

## The meaning of multiculturalism for visible minority immigrant women

FATHALI M. MOGHADDAM AND DONALD M. TAYLOR  
*McGill University*

### ABSTRACT

Underlying Canada's multiculturalism policy is the assumption that maintaining the heritage culture is desired by ethnic groups. Every ethnic group researched thus far has shown strong support for heritage culture maintenance. However, the groups which have so far been the focus of attention have enjoyed relatively positive status. By contrast, this study focused on a sample of women from India, a visible minority group who enjoy less positive status in Canada. These women experienced psychological ambivalence towards the general issue of heritage culture maintenance, yet strongly supported the retention of particular aspects of the heritage culture. This apparent paradox is interpreted in the light of the discrimination and social isolation reported by these women.

An important development in the field of social psychology over the last decade has been a greater focus on the issue of intergroup relations generally (Billig, 1976; Tajfel, 1978, 1982; Taylor & Moghaddam, in press; Turner & Giles, 1981; Worchel & Austin, 1986), and minority group behaviour specifically (Doms, 1983; Moscovici, 1976, 1980; Moscovici, Mugny, & Van Ameraet, 1984; Mugny, 1982; Papastamou, 1983, 1986). This increased concern is partly a response to the greater desire shown by minorities in ethnically pluralistic societies for social and political independence. However, within this growing literature there is as yet insufficient research on a promising new approach to intergroup relations that is entailed in the Canadian policy of multiculturalism (see Berry, 1984).

The policy of multiculturalism, first introduced in 1971, involves a number of fundamental social psychological assumptions about intergroup relations. Implicit in the policy is the assumption that heritage culture maintenance is desired by ethnic groups. This central assumption of multiculturalism gains some support from evidence which suggests that both minority and majority groups are positively disposed towards heritage culture maintenance. A study of non-official languages found strong support among ethnic minorities for the retention of their heritage languages, as well as moderately strong support for the policy of multiculturalism itself (O'Bryan, Reitz, & Kuplowska, 1978). In a study of Greek Canadians, Lambert, Mermegis, and Taylor (1986) reported a strong rejection of the assimilation option and an equally strong desire to maintain the heritage culture in Canada. Finally, in a study of majority group attitudes, Berry, Kalin, and Taylor

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Requests for reprints should be sent to Fathali M. Moghaddam, McGill University, Psychology Department, 1205 Dr. Penfield Avenue, Montreal, P.Q., H3A 1B1.

(1977) reported a relatively positive attitude towards heritage culture maintenance among English and French Canadians.

There is, however, an important limitation to this literature, in that it has focused on groups that enjoy relatively positive status in Canada by way of their history, numerical importance, or organization.

A number of questions arise with respect to heritage culture maintenance with groups that may have had the negative experiences of prejudice and discrimination associated with their cultural distinctiveness. First, what are the attitudes of such groups towards the issue of heritage culture maintenance generally? Second, to what extent do they feel motivated to maintain specific aspects of the heritage culture when these are singled out in a negative fashion? Third, can we learn more about their views on multiculturalism by examining the social interaction patterns, information networks, and self-perceptions of these groups?

Women from India are a classic example of a visible minority group. They suffer the potential for "multiple discrimination" (Ghosh, 1984b) and are at the lowest levels of the status hierarchy in the Canadian context (Berry et al., 1977, p. 106). Among the studies carried out on immigrant women in Canada (Arnopoulos, 1979; Boyd, 1977; Danziger, 1974; Denis, 1981; Ghosh, 1984a, 1984b; Labelle, Meintel, Turcotte, & Kempencers, 1984; Naidoo, 1984; Ng & Ramirez, 1981; Proulx, 1984; Ramkhalawanasingh, 1981; Saunders, 1975), few have produced evidence bearing directly upon the extent to which visible minority immigrant women, such as women from India, wish to maintain their heritage culture.

The purpose of this study, then, was to explore the extent to which a group of visible minority immigrant women are positively motivated towards heritage culture maintenance. In order to gain a more in-depth understanding of attitudes towards heritage culture maintenance, we examined the social interaction patterns, information networks, and self-perception of this group.<sup>1</sup>

## METHOD

### Respondents

Respondents in this study were 104 women of Indian origin. All had been raised in India and had emigrated to Canada between 1965 and 1980. Over 66% had lived in Canada ten years or longer, their average length of residence in Canada being nine years. Four religious groups were represented in the sample: Hindu ( $n = 38$ ), Moslem ( $n = 32$ ), Sikh ( $n = 24$ ), and Christian ( $n = 10$ ). The sample was obtained through the co-operation of Indian community centres and cultural organizations. Our respondents were drawn from different locations scattered across Montreal, because the Indian population is not concentrated in any one geographical location in this city.

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Respondents were representative of a broad spectrum of age and educational groups. The mean age of respondents was 35; 29% were below 30, 47% were between 30 and 39, and 24% were over 40. While 27% of respondents had received university level education, 17% had only completed college education, and 36% had been educated at the level of secondary school or below.

Just over half the respondents (56%) worked outside the home and 93% had at least one child, the mean number of children for this sample being 2.0.

English was spoken to some extent by all respondents. Over 88% of them rated their English proficiency at seven (7) or more on a nine-point scale, where one (1) meant that the respondent spoke English "not at all" and nine (9) meant that she spoke English "very well." By contrast, 68% of respondents did not speak French at all.

### Materials

In the context of a formal interview, a twenty-five page questionnaire was completed by an interviewer on the basis of verbal responses given by the respondent. The topics in the questionnaire were as follows.

*Background information.* A series of demographic questions were asked, including age, citizenship, length of residence in Canada, level of education, English and French proficiency, number of children, employment, and religion.

*Heritage culture maintenance.* The respondents' general orientation towards heritage culture maintenance was assessed by three questions. The first question introduced the general debate on the issue of heritage culture maintenance in Canada as follows: "There is an important debate in Canada about ethnic minority groups. Some people believe that ethnic minority groups should *give up* their traditional ways of life and take on the Canadian way of life, while others believe that ethnic groups should maintain their traditional ways of life as much as possible when they come to Canada."

Respondents were first asked to state their own personal stand on this issue with respect to all groups in Canadian society; second, to indicate their stand on this debate with respect to their own Indian community; third, they were asked the same question with respect to all non-Indian ethnic groups. Respondents gave their answers on a nine-point scale, where one (1) represented total assimilation, "Ethnic minority groups should *give up* their traditional ways of life and take on the Canadian way of life," and nine (9) represented total heritage culture maintenance, "Ethnic minority groups should *maintain* their traditional ways of life as much as possible when they come to Canada."

These questions on general orientation towards heritage culture maintenance were followed by questions on more specific aspects of the heritage culture. Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they gave importance to a selected number of aspects of the heritage culture in the socializing of girls and boys. These selected aspects had been derived through a pilot study with a sample of the Indian community, and were as follows: language, religious ceremonies (e.g., Diwali, Id, Durja Pujan), cultural ceremonies (e.g. traditional dances), traditional values (relating to male-female relations), intergenerational relationships (e.g., respect for elders), child training, sports, clothing, food preparation, food appreciation, literature. Responses were made on a nine-point scale, where one (1) represented "no importance at all" and nine (9) represented "most important."

*Social interaction patterns.* Patterns of social interaction among respondents were investigated through a series of direct questions. First, respondents were asked, "Do you have Anglophone friends and/or acquaintances (these include neighbours and/or co-workers, etc.)?" The same question was asked about their Francophone friends/acquaintances. A second series of questions probed interaction patterns by asking respondents to rate the extent to which they socialized with members of their own group, Anglophones, Francophones, and other ethnic groups. Ratings were made on a nine-point scale, where one (1) represented "All of it" and nine (9) represented "None."

*Information sources.* A series of questions was directed at clarifying the extent to which respondents use the following information sources for obtaining information about Canadian society: English TV, French TV, English radio, French radio, English newspapers and magazines, French newspapers and

magazines, movies, husband, children, other Indians, Anglophones, Francophones, government organizations. A nine point scale was used to assess the extent to which the information respondents have received about Canadian society is derived from each source, where one (1) represented "No information at all" and nine (9) represented "All of the information."

*Self-perceptions.* Respondents' perceptions of themselves and how they believe they are perceived by Anglophones and Francophones were assessed through two sets of questions. The first set of questions required respondents to rate the extent to which they thought of themselves as a member of a variety of group labels.

The interviewer presented the respondent with the following labels: *immigrant, coloured person, Canadian, French Quebecer, English Quebecer, French Canadian, English Canadian, South Asian, Indian, Indian Canadian, Canadian Indian*, the respondent's *Ethnolinguistic group* (e.g., Hindi-speaking), *woman, individual person*. After the presentation of each label, the respondent indicated the extent to which she saw herself as a member of that particular category. Responses to each question were recorded on a nine-point scale, where one (1) represented "definitely yes" and nine (9) represented "definitely no." For the second set of questions, the interviewer asked the respondent to rate the same groups again adding "...only this time rate, not how you think of yourself, but how most Anglophones and Francophones think of you."

### Procedure

Respondents were interviewed individually in their own homes by female interviewers. The interviewers were selected for their first-hand knowledge about the Indian community. Both Hindi and English versions of the questionnaire were prepared and a combination of these two languages was used during most interviews. French was also used during some interviews. In the interview situation, the questionnaire remained with the interviewer, who read the questions one by one to the respondent. Respondents had in front of them a booklet of rating scales relating to the questions in the questionnaire. The respondents used these rating scales to select a response, involving a number from one (1) to nine (9), which the interviewer recorded on the questionnaire. This procedure allowed respondents more opportunity to concentrate on making assessments on the rating scales, because it freed them from the task of reading, interpreting, and filling in the questionnaire itself.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results will be presented and discussed in three sections, dealing with: heritage culture maintenance, social interaction patterns, and self-perceptions. Our primary emphasis will be on results treating the entire sample population as one group. The influence of a series of demographic variables, including age, education level, French proficiency, length of residence in Canada, religion, and citizenship on responses were systematically tested. However, only results showing consistent differences will be reported.

#### Heritage culture maintenance

In this first section, the focus was on the general attitude of respondents towards the issue of heritage culture maintenance. Responses on the issue of the general debate on heritage culture maintenance ( $M = 5.55$ ), heritage culture maintenance by Indian groups ( $M = 5.67$ ), and by other, non-Indian ethnic groups ( $M = 5.60$ ) were all very similar and near the mid-point of the scale. These responses seem moderate, whereas other minority groups whose attitudes have been investigated

TABLE I

Importance given to retaining different aspects of the heritage culture in the socializing of girls and boys

Aspects of the heritage culture		Importance given to the aspect in training of		t (100)
		Girls	Boys	
Language	<i>M</i>	7.89	7.85	1.07
	<i>SD</i>	1.29	1.37	
Religious ceremonies	<i>M</i>	7.52	7.48	1.42
	<i>SD</i>	1.70	1.71	
Cultural ceremonies	<i>M</i>	5.85	5.51	3.28**
	<i>SD</i>	2.19	2.13	
Traditional values	<i>M</i>	6.62	6.58	0.51
	<i>SD</i>	2.24	2.26	
Intergenerational relationships	<i>M</i>	8.00	7.98	0.00
	<i>SD</i>	1.15	1.15	
Child training	<i>M</i>	6.53	5.59	5.22**
	<i>SD</i>	1.95	2.02	
Sports	<i>M</i>	3.81	4.22	3.52**
	<i>SD</i>	2.03	2.24	
Clothing	<i>M</i>	5.93	4.98	3.75**
	<i>SD</i>	2.25	2.33	
Food preparation	<i>M</i>	6.37	5.46	3.54**
	<i>SD</i>	2.01	2.25	
Food appreciation	<i>M</i>	6.70	6.59	2.15*
	<i>SD</i>	2.08	2.08	
Literature	<i>M</i>	5.96	5.90	0.00
	<i>SD</i>	1.84	1.81	

\*  $P < .05$ \*\*\*  $P < .001$ 

on the same issue have shown strong support for heritage culture maintenance (Lambert et al., 1986; Lambert & Taylor, 1985).

The moderate responses shown by Indian women on the general issue of heritage culture maintenance may be interpreted in a number of different ways. For example, it might be argued that the respondents are committed to retain a balance between assimilation and culture maintenance strategies. From this perspective, these women want both to retain parts of their heritage culture and to assimilate to some extent into mainstream Canadian society.

However, a less optimistic alternative would be that the "middle-of-the-road" responses of these women reflect ambivalence. That is, these "mid-point" responses may reflect mixed and uncertain feelings as to which general strategy should or could be implemented in practice. This second interpretation seems to gain support from responses obtained when the respondents were asked about maintaining specific aspects of their heritage culture.

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they give importance to each of eleven selected aspects of heritage culture in the training of boys and girls (see Table 1). What is most striking is that values governing intergenerational relationships and heritage language were rated far above the mid-point of five (5). Thus, although respondents seem to be ambivalent on the general issue of heritage culture maintenance, they strongly endorsed the maintenance of certain basic aspects of their heritage culture.

In order to better understand the ambivalence shown by these respondents towards the general issue of heritage culture maintenance and the apparent paradox of strongly desiring the retention of certain aspects of their heritage culture, we turn our attention to social interaction patterns, information networks, and self-perceptions.

#### Social interaction patterns

A oneway ANOVA revealed significant differences between the extent to which respondents socialized with different ethnic groups,  $F(3, 103) = 133.66, p < .01$ . A post hoc comparison of means using a Neuman-Keuls procedure ( $\alpha = .01$ ) revealed that Indians ( $M = 2.81$ ) socialized more with their own group than with any other group. Also, they socialized more with other ethnic groups ( $M = 5.69$ ) and Anglophones ( $M = 6.00$ ) than they did with Francophones ( $M = 7.32$ ).

To conclude, respondents did most of their socializing with members of their own group. They also socialized to a lesser extent with members of other ethnic groups and Anglophones.

*Relationship between demographic variables and social interaction patterns.* A series of analyses was conducted to investigate the relationship between selected demographic variables, and the extent to which respondents socialized with members of their own ethnic group, other ethnic groups, Anglophones, and Francophones. Probably the most important question addressed in this section is, do women from India move closer to mainstream Canadian society over time, socializing less with their own ethnic group and more with Anglophones and Francophones as they stay in Canada longer?

An important finding is that there were no differences between the interaction patterns of those who had arrived before 1972 (earlier arrivers) and those who had arrived after 1979 (later arrivers). Neither the main effect for length of residence or the interaction involving "length of residence by ethnic group socialized with" was significant. Thus, our findings indicate that the interaction patterns of these women do not change in fundamental ways over time.

There were significant differences between the interaction patterns of high and low educated groups, and citizens and non-citizens. The interaction effect for "education by group socialized with" was significant,  $F(1, 47) = 3.37, p = .05$ . The interaction pattern reveals that compared with the low-educated group, the high-educated group socialized less with their own ethnic group (3.11 vs 2.26), but

more with Francophones (7.18 vs 7.96), Anglophones (5.93 vs 6.22), and other ethnic groups (5.36 vs 6.26).

The interaction involving "citizenship by group socialized with" was also significant,  $F(1, 100) = 2.74, p < .05$ . Compared with non-citizens, citizens socialized less with their own Indian group (3.13 vs 2.47), but more with Francophones (7.04 vs 7.61) and Anglophones (5.66 vs 6.35). These results indicate that respondents who were more educated and were Canadian citizens had relatively more social interactions with majority Canadians and less with their own ethnic group.

However, it is important to note that although the more educated group and Canadian citizens socialized more with majority group members than did the less educated group and the non-citizens, they still socialized far more with members of their own group than with members of any other group.

In conclusion, even women from India who were in the high-educated group and were Canadian citizens did most of their socializing with their own ethnic group, a little socializing with Anglophones, and next to no socializing at all with Francophones. This pattern was as true for women who had arrived before 1972, as it was for those who had arrived after 1979, as well as for both young and old age groups, and for Hindus and non-Hindus.

#### Information sources

The respondents' most important sources of information about the wider society were their husbands ( $M = 6.43$ ), their children ( $M = 6.19$ ), and friends from their own ethnic group ( $M = 5.57$ ). Relatively less ( $M = 4.80$ ) of their information came from government organizations (e.g., immigration centres, employment centres) and language schools for immigrants ( $M = 3.80$ ).

A  $2 \times 4$  ANOVA, language (French/English) by type of information source (TV, radio, magazines, friends) resulted in significant main effects for both language,  $F(1, 100) = 479.75, p < .01$ , and for information sources,  $F(3, 300) = 9.13, p < .01$ . However, these were tempered by a significant interaction effect for language by information source,  $F(3, 300) = 46.01, p < .01$ . Tests of simple effects revealed that English TV, radio, magazines, and friends were used as information sources more than French ones (6.25 vs 2.19, 5.04 vs 1.76, 6.17 vs 1.89, and 5.00 vs 3.13 respectively). Comparisons of means (Neuman-Keuls,  $\alpha = .01$ ) revealed that English TV and magazines were used as information sources more than English friends.

In summary, respondents received very little of their information about Canadian society through personal contacts with Anglophones, and even less of it through personal contacts with Francophones. Their main sources of information were their own family and ethnic community, as well as English TV and magazines. The finding that women from India have less social interactions with Francophones than with Anglophones is perhaps not surprising, given the histor-

ical influence which Britain has had in India. However, our findings indicate that even those women who spoke French, had arrived in Quebec before 1972, and were highly educated tended to experience these same social interaction patterns.

#### Self-perceptions

Self-perceptions were assessed by asking respondents to first rate the extent to which they perceived themselves as members of selected groups, then to rate the extent to which majority group Canadians perceived them as members of these same groups.

*Characteristics of the group labels.* The group labels were selected on the basis of a pilot study and can be usefully placed in three categories. *Category one* is composed of those social groups that are often perceived as having relatively low status and which tend to be the target of some degree of negative prejudice in Canadian society: immigrant, coloured, Indian, South Asian, women, ethno-linguistic group. *Category two* consists of groups that generally have relatively high status in Canadian society: Canadian, English Canadian, English Quebecer, individual person, French Canadian, French Quebecer. *Category three* consists of group compositions which entail both low and high statuses: Indian Canadian, Canadian Indian.

*How respondents perceive themselves.* Respondents perceived themselves first as women ( $M = 1.58$ ) and second as individuals ( $M = 1.92$ ). While the categories Indian ( $M = 2.14$ ) and South Asian ( $M = 2.97$ ) were also highly salient for them, they perceived themselves to be almost as Canadian ( $M = 4.78$ ) as they did coloured ( $M = 4.39$ ). Also, the score for English Canadian ( $M = 5.56$ ) was near the mid-point of the scale (i.e., 5.00). Respondents saw themselves least as French Canadians ( $M = 7.91$ ) and French Quebecois ( $M = 8.09$ ). Thus, according to the self-perceptions of respondents, they are first individual women from India, but also to some extent Canadian.

*How respondents think they are perceived by Anglophones and Francophones.* Respondents believed that most Anglophones and Francophones perceive them first and foremost as Indian ( $M = 1.75$ ), women ( $M = 1.75$ ), immigrant ( $M = 1.92$ ), coloured ( $M = 2.34$ ), and South Asian ( $M = 2.38$ ). In their view, most Anglophones and Francophones perceive them less as individuals ( $M = 3.10$ ) and far less as Canadians ( $M = 7.19$ ). Once again, group labels involving French identity, as in "French Canadian" ( $M = 8.41$ ), were nearest to the "definitely no" end of the scale.

In summary, respondents believed there to be a distinct polarization in the way most majority group Canadians perceived them, with the minority group labels at the "definitely yes" end of the scale and the majority group labels at the "definitely no" end of the scale.

*Differences between how respondents perceive themselves and how they believe Anglophones and Francophones perceive them.* Comparisons were made between



TABLE 2

Comparison of how respondents see themselves and how they believe majority Canadians see them

Group categories	Group labels		How Indian women see themselves	How Indian women think majority Canadians see them	t (100)
Low status labels	Immigrant	<i>M</i>	3.88	1.92	6.94**
		<i>SD</i>	2.73	1.43	
	Coloured	<i>M</i>	4.39	2.34	7.07**
		<i>SD</i>	2.78	2.11	
	Indian	<i>M</i>	2.12	1.75	2.10*
		<i>SD</i>	1.87	1.14	
	South Asian	<i>M</i>	2.97	2.38	3.00**
		<i>SD</i>	2.33	2.03	
	Women	<i>M</i>	1.58	1.75	1.21
		<i>SD</i>	1.18	1.45	
	Ethnolinguistic group member	<i>M</i>	3.56	4.09	1.87
		<i>SD</i>	2.43	2.56	
High status labels	Canadian	<i>M</i>	4.78	7.19	9.20**
		<i>SD</i>	2.60	1.88	
	English Canadian	<i>M</i>	5.56	6.88	6.26**
		<i>SD</i>	2.45	2.22	
	English Quebecer	<i>M</i>	6.23	7.00	3.21**
		<i>SD</i>	2.30	2.05	
	Individual person	<i>M</i>	1.92	3.10	5.42**
		<i>SD</i>	1.67	1.97	
	French Canadian	<i>M</i>	7.91	8.41	2.89**
		<i>SD</i>	1.75	1.28	
	French Quebecer	<i>M</i>	8.09	8.32	1.51
		<i>SD</i>	1.61	1.52	
Mixed status labels	Indian Canadian	<i>M</i>	3.88	3.88	0.00
		<i>SD</i>	2.24	2.27	
Canadian Indian	<i>M</i>	4.95	5.31	1.60	
	<i>SD</i>	2.41	2.47		

\*  $P < .05$ \*\*  $P < .01$ 

how respondents perceive themselves and how they think most Anglophones and Francophones perceive them (see Table 2). It is useful to discuss the results of these comparisons in terms of the three categories of group labels.

*Category 1: low status labels.* There were differences between the way in which respondents perceived themselves and how they thought most Anglophones and Francophones perceive them on four of the six labels in this category. Respondents thought that majority group Canadians perceive them more as immigrants than they see themselves; and also more as coloured persons, as Indians, and as South Asians than they see themselves.

Thus, women from India thought that majority group Canadians perceive them as belonging more to low status groups than they see themselves as belonging to these groups.

*Category 2: high status labels.* There were differences between the way in which respondents perceived themselves and the way in which they thought Anglophones and Francophones perceive them on five of the six labels in this category. Respondents thought that Anglophones and Francophones perceive them less as Canadian than they see themselves; and also less as English Canadian, as English Quebecer, as an individual person, and as French Quebecer than they see themselves.

In summary, women from India thought that majority group Canadians perceive them less as belonging to high status groups as they see themselves belonging to these groups.

*Category 3: mixed status groups.* There were no differences between the way in which respondents perceived themselves and how they thought most Anglophones and Francophones perceive them on any of the labels in this mixed-status category.

*Relationship between demographic variables, how respondents perceive themselves and how they think Anglophones and Francophones perceive them.* Do women from India who are older, have lived in Canada longer, or are Canadian citizens perceive themselves more as Canadians and less as immigrants? We report the results of analyses concerning this issue, because the group labels "Canadian" and "immigrant" are, respectively, the clearest representatives of the "high-status" and "low-status" categories of group labels.<sup>2</sup>

*Length of residence in Canada.* Earlier arrivers saw themselves less as immigrants than did later arrivers, but thought that Anglophones and Francophones see them more as immigrants than did later arrivers,  $F(1, 50) = 4.51, p < .05$  (see Figure 1). However, analyses of simple effects showed there to be no significant difference on how earlier and later arrivers saw themselves on the label immigrant,  $t(50) = 1.60, n.s.$ , whereas there was a significant difference in how they thought Anglophones and Francophones see them on this label,  $t(50) = 2.64, p < .02$ .

Earlier arrivers perceived themselves more as Canadians than did later arrivers, but thought that Anglophones and Francophones perceive them less as Canadians than did later arrivers,  $F(1, 50) = 9.69, p < .01$  (see Figure 2). Analyses of simple effects showed there to be a significant difference in how earlier and later arrivers saw themselves on the label Canadian,  $t(50) = 5.55, p < .001$ , but not in how they thought Anglophones and Francophones see them,  $t(50) = 0.78, n.s.$

*Age.* The older group saw themselves less as immigrants than did the younger group, but thought that Anglophones and Francophones perceive them *more* as

<sup>2</sup> There were also significant relationships between demographic variables and other low-status (e.g., South Asian) and high status (e.g., English-Canadian) group labels. We have not reported results of analyses relating to all these significant relationships because they follow the same pattern as results for the "Canadian" and "immigrant" labels.

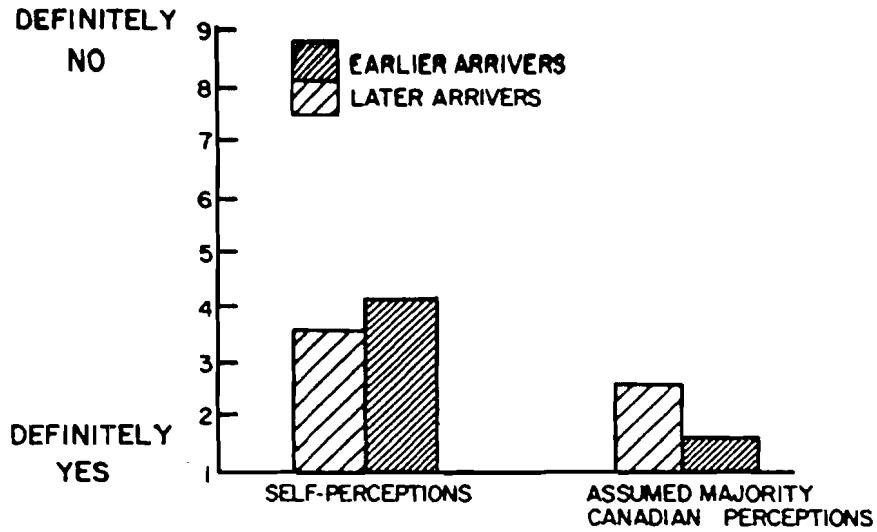


FIGURE 1  
*For the label immigrant*

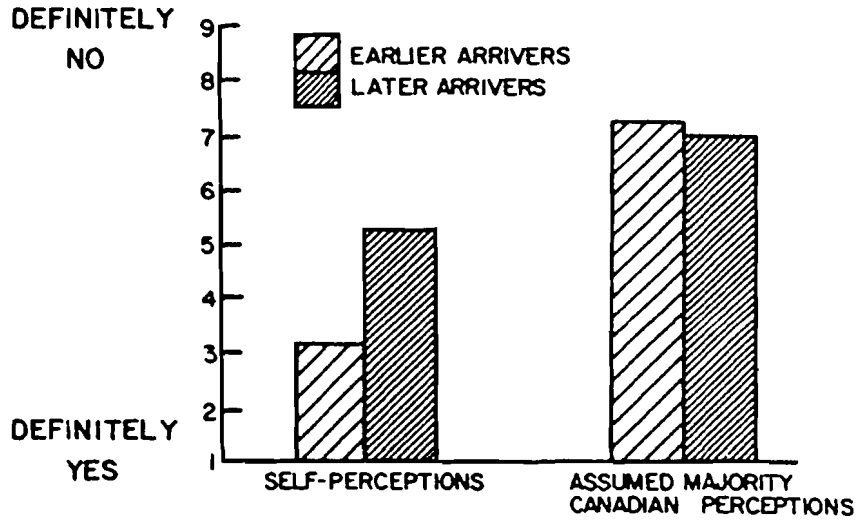


FIGURE 2  
*For the label Canadian*

FIGURES 1 AND 2  
*Earlier and later arrivers: Self-perceptions and assumed majority Canadian perceptions*

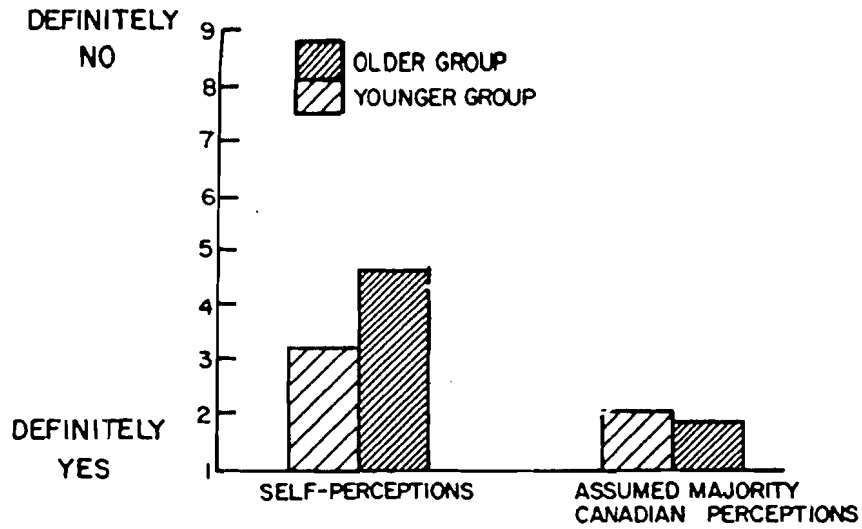


FIGURE 3  
For the label immigrant

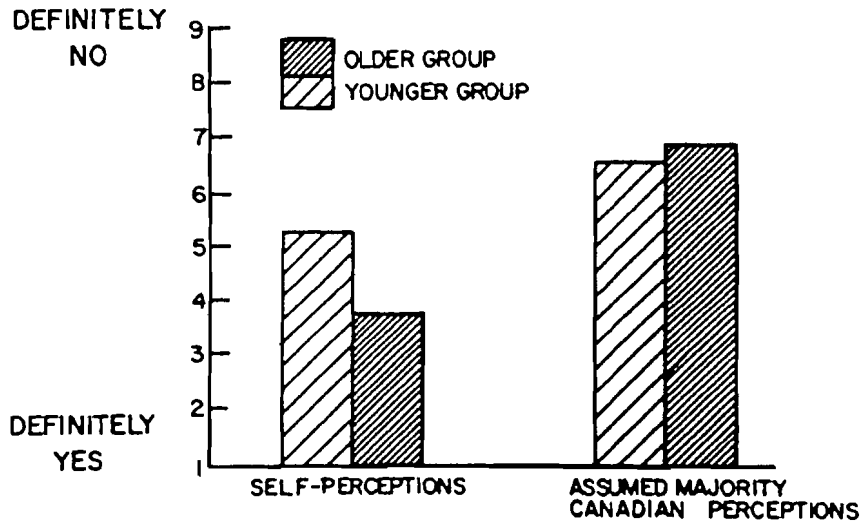


FIGURE 4  
For the label Canadian

FIGURES 3 AND 4  
Low and high age groups: self-perceptions and assumed majority Canadian perceptions

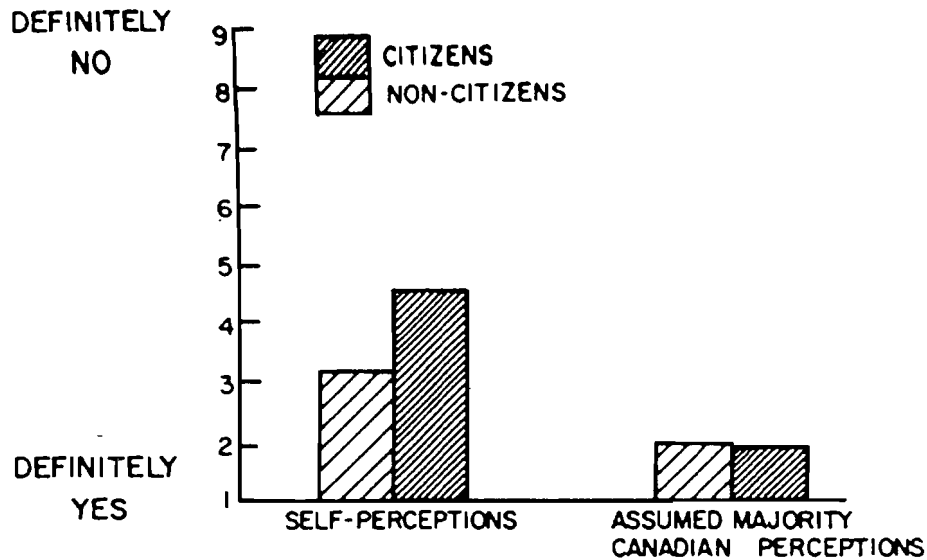


FIGURE 5

*Canadian citizens and non-citizens: self-perceptions and assumed majority Canadian perceptions for the label immigrant*

immigrants than did the younger group,  $F(1, 53) = 4.75, p < .05$  (see Figure 3). Tests of simple effects showed significant differences in how younger and older groups saw themselves on the label immigrant,  $t(53) = 3.83, p < .001$ , but not on how they thought Anglophones and Francophones see them,  $t(53) = 1.76, n.s.$

Similarly, the younger group saw themselves less as Canadians than did the older group, but thought that Anglophones and Francophones perceive them more as Canadians than did the older group,  $F(1, 53) = 5.44, p < .05$  (see Figure 4). Analyses of simple effects revealed significant differences in how younger and older groups perceived themselves on the label immigrant,  $t(53) = 3.95, p < .001$ , but not in how they thought Anglophones and Francophones see them,  $t(53) = 0.86, n.s.$

*Citizenship.* Following a similar pattern of responses already discussed under "length of residence" and "age," Canadian citizens perceived themselves less as immigrants than did non-citizens, but they thought that Anglophones and Francophones see them more as immigrants than did non-citizens,  $F(1, 102) = 8.68, p < .01$  (see Figure 5). Tests of simple effects showed there to be a significant difference in how citizens and non-citizens saw themselves on the label immigrant,  $t(102) = 5.46, p < .001$ , but not in how they thought Anglophones and Francophones see them,  $t(102) = 1.86, n.s.$

The interaction effect "citizenship by self-perception/assumed Anglophone-Francophone perceptions" was significant,  $F(1, 102) = 5.66, p < .05$ . Citizens ( $M = 4.00$ ) saw themselves more as Canadians than did non-citizens ( $M = 5.59$ ),  $t(102) = 4.12, p < .001$ ; but their perceptions of how much Anglophones and Francophones saw them as Canadian ( $M = 7.15$ ) was similar to that of non-citizens ( $M = 7.24$ ),  $t(102) = 0.23, n.s.$

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Unlike the relatively well-established ethnic groups who have been the focus of attention to date, women from India experience relatively low status and seem to feel greater uncertainty about their acceptance by mainstream society. This uncertainty seems to be reflected by their "lukewarm" reaction to multiculturalism generally. However, when it came to specific aspects of the heritage culture, such as language and intergenerational relationships, respondents showed a strong commitment to heritage culture maintenance.

Women from India feel that majority Canadians perceive them as *coloured immigrant women*, whereas they perceive themselves more as *individual Indian Canadians*. Women from India interact mainly with, and receive most of their information from, their own ethnic group. One outcome of this confinement within the ethnic group is that there are necessarily more opportunities to retain the heritage culture. Subsequently, we should be careful about interpreting *own group maintenance and development* (Berry, 1984) within this group as a result of purposive choice based on a genuine selection of alternative strategies.

Relative to how they perceive themselves, women from India thought majority group Canadians perceive them as belonging more to low status groups and less to high status groups. The low status groups on which there were significant differences—immigrant, coloured, Indian, South Asian—were those that have traditionally been associated with some degree of negative prejudice in Canadian society. The belief that majority groups perceive one as belonging to these groups more than one believes oneself to be member of such groups seems itself to be based upon perceived discrimination. Perceived discrimination also seems to be suggested by the belief that majority groups see one as belonging less to high status groups than one believes oneself to be a member of such groups. The assumption that respondents did perceive discrimination was supported by their responses to two questions. First, in response to the question "Have you ever personally felt badly treated in Canada because of your race?", 67.3% answered "yes." Second, in response to the question "Do you know an Indian who has ever been badly treated in Canada because of his/her race?", 89.4% answered "yes."

There were important differences between the extent to which respondents perceived themselves as members of the various group labels. Canadian citizens, older respondents, and those who have lived in Canada longer tended to perceive

themselves more as members of high status groups (as represented by the label "Canadian") and less as members of low status groups (as represented by the label "immigrant"). However, respondents' perceptions of how Anglophones and Francophones perceive them tended to be more similar, with one very important exception.

This exception is important because it suggests that while length of time did seem to lead to greater feeling of "belonging" in Canada, it was accompanied by a feeling that Anglophones and Francophones perceive "me" as a minority group member and less as a Canadian. The feeling that "I am seen as an outsider" seemed to have increased with time.

The focus in this study on women from India is important because it seems to suggest that the retention of heritage culture by an ethnic minority is not necessarily based upon strong support for the policy of multiculturalism itself, but might also arise from perceived discrimination and "forced" isolation. Thus, assessments of the implementation of multiculturalism policy in terms of "ethnic retention" by ethnic groups should, in particular, be complemented by explorations of the self-perceptions of individual ethnic group members.

#### RÉSUMÉ

La politique canadienne du multiculturalisme présume que les communautés ethniques cherchent à maintenir le patrimoine culturel. Jusqu'à présent, chaque groupe étudié a démontré un appui marqué pour le maintien du patrimoine culturel. Ces groupes, par contre, étaient bénéficiaires d'une position sociale relativement positive. Afin d'établir un contraste avec ces études antérieures, la présente étude a examiné un échantillon de femmes de l'Inde. Ces femmes, qui représentent un groupe minoritaire visible ayant une position sociale peu désirable, ont démontré une ambivalence psychologique envers la question générale du maintien du patrimoine culturel tout en démontrant un désir pour le maintien de certains aspects du patrimoine culturel. Ces résultats paradoxaux sont interprétés en fonction de la discrimination et de l'isolation sociale éprouvées par ces femmes.

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