United States.

During the Bangladesh War of Independence in 1971, the Soviet Union condemned the genocide committed by the Pakistani military in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and called on the Pakistani government to stop the genocide. During the war, the Soviet Union provided extensive military and

financial support to the Bengali freedom fighters. Towards the end of the War of Independence, the United States sent the US Seventh Fleet to the Bay of Bengal to assist Pakistan, which was almost defeated by the Liberation Army and the Indian Allies. In response, the Soviet Union launched two squadron cruisers and destroyers of the Soviet Pacific Fleet and a nuclear-armed nuclear submarine from Vladivostok on 6 and 13 December 1971 to counter a potential U.S. threat to the Liberation Army and Indian forces. The Soviet fleet was led by Admiral Vladimir Krugliakov. With the arrival of the Soviet navy, the US navy failed to assist Pakistan. The Soviet navy chased the US navy in the Indian Ocean from 16 December 1971 to 7 January 1972. The Soviet navy also secretly assisted the Indian navy and conducted covert operations against the Pakistani navy. After Bangladesh's victory in the War of Independence, the Soviet Union recognized Bangladesh on 24 January 1972, and diplomatic relations were established between the two states on 25 January.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Bangladesh recognized Russia as the successor to the Soviet Union. Bangladesh's relations with Russia were stable in the 1990s. Russia's cultural ties with Bengal were established in the

eighteenth century. The first Bengali play was staged by Russian playwright and explorer Gerasim Lebedev. Lebedev, with the help of his language teacher Golkanath Das, translated an English play, *The Disguise*, into Bengali on 27 November 1855 and staged it in disguise, which, with the help of local intellectuals, Lebedev also established the first European-style theater in Bengal (Raha 1966).

In Russia, one of the most influential countries in the world, Bangladeshis are increasingly roaming in various professions including business and medicine. More than 1500 Bangladeshis are now living there permanently. A large part of it is involved in trade and commerce. Many are also working in government institutions. It is learned that at least 600 Bangladeshis are currently involved in running various businesses including food, electronics and garment products. Many traders have a significant amount of financial transactions in the Russian market. Several physicians are performing their duties with reputation. Expatriates are also working in various government institutions. Some of the traders are processing raw jute from Bangladesh in Russia and selling it in the local market as there is demand again. Many are importing products from different countries and selling them in the

Russian retail and wholesale markets. Several Bangladeshis are trading electronics products in a supermarket called Moscow. Expatriate businessmen are also buying and renting business centers in Moscow. The purpose of this study was to describe the diverse possible outcomes of the integration of intermarried and in-married immigrants, with reference to the concept of segmented integration. Different marriage types were compared using a nationwide population survey targeted at Russian-speaking and Bangladeshi immigrants, the main immigrant groups in Russia.

## 2.1 Literature review

At the end of the twentieth century there have been vast population movements in the Western industrial countries caused by work and education migration, refugees, tourism and so forth, which bring more people than ever before into contact with each other. At the same time an increase in the intermarriage rates has been a significant family and demographic trend, which can be seen also in Russia. It has become important to understand the 'forces' that influence the integration of immigrants. The theory of 'segmented assimilation' describes the diverse possible outcomes of the process of the adaptation of immigrants and is

used for developing a typology of resources and vulnerabilities affecting such outcomes (Portes & Zhou 1993). Portes and Zhou observed that immigrant groups did not assimilate into a relatively uniform mainstream in the USA. Instead they found three possible 'patterns of adaptation', which were most likely to occur among contemporary immigrants. First was acculturation and parallel integration into the white middle class. Second was acculturation and integration into the underclass and the third associates' rapid economic advancement with slow acculturation and deliberate preservation of the immigrant community (Portes & Zhou 1993). The theory attempts to explain what determines into which segments of the host society a particular immigrant group may 'assimilate'.

Portes and Zhou use the terms assimilation, adaptation and integration quite freely, almost as synonyms (Portes & Zhou 1993). Assimilation is a process by which immigrants adopt the lifestyles and norms of the host society in a way that leads to the disappearance of a distinct immigrant group. Intermarriage has been seen as one form of assimilation (Gordon 1964). Social reality and empirical evidence do not, however, support the idea of inevitable assimilation. In this article, used instead

the term integration, meaning a process in which the immigrant integrates into the host society and/or co-ethnic society. Integration toward the host society can be called external integration, which includes different components: political, economic and social integration (Ekholm 1994). In this study only economic and social integration was studied. The second fundamental part of integration is internal integration, which describes the cohesion of the co-ethnic community and the immigrants' social integration into it (Schierup & Ålund 1987). This study, use the term 'segmented integration' to explain diverse possible outcomes of both internal and external integration.

The spouse not only provides emotional support in getting used to the new society, she or he is also expected to help in different areas of daily life, e.g. looking for housing, work and entrance into social networks. The nationality of the spouse may influence his or her recourse to help. My hypothesis was that the spouse who is a native member of the host society has more resources to help in external integration while an immigrant spouse has more resources for internal integration, with this being one of the reasons leading to segmented integration.

In most of the studies about intermarriage, it is seen a priori as

problematic and it is thought to generate conflict, isolation or marginality for immigrants and their spouses in Western-non-Western marriages (Cottrell 1990; Imamura 1990). On the other hand, intermarriage has been seen as a resource for integration and social inclusion for the foreign-born. The nationality of the spouse is thought to be an important factor promoting integration, according to studies made by Tuomi-Nikula about Finns married in Germany (1987). In addition, if spouses have only or mostly shared Finnish networks, if the Finnish spouse assists a lot in the process of settling into Finland and the immigrant spouse is unemployed or in a low-paying job, the situation may cause economic, social and informational dependence on the Finnish spouse (Jaakkola 1994).

### 3.1 Methodology

This study used data gathered during the period of July-September in 1995 in a representative survey, stratified by gender and ethnic group and targeted on Bangladeshi immigrants in Russia. This study was part of the research project 'Migration and Integration'. The data was weighted for analysis using the actual size of the Russian and Bangladeshi immigrant groups in Russia. Only those immigrants who were married or living in non-formalized unions at the moment

were analyzed in this study. There were only 69 intermarried men in the sample (compared with 435 in-married men after weighting). Active labor force participation, home ownership, a normal or spacious housing density and the good economic situation of the family indicate greater access to economic resources. Financial security guarantees many possibilities and a lack of economic resources impedes choice and induces powerlessness. This applies to everybody, both native Russian and the foreign-born. Economic integration was measured by the following indicators:

Employment or some other socially accepted activity is crucial for the integration of immigrants. Therefore, the following classification was used: (a) not unemployed at the moment and (b) unemployed at the moment. Economic situation of the family was measured using a subjective assessment. Thus, the classification was used: (a) good economic situation and (b) bad economic situation. First housing tenure was described using the classification: (a) homeowner and (b) tenant. Owner occupancy is a sign of permanence, of the intention to stay and the family's social and economic status in Russia and can be interpreted as an indicator of integration into the middle class. The housing density classification was (a) normal or spacious

and (b) overcrowded. The dwelling was classified as overcrowded if there was more than one person per room, with the kitchen excluded from the analysis. Social integration into the Russian and co-ethnic community was measured by personal networks. Personal networks were defined as ties of kinship and friendship, and measured by meeting co-ethnic and Russian relatives and/or friends at least once a month.

The research methods utilized for studying social and economic integration were cross tabulation and logistic regression analysis. In the logistic regression model, economic integration was measured by a dichotomy of the accumulation of indicators (0-2 vs. 3- 4 indicators). Accumulation of economic integration included the following four indicators: type of activity, economic situation of the family, housing tenure and density. The explanatory variables were introduced in the following order: gender, age, ethnic background of the respondent, education, nationality of the spouse, year of migration, Russian language proficiency and place of residence. The first characteristics of the individuals were irreversible: once ascribed they cannot normally be changed. The second types of variables were reversible and potentially they can be influenced by the person him/herself at

a later stage in life. The same set of background variables was used in all analyses. The main idea was to compare which variables explained different segments of integration.

#### **4.1 Data analysis**

Intermarriages were common among immigrant men from the Bangladesh living in Russia. One-third (31%) were married to a Russian origin and 41 percent to another immigrant. So almost half (46%) of the married (or cohabiting) women in our data were intermarried at the time of the study. The clear majority of intermarried men obtained an entry visa by marrying a Russian citizen (83%), while the clear majority (72%) of in-married immigrants obtained an entry visa as "a returning migrant" (including spouses of ethnic Russian).

Table 1.1 presents the background of in- and intermarried immigrant men in Russia. A number of universal factors influencing integration have been distinguished including age and time of immigration: a young age and long period as an immigrant accelerate integration. Intermarried immigrant men migrated a little earlier (one year) on average to Russia than in-married men. Intermarried immigrant men were also somewhat younger when they migrated compared to in-married. In these respects it may be

easier for intermarried immigrants to integrate into Russian society than for in-married men.

In general, immigrants from the Bangladesh were well educated. Intermarried immigrant men had a university or high occupational degree somewhat more often than in-married men. Only 3% of all men had just a

primary education or less. The differences between in- and intermarried men were not so clear concerning pre-immigration occupations. Half of the immigrant men from the Bangladesh had a profession before moving to Russia. Immigrant men from the Bangladesh brought with them a large amount of 'human capital', which may be favorable for integration.

**Table 1.1: Background of in-marriage and inter-marriage immigrants from Bangladesh in Russia**

Descriptions	Men	
	In-Marriage	Inter-marriage
Average age	39	36
Year of migration	32	28
Ethnic background of spouse		
Russian	39	60
Others	12	24
Education		
Primary level	3	3
Higher Secondary level	65	55
Graduation level	32	42
Russian language proficiency	44	67
Living place		
Rural-densely populated	3	19
Rural-sparsely populated	5	11
Urban	92	70

Integration is easier if the immigrant can speak the language of the dominant culture, because he or she is then able to make contacts with its members. At the

same time contacts - e.g. marriage - with a member of the host society makes it possible for the immigrant to learn the language. Many immigrants had learned



Russian before moving to Russia: e.g. many ethnic Russian had it as a mother tongue (37% of them in this study), usually in combination with another mother tongue, and some marriages were probably possible because of language skills. In many cases, however, immigrants from the Bangladesh are not actually skilled in the other language.

At the time of the study less than half of the in-married immigrant men spoke Russian well or very well, while over two in three of intermarried men did so. Both in-married and intermarried men migrants were most likely to be urban. Intermarried men were, however, more often likely to be found in densely populated rural communities (19%) compared to in-married immigrant men (3%). One intermarried man in five lived in a sparsely populated rural community, while less than 9 percent of in-married men did so. In towns where many immigrants live it is easier to form ethnic communities and networks. In the countryside and in small towns the supply of candidates for co-ethnic friends and spouses can be sparse as are work possibilities, but the housing situation is better.

The high unemployment rate of the immigrants indicates that the danger of

marginalization is imminent. Intermarried men were somewhat less often unemployed than in-married immigrant men. The difference between these groups was not very big (4%). It is clear, however, that the accumulation of unemployment is more common in the families where both spouses are immigrants. In 11% of the families of in-married immigrant men both spouses were unemployed, compared to 4% of intermarried men ( $p < .000$ ).

Not surprisingly, immigrant men married to other immigrants tended to live in more modest socioeconomic conditions, as indicated by the subjective economic situation of the respondent and his family. Three out of four intermarried men reported that their family's economic situation was good, but only 56 percent of the in-married immigrant men did so.

The differences between marriage types in regard to housing were clear: only one in ten in-married immigrant men owned their accommodation compared to half of intermarried men. Intermarried couples also had more living space in their homes than in-married couples: one-third of in-married immigrant men lived in overcrowded conditions, while one in four intermarried men did so.

**Table 1.2: Economic indicators of integration**

Descriptions	Men	
	In-Marriage	Inter-marriage
Type of activity	77	82
Economic condition of the household	56	73
Housing tenure	10	48
Housing density	65	75

The presence of several economic integration indicators means the individual's economic position is good and the contrary means a weak and potentially exposed position. In-married immigrant men were in a weaker economic position than intermarried men when the accumulation of indicators was studied (minimum 0 – maximum 4). Intermarried immigrant men were almost twice as often (61%) integrated in regard to at least three indicators mentioned in Table 1.2 compared to in-married men (31%) ( $p < .000$ ). One out of four in-

married men was integrated economically in only one dimension compared to one in ten intermarried immigrant men. It was rare for immigrant men to not be integrated in any dimension at all.

A logistic regression analysis was carried out on the accumulation of the economic integration indicators in the case of immigrant women. The main results of the analysis can be summarized as follows (Table 1.3):

**Table 1.3: Model of economic integration (odds ratio, logistic regression)**

Descriptions	Economic integration						
	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Age							
18-29	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
30-39	1.10	1.10	0.77	0.81	0.65	0.70	0.70
40-65	0.60	0.60	0.55	0.62	0.47	0.51	0.52
Ethnic background							
Russian	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Others	1.38	1.28	1.42	1.34	1.16	1.05	1.04
Education							
Primary	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Secondary	1.05	1.03	1.15	1.15	1.15	1.12	1.14
Graduation	1.85		1.99	2.02	2.09	2.05	2.03
Type of marriage							
Russian	0.90			0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Others	3.02			2.60	2.42	2.16	2.16
Year of migration							
1947-1970	0.90				0.90	0.90	0.90
1971-1989	0.37				0.62	0.65	0.65
1990-1994	0.18				0.23	0.28	0.28
Russian language proficiency							
Speak moderately	0.90					0.90	0.90
Speak fluently	2.25					1.24	1.25
Living place							
Rural-densely populated	0.90						0.90
Rural-sparsely populated	1.85						1.18
Urban	1.10						0.73
Significance level	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

The oldest age group was slightly less economically integrated than the younger groups (41% vs. 51-52%). These differences remained even after controlling for the possible influence of other factors. This was expected, because according to previous studies it is easier for the young to integrate. Immigrants who had university and high occupational degrees were more economically

integrated compared to immigrants with a lower education. The differences between educational groups remained statistically significant even after the other factors were controlled for. In accordance with the hypothesis, marriage with a member of the dominant culture was clearly more favorable for economic integration than marriage with another immigrant. The original difference between marriages

types diminished slightly after the influence of other factors was controlled for, but remained big and statistically significant.

Year of migration had a powerful impact on economic integration. Most of the immigrant men who moved to Russia before the 1990s were economically integrated (71%), as were half of those who moved between 1990-1994. With time immigrant men seem to adapt more into the Russian economic system. Proficiency in the Russian language was also an important factor promoting economic integration. Those men who spoke Russian well or very well were clearly more often economically integrated compared to those who spoke Russian moderately or poorly. Economic integration seemed to be easier in the densely populated rural areas compared to both urban and sparsely populated rural areas. The original difference between places of residence diminished, however, once other factors were

controlled for and did not remain statistically significant.

In below Table 1.4 shows the results concerning social integration. The majority of the immigrant men met both co-ethnic and Russian relatives and/or friends at least once a month. This could be interpreted as a positive sign of integration. It was somewhat more common among intermarried men (75%) to meet both co-ethnic and Russian relatives or/and friends than among in-married men (61%). A clear majority of both inter- and in-married immigrant men met co-ethnic relatives and/or friends at least once a month (93% vs. 85%,  $p < .000$ ). Two out of three intermarried immigrant men met co-ethnics every week as did a clear majority (85%) of in-married men ( $p < .000$ ). This indicated the important role of immigrant networks for all immigrant men, not only for those married to other immigrants, although they met co-ethnics more often than the intermarried men did.

**Table 1.4: Social integration (in percentage)**

Social networks	Every week/every month	
	In-Marriage	Inter-marriage
Meets both co-ethnics and Russians	61	75
Meets only co-ethnics	31	8
Meets only Russians	3	9
Does not meet any networks	1	4

More intermarried immigrant men met Russian relatives and/or friends at least once a month than did in-married immigrants (85% vs. 65%,  $p < .000$ ). The clear tendency of intermarried men to have close networks with Russian could be traced by how many met every week: half of the intermarried men and one third of the in-married men met Russian relatives and/or friends every week (51% vs. 34%,  $p < .000$ ). One-tenth of the intermarried men met only Russian once a month. This could be interpreted as isolation from the co-ethnic community and potential dependency on the Russian spouse's networks or other Russian networks. It could be even interpreted as a tendency toward assimilation. It was rare for the in-married immigrant men to meet only Russian and no co-ethnics once a month (3%). One-third of the in-married immigrants did not meet Russian people even once a month, which was an indication of the social isolation of these immigrants from the host society.

Over half (57%) of the in-married immigrant men who had Russian or

Bangladeshi friends in Russia had only/mostly co-ethnic friends while the figure for those who were intermarried was 34%. Intermarried immigrants had only/mostly Russian friends twice as often (43%) compared to in-married immigrants (19%). One both in- and intermarried man out of four had an equal number of Russian and co-ethnic friends. ( $p < .000$ .) Intermarried immigrant men had close friend(s) in Russia somewhat more often than in-married immigrants (83% vs. 79%,  $p < .047$ ).

Two logistic regression analyses (Table 1.5) were conducted to study social integration into the co-ethnic and the Russian community separately. Those who met co-ethnic friends and/or relatives at least once a month were compared with those who did not.

**Table 1.5: Model of social integration in Russian community (odds ratio, logistic regression)**

Descriptions	Economic integration						
	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Age							
18-29	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
30-39	0.88	0.88	1.01	0.88	0.86	1.03	1.03
40-65	0.75	0.77	0.80	0.83	0.80	0.77	0.85
Ethnic background							
Russian	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Others	1.65	1.60	1.54	1.48	1.46	1.13	1.15
Education							
Primary	0.90		0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Secondary	0.86		1.00	1.13	1.13	1.29	1.16
Graduation	0.71		0.70	0.80	0.81	0.81	0.81
Type of marriage							
Russian	0.90			0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Others	2.08			2.06	2.00	1.67	1.41
Year of migration							
1947-1970	0.90				0.90	0.90	0.90
1971-1989	0.50				0.75	0.80	0.78
1990-1994	0.46				0.70	0.88	0.85
Russian language proficiency							
Speak moderately	0.90					0.90	0.90
Speak fluently	1.04					1.64	1.58
Living place							
Rural-densely populated	0.90						0.90
Rural-sparsely populated	1.87						1.81
Urban	1.04						1.38
Significance level	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

A similar analysis was conducted of meetings with Russian relatives and/or friends. The main results of the analyses

can be summarized as follows (Table 1.6):

**Table 1.6: Model of social integration into the co-ethnics community (odds ratio, logistic regression)**

Descriptions	Economic integration						
	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Age							
18-29	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
30-39	0.58	0.60	0.58	0.55	0.63	0.65	0.67
40-65	0.50	0.45	0.44	0.38	0.50	0.51	0.54
Ethnic background							
Russian	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Others	0.17	0.15	0.15	0.16	0.18	0.17	0.16
Education							
Primary	0.90		0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Secondary	1.65		1.77	1.60	1.78	1.77	1.78
Graduation	1.42		1.63	1.58	1.80	1.77	1.73
Type of marriage							
Russian	0.90			0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90
Others	0.23			0.21	0.23	0.23	0.25
Year of migration							
1947-1970	0.90				0.90	0.90	0.90
1971-1989	1.20				1.40	1.41	1.46
1990-1994	3.10				1.27	1.37	1.45
Russian language proficiency							
Speak moderately	0.90					0.90	0.90
Speak fluently	0.40					1.01	1.02
Living place							
Rural-densely populated	0.90						0.90
Rural-sparsely populated	0.72						1.10
Urban	0.36						0.50
Significance level	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Age did not influence social integration in any marked or statistically significant way. This was not expected, because according to many studies integration is

more difficult for older immigrants. Education did not have a systematic and statistically significant effect on social integration. The survey analyses support

the hypothesis that intermarriage is more favorable for integration into the Russian community than is in-marriage (85% vs. 65%). When other variables were held constant this connection diminished slightly, but remained statistically significant. On the other hand in-married immigrants were more closely in touch with co-ethnic networks compared to intermarried immigrants (93% vs. 85%). This connection remained the same and statistically significant after the other factors were controlled for.

The year of migration had an important impact on social integration into the co-ethnic community. Only three out of four (77%) of those who immigrated before the 90s were integrated internally. This connection decreased somewhat after the other variables were controlled for, but remained important and statistically significant. At the same time social integration into the Russian community increased with time. Three out of four of those who migrated in the 1990s were integrated into the Russian community, but already 82 percent of those who migrated before the 1990s. The connection between integration into the Russian community and the year of migration diminished and was no longer statistically significant, however, when other variables were controlled for.

Russian language skills had an important impact on social integration into the Russian community. Two-thirds of those who spoke Russian moderately or poorly were integrated into the Russian community, compared to as many as 80 percent of those who spoke Russian well or very well. However, proficiency in Russian had only a weak impact on integration into the co-ethnic community. This connection was not statistically significant after the other variables were controlled for. Integration into the Russian community was a little easier in the rural areas compared to urban areas (84-87% vs. 71%), but it was somewhat more difficult for the immigrant men to integrate into the co-ethnic community in the sparsely populated rural areas (83% vs. urban 91%). These connections diminished and were no longer statistically significant after the other factors were held constant.

In Table 1.7 the results of segmented integration are presented. The concentration of integration into certain segments was clear. According to the analysis, marriage with a member of the dominant culture is more favorable for the integration process than is marriage to another immigrant. Half of the intermarried immigrants were both internally and externally integrated, but only one in four of the in-married men.



The most common combination for in-married immigrant men (39%) was social integration into both co-ethnic and Russian networks, but weak economic integration. This combination was the second most common one among intermarried immigrant men (25%).

One out of four in-married men, but only five percent of intermarried immigrant men had not gained economic integration or formed contacts with Russian, but were integrated into the co-ethnic networks. In-married immigrants were

more closely in touch with co-ethnic networks than intermarried immigrants. More than one in nine of in-married men were economically well integrated and socially separated from the Russian. In contrast six percent of the intermarried men seemed to be socially integrated only into the Russian networks and economically integrated. The most marginal group of all - those who were economically and socially marginal in both networks - is very small: only one percent of both the in-married and intermarried men.

**Table 1.7: Segmented integration**

Descriptions	Men	
	In-Marriage	Inter-marriage
Both networks and economic integration	21	49
Russian network and economic integration	2	8
Co-ethnic networks and economic integration	12	2
Weak networks and weak economic integration	2	5
Both networks and weak economic integration	39	25
Russian network and weak economic integration	3	4
Co-ethnic networks and weak economic integration	19	5
Weak networks and weak economic integration	2	2
Total	100	100

## Discussion

Many studies have presumed that intermarriage is problematic and generates marginality and isolation for immigrants (Cotrell 1990). This was not, however, the case in this study. The survey results support the hypothesis that

integration is segmented and that marriage type has an independent impact on the segmented integration of immigrants. According to the results, intermarried immigrant men from the Bangladesh seem to be more successful in finding access to the Russian mainstream society compared to in-

married immigrant men. Half of the intermarried and one fifth of the in-married immigrants have achieved both internal and external integration, into Russian society. In-married immigrant men more often have economic limitations compared to intermarried immigrant men.

Although social integration into both Russian and co-ethnic networks was the most common pattern for in- and intermarried men, a considerable number of in-married immigrants actually integrate only into co-ethnic networks, which are based on the language of their native country. Social separatism from the host society may empower the newcomers and the least integrated segments, yet, at the same time, it may hamper economic integration for many in-married immigrants. Social isolation from members of the host society and weak economic integration may have a negative impact on the future prospects of in-married immigrants and their children. On the other hand, among the intermarried immigrants social isolation from co-ethnics was somewhat more common than among in-married immigrants. Inter-marriage does not, however, necessarily lead to external integration. Also some intermarried immigrants have economic problems, are unemployed and do not meet Russian

people every month. Limitations of external and internal integration may cause economic and social dependence on the Russian spouses.

There are several reasons to expect intermarried immigrant men to be externally integrated more often than in-married immigrant men. First, the results indicated an educational selection of intermarried immigrant men. Intermarried men were younger when they moved to Russia, they had been living in the country longer and they spoke Russian better than in-married immigrants, which put them in a better position regarding external integration. Intermarried men also lived more often in rural areas, where external integration seemed to be a little easier, compared to in-married immigrants.

Second, a Russian spouse may assist in the immigration process, in obtaining a visa and in settling into a new place of residence. It seems that a Russian wife can help her immigrant husband in the process of social mobility. It is possible for many an intermarried immigrant man to move directly into a Russian middle-class housing area, into a spacious apartment owned by the family, jumping several steps ahead and bypassing the bottom-up order traditional for immigration. Members of the host

country can introduce the immigrant's spouse to new 'cultural milieus': Russian culture, language and lifestyle. It seemed that the Russian spouse had a significant role in the formation of the immigrant husband's networks and that they often at least partly had a shared network. Through his spouse the immigrant men gets to know different sides of Russian society. This can be also problematic, because linguistic inequality in the early years of marriage can cause conflicts and dependence on the spouse.

There are also many other factors besides marriage type, which together or individually were connected to external and internal integration. Education had an impact on economic integration, but not on social integration. The economic situation of immigrant men improved year by year. Their integration into the co-ethnic community weakened and integration into the Russian community grew somewhat stronger the longer they lived in Russia. The establishment of friendships with the members of the host society takes time among first-generation immigrants. On the other hand, a long period of residence is by no means a guarantee that friendships will be made with Russian which is similar with other studies (Jaakkola 1983; Jaakkola 1984). Russian language skills were an important factor accelerating external

integration. Linguistic ability in the host language does not, however, entail total rejection of one's own ethnic group.

Given the scanty knowledge available about intermarriage and its connections to discrimination and feelings of marginality and dependence potentially experienced by foreign spouses in Russia, and the detailed connections of intermarriages to social networks, future studies are both necessary and urgent. A small inter-ethnic distance from the dominant culture is a factor promoting integration into the host society. Integration is easier if the immigrant is of the same religion and cultural family as members of the dominant culture (Padilla 1980).

## **Conclusion**

The social and economic integration of immigrant male from Bangladesh into Russian society was explored, with reference to the concept of segmented integration. The results show that intermarried immigrant male seem to be quite successful in finding access to the Russia and co-ethnic networks and at the same time they were economically integrated. In-married immigrants experienced economic limitations more often than those who were intermarried. A noticeable part of in-married men actually integrate into the networks of co-

ethnics, while integration into Russian networks is weak or non-existent. Intermarried immigrant men, on the other hand, integrate more often only into the Russian community. This indicates that integration has become segmented and that marriage type was an important element - but only one among other factors - in the process of segmented integration.

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