

**The Content and Function of Canadian and Cultural Identities
Among First and Second Generation Immigrants**

Progress Report

Submitted By

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Progress Report for the November 1, 1999 to October 31, 2000

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Research Funded by the Grant

The first study funded by this grant was one in which key stakeholders in the immigrant community were identified and interviewed using primarily qualitative open-ended questions. The focus of these interviews was "the nature and function of the respondent's Canadian and cultural identities, the relationship between these two identities in the context of important cultural norms and values, and their (the respondents') attitudes toward multiculturalism" (page 3 of the grant proposal). A copy of the questions in the interview schedule that was developed by the research team is attached along with the major themes that emerged in the responses to the qualitative questions. This schedule asks respondents about the nature of their Canadian and cultural identities, the positive (pride) and negative (shame) aspects of these identities, and about how they refer to themselves when talking about their culture of origin (section 1, 16 questions). The next set of questions (section 2, 9 questions) explore the ways in which the respondents' identities with Canada and their culture of origin are compatible and the ways in which they are incompatible. This section also explores how immigrants become integrated into the Canadian way-of-life from their own perspective. The third set of questions (section 3, 5 questions) probe the respondents for their attitudes and beliefs about multiculturalism and Canada's multicultural policy. Finally, demographic questions were asked to end the interview. In all, the interview schedule contained 28 open-ended questions which makes it a much more extensive and in-depth instrument than was originally envisaged. Nevertheless, the team felt that it was important to proceed with this detailed probe given the gaps in our knowledge described in the grant proposal.

Three local immigrant organizations (the Saskatchewan Intercultural Association, the Open Door Society, and the Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan) were approached and asked to endorse the project and identify stakeholders who were leaders in their particular immigrant community and who were either first or second generation immigrants themselves. This approach was successful and eventually 25 interviews were completed with a wide variety of stakeholders from many different cultural groups. However, the data collection process was delayed for two reasons. First, the boards of the immigrant organizations did not respond to my request for names of stakeholders for some time partly due to the need to consult widely with their own members before agreeing to my request and partly due to a delay created by uncertainty over government funding caused by the provincial election (essentially, all decisions were placed on hold until the funding issue was resolved). Second, after collecting data from approximately 12 interviewees it became apparent that we had been unable to locate any second generation immigrants. At this point, interviewing was placed on hold while this issue was explored with the agencies in question. In the end, it became clear through discussions with agency personnel and through the interviewees themselves (at the end of the interview they were asked to name other leaders in their local cultural community who it would be valuable to interview) that there were very few, if any, second generation immigrants who were leaders in their cultural communities. This meant that the study became one in which first generation immigrants who are leaders in their local cultural communities were interviewed.

The first study was completed in March, 2000. Therefore, it was decided to spend the summer months identifying and analyzing the qualitative themes from this study. First, the interviews were transcribed from audiotapes into a large word processing file (approximately 120 pages of text). Then the

responses to each question were coded into themes by each interviewer independently of one another (creating two new data files). A third coder examined these two sets of themes and recorded the percentage agreement between the two coders and, where there was disagreement, chose the theme she thought was most appropriate. A series of meetings involving these coders and myself resulted in the creation of a data file which 1) contains the themes used by 3 or more respondents by question, 2) idiosyncratic responses to each question, and 3) overarching themes that emerged across questions. This task has been completed resulting in a great deal of very interesting and rich information (see Appendix 1 for a summary of this work). Currently, these results are being presented to members of the three immigrant organizations and their co-operation with the second stage of the project has is being negotiated.

The master interview schedule for the second set of studies described in the grant proposal has also been designed. The mostly closed-ended questions used in this interview schedule were derived from the results of the first study and a study by Cinnirella (1997) who was kind enough to send me the interview schedule that he used to question British and Italian students (see grant proposal, page 3). Currently, I am holding meetings with representatives of the three agencies in which I describe the results from the first study and then review the questions contained in the master schedule. The discussions that ensue focuses on three themes: first, the appropriateness of the questions and the length of the interview, second, on whether the agency would support the next set of studies and provide access to immigrant populations, and, third, whether the agencies would like short sections added into the master schedule which would answer questions useful for their own program planning and development cycle.

Finally, a laboratory study "of some emergent hypotheses concerning the causal determinants of a secure versus an insecure cultural identity" (page 6, grant proposal) will be carried out concurrent with the interview studies just described. A strong theme to emerge from the interviews with key stakeholders was that white Canadians do not understand or appreciate the traditional cultural values and traditions of immigrants, particularly non-white immigrants. And, in some instances, this lack of understanding was linked to racism and, by implication, to lack of support for multiculturalism. Therefore, the laboratory study will examine this barrier to the integration of immigrants into Canadian society in more detail using a simulation of a social situation containing such a barrier.

Graduate Student Involvement in Research on Immigrant Populations Stimulated by but Not Funded by the Grant:

Both in the preparatory period in which the grant was written (the 1998/99 academic year) and in the first year of the grant, I have encouraged my graduate students to undertake applied research projects of relevance to the local immigrant population as part of their training in Applied Social Psychology. This shift in research direction (albeit, still from an intergroup relations perspective) has resulted in a number of graduate student projects being completed. Perhaps the most significant of these is Vonda Plett Martens' M.A. thesis entitled, "Exploring the Cross-cultural Adjustment of International Students' Wives" which was completed in the Spring of this year. The results and recommendations from this study, along with those from an earlier needs assessment that Vonda and I completed in 1997, are currently being used by the International Students Advisor and his staff at the University of Saskatchewan to plan programs for this hidden population who's support is so important for the academic success of foreign graduate students.

Two other graduate students have also been involved in projects for the immigrant community as they fulfill their practicum and internship requirements which are an integral part of their program of studies in Applied Social Psychology. These students were the interviewers for the stakeholder study describe above. For his first practicum, Myles Ferguson completed a consumer satisfaction survey of recent immigrants with professional training who had completed a job readiness program run by the Saskatchewan Intercultural Association. This program was designed to help new immigrants with professional training enter the Canadian labour market. A more senior student, Leah Burgess worked for the Open Door society on a project in which she helped develop a training manual for a parenting program for first generation immigrants who have teenage children. Essentially, these children are experiencing pressure from their native-born Canadian peers to take part in activities that their parents

are not prepared to allow because it conflicts with the cultural practices of their country of origin. Thus, the focus of the program is on how to deal with this difficult and ongoing parenting challenge.

Finally, a Ph.D. student, Debra Woods is developing her proposal on the psychological antecedents which influence how immigrant women maintain and strengthen their cultural identity using theoretical ideas derived from Self-Categorization Theory and Social Representation Theory. This work is still in the very early stages of development.

Canadian and Cultural Identities
Study 1
Overview of Themes

Note: Listed are the Questions from the Survey, the Themes found within in Question, and following the theme is the AGREEMENT value. For all M-themes listed, the single number in brackets is the number of statements that were included underneath that M-theme. Many just have 2 statements – so if this is too few statements to be considered a theme at all, then they can be taken out of the list.

Q 2: “ What does it mean to you to be a Canadian?”

1. Citizenship and Living the Canadian Code of Life (4/6)
2. Calling Canada Home (3/8)
3. European (2/3)
4. Priviledges and Rights of Being a Canadian Citizen (3/4)
5. Canadians are Peaceful and Friendly (5/5)
6. Can't Answer or Don't Know (Re: Typical Canadian) (1/3)
7. Multicultural Identity (2/6)
8. Participating in Canadian Society (5/8)

M-theme 1: Allowed to Keep Own Culture (2)

M-theme 2: Having Canadian Identity (4)

Q 3: “What things about Canada and the Canadian people make you feel proud to be Canadian?”

1. Peaceloving (9/13)
2. Multiculturalism – Unity of Diverse People (6/9)
3. Freedom and Civil Liberties (7/12)
4. Canada Welcomes Immigrants (3/4)
5. Canadians have a Charitable Reputation at home and abroad (3/4)

Q 4: “ What things, if any, about Canada and the Canadian people make you feel ashamed of being Canadian?”

1. Way Natives are Treated (3/3)
2. Racism/Discrimination (5/6)
3. Not Ashamed (9/10)

Q 5: “What is it about Canada and the Canadian way of life that makes you feel that you belong here?”

1. Don't Belong (5/5)
2. I Feel Accepted (4/5)
3. People Make me Feel Accepted (3/3)
4. Joining the Community (2/4)
5. Freedom (3/3)
6. Not Coded/Misc. (3/4)
7. Stability/Security (economic, political, social) (4/5)

Q 6: “What is it about Canada and the Canadian way of life that makes you feel that you do not belong here?”

1. I Do Belong Here (5/6)
2. Racism/Discrimination (3/3)
3. Weather (4/4)
4. Language Barrier (9/10)
5. Physical Appearance (3/3)
6. Lack of Appreciation/Knowledge of Cultural Aspects (2/7)

Q 7: “Before we leave this section, do you have anything to add to what you have already said about you as a Canadian?”

1. Proud to be Canadian (2/4)
2. Nothing to Add (5/6)

Q 11: “What does it mean to you to be a _____ (give nationality or cultur of origin as identified in Q10)?”

1. It means Having a sense of Homeland/Roots (7/11)
 2. People are Honest and Hardworking (2/3)
 3. Pride (2/4)
- M-theme 1: Language (7)
M-theme 2: Culture/Customs (10)

Q 12: “What things about _____ and the _____ people make you feel proud to be _____?”

1. Born and Raised There (7/7)
 2. Hardworking/Resilient People (2/3)
 3. People: Spirit and Generosity (6/6)
 4. Tightly-Knit Community (4/6)
 5. Not Proud (2/4)
 6.)
 7. Art/Culture/History (2/7)
- M-theme: Proud of Homeland Achievements (2)

Q 13: “What things, if any, about _____ and the _____ people make you ashamed of being _____?”

1. Ashamed of Gov’t and Political Situation (12/13)
 2. Violence and War (4/5)
 3. Poverty (5/5)
 4. Not Ashamed (5/5)
- M-theme 1: Unequal Distribution of wealth (2)

Q 14: “What is it about _____ and the _____ way of life that makes you feel that you belong there?”

1. Born and Raised There – My Roots and Culture (6/11)
2. Family and Friends (4/7)

Q 15: “What is it about _____ and the _____ way of life that makes you feel that you did not belong there?”

1. Feel Like I Always Belong There (6/6)
2. Don’t Like the Style of Government (9/10)
3. Living in New Society = Feel Like I Don’t Belong (2/3)

Q 16: no themes

Q 17: “In what ways is the Canadian way of life similar to the _____ way of life?”

1. Similar in how Both Value their own Culture and Tradition (2/4)
2. Materialistic/Capitalistic (3/3)
3. People – Similar Personal Values (2/10)
4. People are Friendly (2/3)
5. No similarities (3/3)

M-theme 1: Importance of Education (2)
M-theme 2: Family (2)

Q 18: “In what ways is the Canadian way of life different from the _____ way of life?”

1. Different Values (5/5)
2. Cutural Customs are Different (3/3)

3. Canada has more Advanced Technology (3/3)
4. Canada has a Higher Standard of Living (5/6)
5. Education is Different (4/4)
6. Weather (5/5)
7. Gov't and Politics are different (4/4)
8. Work Ethic/Norms are Different (2/3)
9. Leisure time spent differently (2/3)

Q 19: "What factors help immigrants to become integrated into the Canadian way of life?"

1. Language (9/10)
2. Learning Canadian Customs (6/8)
3. Joining Community Groups (3/6)
4. Finding Meaningful Work & Education (3/4)
5. Friends/Social Network (3/4)
6. Having Children Encourages Integration (2/3)

Q 20: "What factors prevent immigrants from becoming integrated into the Canadian way of life?"

1. Language Barrier (14/15)
2. Qualifications Not Being Recognized (5/9)
3. Unemployment/Poor Employment Opportunities (3/4)
4. Unfamiliar with Customs (2/7)
5. Isolation – Keeping with Homeland People and Way of Life (2/7)
6. Racism/Discrimination (3/3)

Q 21: "Please explain the ways, if any, that immigrants from _____ are discrimination against in Canada."

1. Language Barrier (5/8)
2. Discrimination in Employment Situations (2/6)
3. Discrimination b/c Immigrants do not have Anglo Appearance – Racism (2/6)
4. Education is Undervalued or Not Recognized (1/3)
5. Certain Immigrant Groups Discriminated b/c of Past (2/3)

M-theme 1: Don't Feel Discriminated Against (4)

Q 22: "Explain how your loyalty to Canada and your loyalty to _____ are compatible with one another."

1. Compatible – No Reasons Given (3/16)
2. Compatible: Home Loyalty by Birth, Cdn. Loyalty by Choice (2/3)
3. No Loyalty to Homeland (2/3)

M-theme 1: Loyalties are Compatible – Proud to be from both Homeland and Canada (3)

Q 23: "Explain how your loyalty to Canada and your loyalty to _____ are incompatible with one another."

1. Loyalties are Compatible (12/13)
2. No Loyalty to Homeland or More loyalty towards Canada (2/5)
3. Not Coded/Miscellaneous (2/3)

Q 24: "Explain how your Canadian beliefs and values and your _____ beliefs and values are compatible with one another."

1. Values/Beliefs are Compatible (6/9)
2. Certain Customs/Religious Beliefs are Same (2/3)
3. Some Values are Different (3/4)

Q 25: "Explain how your Canadian beliefs and values and your _____ beliefs and values are incompatible with one another."

1. Beliefs/Values are Compatible (8/9)

2. Family Values are Different (4/4)
3. Raising Children is Different (4/4)

Q 26: “What do you understand is the intent behind Canada’s multicultural policy?”

1. For People to Live in Harmony + Encourage Equity (4/7)
2. Allow Immigrants to Share Knowledge + Strengthen Canada (2/4)
3. Celebrate Diversity – Imm. Keep and Express Own Cultural Identity (5/7)
4. Don’t Know Intent of Policy (3/3)

Q 27: “How would you evaluate this policy?”

1. Policy is Good, but there is Room for Improvement (3/4)
2. Positive Evaluation: Immigrants can share, teach, + express cultures (3/3)
3. Positive Evaluation: No Reasons Given (5/7)
4. Not coded/Undecided (3/3)

Q 28: “What are your views on immigrants who choose to become Canadians and forget the cultural customs, values, and traditions of their country of origin?”

1. Not my Place to Judge: People have their own reasons (5/10)
2. Bad Idea: People Shouldn’t Forget their Heritage (3/9)
3. Impossible to Completely Forget Background (2/3)

M-theme: It is Important to Adapt to Canadian Society While Taking the good and leave the bad from Home (5)

Q 29: “What are your views on immigrants who retain their loyalty to their country of origin, who retain their cultural customs, values, and traditions, and who do not wish to become Canadian?”

1. It’s Important to be a Full Participating Member of Society (3/14)
2. It’s not my place to Judge: People have the Right to Choose (3/7)

M-theme: People Shouldn’t come if they Don’t Want to Join (3)

Q 30: “What are your views on immigrants who wish to become Canadian while maintaining the cultural customs, values, and traditions of their country of origin?”

1. It’s OK to Retain the Customs & Traditions of Homeland (3/5)
2. It’s Possible to Manage Both Home and Canadian Beliefs, Values and Traditions (4/4)
3. It’s Important not to forget Who You Are and Where You Come From (3/7)