

ATTITUDES OF LONG-TERM RESIDENTS OF GUAM  
TOWARD IMMIGRANTS  
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FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA  
AND THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

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Two studies investigated the reactions of long-term residents of Guam to immigration and immigrants from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) as a result of the implementation of the Compact of Free Association (CFA) signed between these two countries and the United States. The first study involved 74 in-depth interviews with informants discussing the impact of the Compact, their attitudes towards the Compact, and their assessment of changes following the implementation of the Compact. The second study gathered the views of a stratified random sample of 503 Guam residents interviewed by telephone. Their assessments of the Compact impact, and attitudes toward the Immigrants were investigated by open and closed-ended questions. They were also asked about their expectations of the Government of Guam and the Federal Government of the United States concerning the integration of the immigrant population into Guam life. Both studies confirmed that the Compact of Free Association had a major impact on Guam. Respondents provided helpful suggestions to ease the adaptation of the Immigrants to the culture and life on Guam, and to improve relations with the Immigrants.

The Compact of Free Association (CFA), signed in 1986 between the United States and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, gave free entry to the citizens of those two Micronesian nations to the United States and to all U.S. territories. Following the compact, CFA citizens started to migrate to Guam, taking advantage of the short distance between their home countries

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and Guam. Guam, with its prospering economic conditions and job vacancies exceeding the available work force on the Island, became an attractive place for outsiders to come and work. FSM citizens, in large numbers, and Marshall Islanders, in fewer numbers took advantage of these conditions. The 1990 U.S. Census records showed that the FSM population doubled each year during the 1988-1990 period, jumping from 500 in 1988 to 2,000 in 1990 (Rubinstein and Levin, in press). The latest Census records of the Micronesian population give much higher figures, reaching 4,000 in 1992 (Census of Micronesians on Guam, Rubinstein and Levin, in progress).

This migration has consequences for the home states of the Immigrants, as well as the long-term residents of Guam<sup>1</sup> who have been affected by the changes after the implementation of the Compact of Free Association in the years following 1986. To our knowledge, the impact of the Compact on the people of Guam and their reactions to the changes following the flood of CFA citizens to Guam have not been studied and documented up to this point. It is the purpose of this paper to report the studies conducted to investigate the experiences, impressions, and attitudes of long-term residents of Guam to immigrants from the CFA states, and also to discuss the long-term residents' perceptions about the impact of the Compact of Free Association. The report also summarizes residents' viewpoints regarding the actions that they feel the local Government of Guam and the Federal Government of the United States should take to help the adjustment of Guam to the immigration following the Compact.

Two studies were conducted to understand the reactions of long-term residents of Guam towards Compact-related immigrants. Study 1 was an in-depth analysis of the residents with a variety of backgrounds, who are in close contact with the CFA citizens as neighbors, co-workers, or employers. Study 2 was a phone survey of 503 Guam residents who have lived on Guam for at least 5 years and were chosen from 19 villages with a stratified random sampling which allows the representation of villages in numbers that are proportional to each villages' representation in the total Guam population.

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<sup>1</sup> Within the text, the long-term residents of Guam will sometimes be called *long term residents* or *residents*, and the citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Marshall Islands living and working on Guam will be called *immigrants*.

## Study 1

The purpose of this study was to develop some insight about the issues that arise in the daily lives of long-term residents of Guam in their interactions with the immigrant community. Face to face interviews asked for information about issues such as frequency of contact, experiences, attitudes based on these experiences, and reactions toward the Compact itself. Once the issues were defined in this study, this information helped to design the interview schedule used in Study 2.

### *Method*

#### *Respondents*

Seventy-four in-depth interviews were conducted with long-term residents of Guam. Forty-two were males and 32 were females. Respondents were chosen from employers of immigrants working in the private or public sectors, or those who rent to the immigrants, or those who live in the neighborhoods most concentrated with the immigrant population, i.e., areas such as Mangilao, Yigo, Dededo, and Toto-Maite.

The average age of the respondents was 32.9 years with a range between 18 and 65. The number of years that the respondents lived on Guam ranged from 2 to 65 years with an average of 23.6 years. In terms of the ethnic make-up, 53% were Chamorros, 15% were Caucasians, 14% were Filipinos and 18% were others such as Black, mixed Chamorro, mixed Asian and Pacific Islander.

The sample was composed of highly educated respondents with 51% college graduates, 34% high school graduates and 12% with Master's and Ph.D. degrees. The sample was also in the upper scales of income with 64% owning their residences, and 34% renting. The yearly income of 61% was in the \$ 31,000 - 80,000 range and 10% earned over \$ 80,000 annually.

The majority of the respondents came from the villages of Dededo (30%), Mangilao (20%), and Barrigada (8%).

#### *Procedure*

The interviewers were students from an upper division Psychology class being trained to design, conduct, and analyze scientific research. The project was a part of their skill-building exercise.

Twenty-five students were instructed in a regular University of Guam (UOG) class on how to conduct interviews and two in-class practice interviews familiarized

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the interviewers with the instrument and helped them become comfortable with the process. The interviewers contacted three people chosen on the basis of the above stated criteria (also, see Appendix 1, interview schedule). All the interviews were tape-recorded.

#### *Instrument*

The interview schedule was developed in consultation with other researchers working on the Compact Impact Needs Assessment Studies, experts in research methodology, and upper division psychology students at the University of Guam. The input from all these sources was incorporated into the revisions following the initial construction of the schedule. The instrument included eight closed-ended questions asking the amount and the nature of contact with the Immigrants, and respondents' attitudes towards the Compact of Free Association. There were two open-ended and two closed-ended questions asking about the problems caused by CFA Immigrants and a report of the problems experienced by the Immigrants, as perceived by the long-term residents. The instrument also contained questions asking the perceived impact of the Compact and how it affects daily life on Guam (see, Appendix 1).

### *Results*

#### *Effects of Immigration on Life in Guam*

When asked about how much their life is affected by CFA immigration, 69% of the respondents indicated that their life is somewhat (54%) or very much (15%) affected. Thirty-one percent stated that their life is not affected at all (Table 1).

Table 1

*Responses to the Question Asking the Effects of Immigration on Respondents' Lives*

Measure of Affect	Percent of Responses
Very Much	15
Somewhat	54
No Affect	31
Total	100

When the respondents are asked how much *life on Guam* is changed by the Immigrants, 63% of the respondents indicated that life is quite (44%) or very much (19%) changed. Thirty-six percent stated "not much change" and 1% stated no change (Table 2).

Table 2

*Responses to the Question "How much life on Guam is changed by the Immigrants ..."*

Amount of Change	Percent of Responses
Very Much	19
Quite	44
Not Much	36
None	01
Total	100

These two questions clearly showed that the majority of residents agree that their daily life and life on Guam is affected by this immigration. An open-ended question further investigated the nature of these changes, asking the interviewees to state specifically the areas that changes were felt the most. Their responses were content analyzed and presented in Table 3.

As can be seen from Table 3, the responses cover a wide range and include problem areas such as housing, traffic, school, and health care systems which are not sufficient for a growing population.

Another group of responses in the change category include items such as "cultural integration" and "changes in the service industry" which indicate the cultural impact of CFA states on the Guamanian culture.

*The Amount and Nature of Contact With the Immigrants*

Respondents were asked about the frequency, the nature, and the place of contact with the Immigrants (Table 4).

As can be seen from Table 4, 73% of the respondents indicated that they have contact with the Immigrants everyday (50%) or twice a week (23%) . Only 5% of the respondents indicated "no contact" and 14% indicated infrequent contact (once in a while) .

Table 3

*Long-term Residents' Responses Regarding Changes on Guam as a Result of Immigration.*

Type of Change	Percent of	
	Sample Reporting Change	Responses
Increased Difficulties in Housing	11	9
Integration of Different Cultures to Guam Lifestyle	9	8
Population Increase	9	8
Increased Burden on Government	8	7
Increased Competition on the Job Market	8	7
Creating Social Disorder	7	5
Burden on School System	5	4
Burden on Public Health Care System	5	4
Increased Traffic/Accidents on the Roads	4	4
Changes in the Service Industry	5	4
Damage to the Environment	3	2
No Comment	35	28
Others	12	10
Total	121	100

*Note.* There are a total of 92 responses from 74 respondents because the respondents were free to state as many different items as they wished to state.

Most of the contact occurred in the work place (49%), followed by public places (29%). Seven percent of the respondents were neighbors and 15% contacted them in other contexts such as schools (Table 5).

Table 4

*Responses to the Question, "How frequently do you have contact with Immigrants.."*

Frequency of Contact	Percent of Responses
Everyday	50
Couple of Times/Week	23
Once a Week	8
Couple of Times/Month	0
Once in a While	14
Never	5
Total	100

Table 5

*Places of Contact with the Immigrants*

Place of Contact	Percent of Respondents	Percent of Responses
Neighborhood	7	7
Work Place	47	49
Public Places	28	29
Other	15	15
Total	97	100

*Note.* There were a total of 72 responses from 74 respondents.

As Tables 3, 4, and 5 indicate, the respondents whose opinions are stated in Study 1 are people who have close and frequent relationships with the Immigrant community. These demographic statistics show that the sample met the criteria set for the study.

*Reactions to the Compact of Free Association*

When asked about their reactions to CFA, respondents expressed mixed feelings. Overall 38% expressed approval with 3% expressing strong approval. Overall 33% expressed disapproval, with 1% expressing strong disapproval. 9% of the respondents stated they were neutral and 19% expressed no opinion (Table 6).

Table 6  
*Reactions to the Compact of Free Association*

Opinions	Percent of Responses
Strongly Approve	3
Approve	35
Neither Approve/Disapprove	9
Disapprove	32
Strongly Disapprove	1
No Opinion	19
Total	99

*Note.* Total percentage is less than 100 due to rounding error.

Table 7  
*Responses to the Question About the Problems Caused by the Immigrants*

The Amount of Problems	Percent of Responses
Many Problems	31
Few Problems	57
No Problems	13
Total	101

*Note.* Total percentage is more than 100 due to rounding error.

*Problems Caused by the Immigrants*

When asked whether the Immigrants were causing any problems, 88% of the respondents expressed few (57%) or many (31%) problems. 13% stated that Immigrants cause no problems.

Table 8 documents residents' perceptions about the types of problems caused by the Immigrants. The responses cover a wide range extending from public disturbances (8%) and crime (8%) to insufficiency of resources due to increased population, i.e., housing shortage (11%), overpopulated schools (6%) and culture clashes (6%). Parallelisms can be observed between this table and Table 3.

Table 8

*The Types of Problems the Immigrants are Causing*

Type of Problem	Percent of Respondents	Percent of Responses
Drinking	12	8
Driving Problems	12	8
Housing Shortage	16	11
Crime	11	8
Use up Welfare/Social Services	12	8
Careless About Environment	11	8
Cause Public Disturbance	12	8
Overpopulated Schools	8	6
Culture Clashes	8	6
Unsanitary	4	3
Take Over Jobs	4	3
No Comment	16	11
Others Ungrouped	16	11
Total	142	99

*Note.* There are a total of 106 responses from 74 respondents because the respondents were free to state as many items as they wanted. The percent of responses total is less than 100 due to rounding error.

### *Problems That the Immigrants are Experiencing*

Long-term Guam residents were asked to specify the problems they think the immigrants experience. The question was open-ended, giving the respondents the freedom to express, in their own words, their perceptions of the difficulties faced by the immigrant population. The responses were content analyzed and presented in Table 9.

Table 9

#### *Respondents' Views About the Problems Experienced by the Immigrants*

Type of Problem	Percent of Respondents	Percent of Responses
Housing Problems/Living Conditions	31	18
Culture Shock/Adjustment Problems	46	27
Prejudice/Discrimination	18	10
Finding Work and Keeping Work	15	9
Language Barriers	14	8
Financial Problems	9	5
Understanding the Legal System	7	4
Lack of Education/Skills	5	3
Transportation	3	2
No Comment	8	5
Don't Know	3	2
Others, Ungrouped	15	9
Total	174	102

*Note.* There were a total of 128 responses from 74 respondents because the respondents were free to state as many items as they wanted to. The percent of responses total is more than 100 due to rounding error.

The most frequently mentioned category was culture shock and the related adjustment problems (27%). The second most frequently mentioned category, housing problems (18%), was followed by another social problem, prejudice and discrimination (10%). Other problems, such as finding work, communication problems, and similar others made up less than 10% of the responses. It is interesting to note that the

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residents' perceptions regarding the problems faced by immigrants were more focused on social/cultural problems originating from cultural differences.

#### *Suggestions for Solutions to the Problems*

Respondents were also asked to comment about their views regarding the solutions to the problems experienced by the immigrants. Their responses were content analyzed and presented in Table 10.

As can be seen from Table 10, half of the responses stated the need to educate the Immigrants so they find employment and improve their living conditions. Respondents also stated the need to provide orientation to the Immigrants to learn about Guam's culture in order to ease their adjustment. One of the practical solutions that was suggested was to have a center for them to help each other. The other group of responses focused on immigration procedures and expressed the residents' desire to have control over it. Such responses shared by 16% of the people reflect the resentment of some of the long-term residents of Guam to the Compact of Free Association which does not grant the Government of Guam such control over immigration.

A small group of responses (5%) acknowledged the prejudiced attitudes toward the Immigrants and mentioned the need to educate the long-term residents to become more sensitive to cultural differences.

#### Study 2

The purpose of this study was to survey a representative sample of long-term residents about their reactions to the immigrants from CFA states, the impact of this Compact on their lives and what they would like to ask the local Government of Guam, and the Federal Government of the United States to do regarding this current issue.

#### *Method*

##### *Respondents*

503 long-term Guam residents were interviewed on the phone. 97% of the phone calls were made during weekdays from 5:30-8:30, and 3% on the weekends from 1:00-5:00 in April and May 1993.

Respondents were chosen from a telephone list of Guam Telephone Authority (GTA) residential customers excluding the business numbers. The sample was formed with a stratified random sampling procedure from the 19 villages on Guam which made it possible for each village to be represented in the sample in proportions similar to their representation in the Guam population. Telephone customers over 18 years old,

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Table 10

*Response Categories to the Question, "What can be done to solve some of the problems experienced by immigrants...?"*

Type of Solution	Percent of		
	Respondents	Responses	Responses in Subcategories
<i>Comments Re/ Education, Orientation</i>			
Educate/orient before coming to Guam	31	24	
Teach skills / train / educate	20	16	
Organize a center/liason office to help one another	11	8	48
<i>Suggestions to Eliminate Prejudice</i>			
Increase Residents Cultural Sensitivity	7	5	5
<i>Practical Solutions</i>			
Find affordable housing	5	4	
Meetings of the Community leaders with the Governor to discuss solutions	4	4	7
<i>Comments About Immigration</i>			
Screen immigrants	8	6	
Control immigration	8	6	
Send them back	3	2	
Solve their problems at home	1	1	16
<i>Others</i>			
Don't know	5	4	
No comment	8	6	11
Others, ungrouped	16	13	13
Total	127	99	100

*Note.* There were a total of 95 responses from 74 respondents because the respondents were free to give as many as they wanted to. The percent of responses total is less than 100 due to rounding errors.