

Haitian and Indian women rated their identification with (self-perceptions), and the extent to which they believed majority Canadians perceived them as being (metaperceptions), Haitian or Indian, immigrant, and Canadian. Self-perceptions and metaperceptions were compared in order to understand the quality of integration for the two samples. An attempt was made to predict self-perceptions on the basis of pragmatic (years in Canada, age at arrival, citizenship status) and social psychological (motivation for culture retention, perceived discrimination) predictors in a series of multiple regression analyses. Although both samples expressed a strong identification with their ethnic groups, different results emerged for immigrant and Canadian identifications. Identity perceptions for these labels were more closely related to pragmatic predictors for the Indian, whereas social psychological variables were more predictive for the Haitian. The results are discussed in relation to the different visibility of the two groups as well as other salient factors in a multicultural context.

THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL IDENTIFICATION FOR VISIBLE IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN A MULTICULTURAL CONTEXT

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Social identity and social identification are central to understanding the social behavior of individuals in a multicultural context. A number of social psychological theories have accorded importance to these concepts (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Taylor & Moghaddam, 1987; Turner, 1987; Turner & Oakes, 1986; Weinreich, 1986), and studies of intergroup behavior in both experimental and field settings have demonstrated their importance (e.g., Tajfel, 1978; Berry, Kalin, & Taylor, 1977). From a cross-cultural perspective, social

AUTHORS' NOTE: The writing of this article was supported in part by a research grant to the first author from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, as well as a Canada Research Fellowship. The authors would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on an earlier version. Correspondence should be addressed to Richard N. Lalonde, Department of Psychology, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3.

JOURNAL OF CROSS-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY, Vol. 23 No. 1, March 1992 25-39
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identification becomes particularly complex for immigrants who move from one cultural milieu to another. Immigrants face the challenge of resolving conflicting identifications, particularly when the values and ideologies of heritage and host cultures are at odds (Weinreich, 1983). Social identification can be even more difficult and complex for visible immigrants, who have to contend with being a minority on the basis of color as well as culture. The interactions between an immigrant and the host community are, therefore, expected to have a strong impact on the immigrant's identification with that community.

This article focuses on specific social identifications that are available to immigrants in a multicultural setting. As immigrants redefine themselves, new categories for social identification emerge. For example, by virtue of a move to a new country, the individual is labeled an immigrant. The same individual may apply for permanent residency status and be classified as a member of the host nation (e.g., Canadian). These new categories of identification are societally imposed, however, and are not necessarily internalized by the individual. The new categories often conflict with heritage culture identification, and immigrants may not wish to adopt them (Weinreich, 1983). Social identity, therefore, is multifaceted. An individual may choose or reject different social categories for self-definition. Although some research has explored the social identity of immigrants from a cross-cultural perspective (e.g., Liebkind, 1986), more work is needed to understand the complex dynamics underlying their social identifications.

A number of factors contribute to the strength of an individual's identification with a social category. A first set of such factors is very pragmatic: for example, time, age, and legal status. The longer immigrants reside in a new country, the less they feel like outsiders and the more they feel that they belong to the new society (e.g., Moghaddam & Taylor, 1987). Younger immigrants tend to be more flexible in their social identifications and more willing to adopt new categories of self-definition. Finally, formal procedures such as adopting the host country's citizenship may also influence certain social identifications. It can be predicted that individuals who immigrated at a relatively young age, who have been living in the host culture for some time, and who have become citizens of the host country would be more willing to identify themselves as members of the host culture, a new social category for self-definition. This prediction follows a functional model of social identification.

A second set of factors relevant to the social identifications of immigrants is social psychological in nature. Social identification is influenced by the social interactions that take place within a culture. Berry (1986) proposed a

social psychological model of immigrant acculturation and identification which is based on the individual's attitudes toward the heritage and host cultures. An individual's attitude toward the host culture develops from interactions with members of the host culture and is influenced by the receptivity of the host community. The impact on social identification can be assessed in two ways. One strategy would be to ask immigrants the extent to which they have encountered discrimination by the host culture either personally or against their cultural group as a whole. Weinreich (1986), among others, has stressed that the experience of discrimination strongly affects the self-image and the process of identification.

A second strategy would be to ask the members of the host culture to categorize the members of the incoming group on selected dimensions of identification. Weinreich (1983) has recognized the interactive nature of identification and made a distinction between aspects of identity that are recognized subjectively and those that are designated externally. These latter aspects, which Weinreich calls *alter-ascribed social identities*, come from the categorical ascriptions made by others (e.g., host culture). They can be assessed directly or indirectly by looking at what Weinreich has called *metaperspectives of self*, namely, how one views others as defining the self. For example, part of the self-definition of an immigrant woman will be derived from how she feels her family, her employer, and her neighbors perceive her.

This study examines the identity perceptions of visible minority immigrant women from two cultures. Richmond (1988) has proposed that visible minorities are more likely to experience social and economic discrimination than linguistic and religious minorities. Moghaddam and Taylor (1987) have suggested that visible immigrants have less of a choice of social identifications. Although they may want to become members of the host nation, they may feel that the members of that nation are not willing to accept them.

The two groups included in this study were Haitians and Indians (South Asian) in Montreal, Canada. Both are visible because of racial and cultural features (e.g., language). Of the two groups, Haitians are more visible in Montreal simply because of their larger number. Furthermore, media coverage has made Haitians more visible than Indians in Montreal, where they have been the subject of numerous stories dealing with discrimination in business, housing, and schools. These two ethnic groups are among the least positively viewed in a cross-national study of majority group attitudes in Canada (Berry et al., 1977). The setting of this study, Montreal, is of particular interest because most of its inhabitants come from either French or English cultures. It would be expected on the basis of linguistic similarity

that the acculturative environment would be French Canadian for the Haitians and English Canadian for the Indians.

From an experiential perspective, immigrants have at least three social categories that can be salient in social identification. First, the newcomer enters the host society with his/her original national identity (i.e., Haitian or Indian). Upon arrival, this person is classified as an immigrant. Finally, the immigrant may take on the host society's national identity by becoming a Canadian citizen. Two observations should be made about these categories of identification. First, they are not meant to be exhaustive or mutually exclusive. The categories were selected because they indicate the extent to which immigrants have integrated into the host culture. Second, these categories have different affective connotations attached to them, and an assessment of that affective meaning will be made.

Several predictions were made. Individuals with a recognized social status (i.e., Canadian citizen) should identify more with the host community (Canadian) and less with their initially imposed category (immigrant). Immigrants who were younger when they arrived in Canada or who have been residing there for a longer time should identify more with the host community and less with the category of immigrant. For visible immigrant groups, the experience of discrimination will be a better predictor of new social identifications than the pragmatic class of predictors. The rationale for this prediction is that the feelings of alienation brought about by discrimination will nullify the importance of factors such as the age of arrival and citizenship status.

It is further hypothesized that identification with the heritage culture will remain strong for individuals in this study, all of them first-generation immigrants. As noted by Liebkind (1986), taking on a new identity is a threatening experience, and the sense of belonging to an ethnic community may be one of the primary sources of security for the immigrant who faces the challenge of adapting to a new society. In addition, it is hypothesized that the motivation to retain the heritage culture will also be a predictor of new identity acquisition. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) postulates that individuals need a positive social identity and that it can be achieved by making the in-group positively distinct from relevant out-groups. Individuals who are strongly motivated to identify with their heritage culture are more likely to use that identification to enhance their sense of self; as a result, they are probably less willing to identify with other categories in order to make their cultural identification as distinct as possible.

Of final interest in this study was the interpretation of conflicting identifications. The study of different identifications may provide some indication

of the extent and form of social integration within the host culture. Individuals who have less conflicting heritage culture and host culture identifications may feel more integrated than individuals having more conflicting identifications. Furthermore, for the social categories under investigation, a larger discrepancy between self-perceptions and metaperceptions of identity may indicate greater feelings of alienation. It was hypothesized, on the basis of the work of Moghaddam and Taylor (1987) with visible immigrant women, that a discrepancy would exist between the personal identity of visible immigrants and the way they feel they are identified by others.

METHOD

RESPONDENTS

Respondents were first-generation immigrant women from Haiti ($N = 136$) and India ($N = 108$). The mean age of the Haitian sample was 35.12 and that of the Indian women was 32.83. The Haitian women had been living in Montreal for an average of 10.93 years, and 80% of them were Canadian citizens. The average years of residence for the Indian women was 13.61, and 81% were Canadian citizens. Although the profile of the two samples differed with respect to marital status and level of education, each sample seemed to reflect the respective population, as profiled in the 1981 Canadian population census. An important demographic difference between these populations is their relative size. As of 1981, Haitians represented 4.24% of immigrants to the Montreal region, whereas Indians accounted for 1.34%. From 1981 to 1985, nearly five times more Haitians than Indians immigrated to the Montreal area.

MATERIALS

The present research was part of a large-scale project addressing different aspects of immigrant integration.¹ The following variables were examined in the present study. The questions were formulated to be answered on a 9-point scale ranging from *definitely no* (1) to *definitely yes* (9).

Social identifications. Identity perceptions fell into two categories: self-perceptions and metaperceptions. The respondent was first asked to what extent she perceived herself as a member of her ethnic group (i.e., Haitian or Indian), an immigrant, and a Canadian. She was then asked how she thought

Francophones and Anglophones, the majority groups in Montreal, perceived her, using these same three labels (i.e., metaperceptions of self).

Value of group labels. In order to contextualize the three group labels in terms of their affective connotations, the respondent was asked to indicate the extent to which Canadian society positively values membership in the three groups (Haitian/Indian, immigrant, Canadian).

Perceived discrimination. Measures of perceived group and individual discrimination were assessed by aggregating responses on three items. The respondent was asked the extent to which her ethnic group was discriminated against on the basis of race, culture, and newcomer status (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$). The respondent also was asked to what extent she had personally been discriminated against on the basis of the same three categories ($\alpha = .77$).

Motivation for culture retention. Eight items were initially presented to examine the underlying motivation for heritage culture maintenance. A principal components factor analysis of the items revealed that the most important factor was identified by three items (i.e., culture is seen as part of personality, more confidence in getting ahead within the ethnic community, a hope of someday returning to the homeland). The factor was labeled *motivation for retention*. The three items were aggregated into a single measure ($\alpha = .58$).

Demographic variables. There were three demographic variables of interest: age of the respondent upon arrival in Canada, citizenship status (coded such that Canadian citizens were given a 1 and other respondents a 2), and the number of years of residence in Canada.

PROCEDURE

Respondents were interviewed in their homes by a trained interviewer of their own sex and ethnicity. A structured interview procedure was used in which interviewers were responsible for asking questions and recording responses. Respondents were asked to provide answers on the basis of a prescribed scale described in a booklet they were given. Interviews with Haitians and Indians were based on French and English questionnaires, respectively. Back translation was used to ensure equivalence of the two forms.

RESULTS

Perceived value of labels. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which Canadian society positively valued membership in the three categories of interest, in order to tap the possible affective connotation of membership in these groups. Responses were analyzed in a sample (Haitian vs. Indian) by group label (ethnic vs. immigrant vs. Canadian) ANOVA design. Significant main effects were found for sample ($F[1, 239] = 19.67, p < .001$) and for group label ($F[2, 478] = 224.75, p < .001$). The interaction was also significant ($F[2, 478] = 14.08, p < .001$), and Scheffé post-hoc tests of simple main effects were conducted ($\alpha = .01$). As expected, both the Haitian ($M = 7.77$) and the Indian ($M = 7.50$) samples rated the host culture label, Canadian, as being the most valued. In addition, the Haitian sample indicated that majority Canadians valued membership in the immigrant category ($M = 5.35$) more positively than membership in the Haitian group ($M = 4.29$). Conversely, the Indian sample perceived that Indian group membership ($M = 4.11$) was somewhat more valued than immigrant group membership ($M = 3.45, p < .05$). Finally, the Haitian sample perceived immigrant group membership as being more valued than did the Indian sample.

Identity perceptions. Identity perceptions were analyzed in a sample (Haitian vs. Indian) by group label (ethnic vs. immigrant vs. Canadian) by perception type (self-perspective vs. metaperspective) ANOVA design with repeated measures on the latter two factors. Significant main effects were found for sample ($F[1, 239] = 4.97, p < .05$) and group label ($F[2, 236] = 286.29, p < .001$). Significant sample by label ($F[2, 236] = 61.83, p < .001$) and perception type by label ($F[2, 236] = 69.19, p < .001$) interactions also were found. All of these effects were subsumed under the significant three-way interaction ($F[2, 236] = 16.75, p < .001$) presented in Figure 1. Given this higher order interaction, simple main effects were examined within samples using a Newman-Keuls procedure.

For the Haitian sample, the labels Haitian and immigrant were rated significantly higher than the Canadian label for both self- and metaperceptions ($p < .001$). Furthermore, Haitians rated themselves to be more Canadian than they assumed majority Canadians perceived them ($p < .05$).

The Indian women perceived themselves as being more Indian than Canadian or immigrant ($p < .01$). Furthermore, they perceived themselves to be more Canadian than immigrant ($p < .01$). At the same time, they felt that

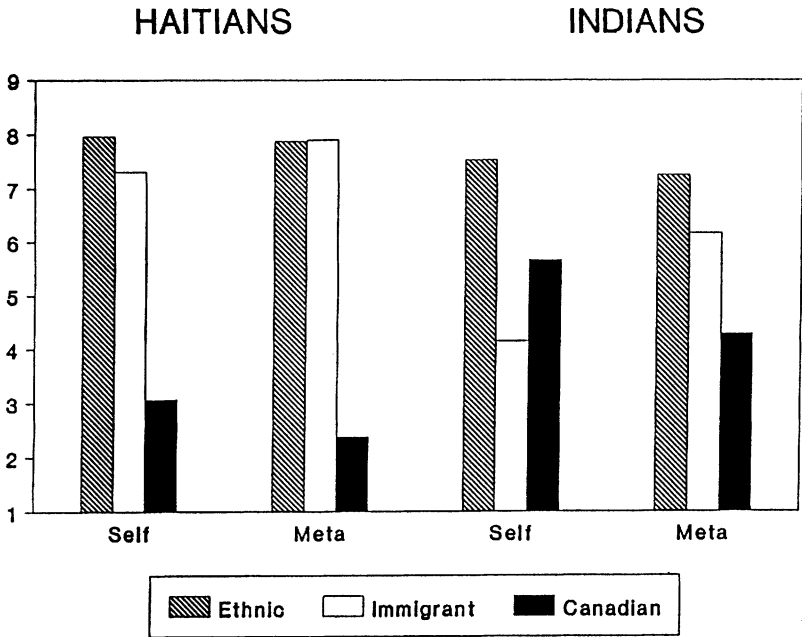


Figure 1: Self- and Metaperceptions of Identification

majority Canadians perceived them as being more immigrant than Canadian ($p < .01$). Like the Haitians, Indian women perceived themselves to be more Canadian than they assumed the majority perceived them ($p < .01$); they also perceived themselves as being less immigrant than they thought the majority perceived them ($p < .01$).

Between-sample comparisons using a Scheffé procedure revealed that the Haitian sample rated the immigrant label higher than the Indian sample for both self- and metaperceptions ($p < .01$). A reversed pattern of means was found for the Canadian label; the Indian sample gave it higher ratings than the Haitian sample for both self- and metaperceptions ($p < .01$).

Predictive analyses of self-perceptions of identity. In order to test the effects of pragmatic predictors (years of residence, age at arrival, and citizenship status) and social psychological predictors (individual and group discrimination, motivation to retain culture) on social identifications, a series of multiple regression analyses were conducted separately for each sample,

TABLE 1
**Stepwise Multiple Regression Analyses
 Using Self-Identity Perceptions as the Criteria**

	<i>Predictor Variables</i>						
	<i>Years in Canada</i>	<i>Age at Arrival</i>	<i>Citizen Status</i>	<i>Motivation Identity</i>		<i>Discrimination</i>	
				<i>Retention</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>R</i>
Haitian sample							
Haitian				.52***			.52
Immigrant				.43***	.26***		.56
Canadian				-.20*	-.30***		.40
Indian sample							
Indian				.43***			.43
Immigrant		.34***	.39***			.22**	.63
Canadian		-.29**	-.41***				.56

NOTE: Standardized β coefficients are presented in this table.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

using each of the self-identity perceptions as the criterion variable.² A stepwise procedure was used, with an alpha level of .05 as the criterion for retaining a variable in the equation. This procedure permits only significant predictors to be retained, thus permitting an identification of the best possible predictors.

The results of the six regression analyses are reported separately for each sample in Table 1. Standardized beta coefficients are reported only for significant predictors. Caution is warranted in a comparative interpretation of these coefficients because of the pitfalls involved in such comparisons (Pedhazur, 1982). The importance of the results lies in the presence or absence of a variable in the prediction of self-perceptions of identity.

The same result was obtained for both samples with respect to the prediction of self-identification with the ethnic group of origin: The motivation for the maintenance of culture for purposes of identity was the sole predictor. Women who had a stronger motivation to retain their identity indicated a stronger identification with their ethnic group.

There was a marked difference between the two samples with respect to which variables predicted their identification with the immigrant and Canadian labels. For the Haitian sample, motivation to retain ethnic identity and perceived group discrimination were positive predictors of identification with immigrant but negative predictors of identification with Canadian.

TABLE 2
Differences Between the Haitian and
Indian Women Samples on the Different Identity Predictors

	<i>Haitian</i>	<i>Indian</i>	t	p
Years in Canada	10.93	13.61	4.35	.001
Age at arrival	24.15	19.16	3.21	.001
Motivation for culture retention	17.38	14.46	4.40	.001
Group discrimination	18.56	16.32	2.84	.01
Individual discrimination	15.06	9.36	7.33	.001

Demographic characteristics were found to be the best predictors of immigrant identity and Canadian identity for the Indian sample. Indian women who were older upon arrival and who did not have Canadian citizenship were more likely to identify with the immigrant category, and Indian women who were Canadian citizens were more likely to see themselves as Canadian. Finally, the perception of individual discrimination was predictive of a greater perception of self as an immigrant for the Indian sample.

The samples differed from each other on the predictor variables. The means associated with the different samples for the predictor variables and the significance of these differences can be found in Table 2. It was found that on average the Haitian women were significantly older upon arrival in Canada but had been here for a shorter period of time than the Indian women. It can be seen that the Haitian sample reported significantly higher levels of individual and group discrimination and a stronger motivation for culture maintenance than the Indian sample.

DISCUSSION

Two central aspects of the results will be discussed: the significance of contrasting social identifications for assessing immigrant integration and the prediction of social identifications on the basis of pragmatic and social psychological factors. From a cross-cultural perspective on social identification, it must be asked if similar results would be obtained for other visible immigrants who are adapting to other multicultural settings. Furthermore, is it feasible to establish a general model for understanding the process of identification for immigrants from different cultures?

CONTRASTING SOCIAL IDENTIFICATIONS

Identification with a social group is partial and not absolute (Weinreich, 1983). By contrasting different social categories of identification, it is possible to determine which are most important and the extent to which they converge or diverge. With regard to self-perceptions of identity, both the Haitian and Indian women expressed the strongest attachment to their heritage group, as hypothesized. Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) would interpret this finding to indicate that ethnic in-group identification provides these women with some positive distinctiveness in their social milieu. Both the Haitian and Indian communities are at a social disadvantage in comparison to many groups in Montreal, however, and the women in both samples acknowledged that membership in their ethnic group was not positively valued by majority members of Canadian society. Their ethnic in-group still provides a set of cherished values that are distinct from those of the host culture (Weinreich, 1983). Furthermore, ethnic identification for these women is deeply rooted in attachments developed over a number of years and provides a much needed sense of security (Liebkind, 1986). A strong ethnic attachment is expected for all first-generation immigrants regardless of their host society, but a shift in this identification should gradually occur in future generations (Aboud, 1981).

The results pertaining to the Canadian and immigrant categories were particularly interesting, especially with respect to the discrepancy between self-perceptions and metaperceptions. First, consistent with previous research examining immigrants in Canada (Moghaddam & Taylor, 1987; Moghaddam, Taylor, & Lalonde, 1987), both samples in this study perceived themselves as being more Canadian than they felt majority Canadians perceived them. Such discrepancies may represent feelings of alienation and a lack of integration of ethnic and host nation identity. This interpretation could also be applied to the discrepancy existing between self-perceptions and metaperceptions of immigrant identification for the Indian sample. Indian women perceived themselves as significantly less immigrant than they believed majority Canadians perceived them. This discrepancy takes on added significance because the Indian sample perceived the immigrant category as being negatively valued in Canadian society.

These considerations suggest that certain aspects of identification are quite similar for the Haitian and Indian women. Both groups maintained a strong in-group ethnic identity, while indicating they did not feel part of the broader national group. Nonetheless, there were important differences between the two samples. Both self-perceptions and metaperceptions revealed

a stronger Canadian identification for the Indian sample, and a stronger immigrant identification for the Haitians. One interpretation of these results is that the Haitians felt less integrated within Canadian society than the Indians. Alternatively, the Haitian women may not have wanted to integrate into their new social milieu. The processes underlying these differential identifications are illuminated by the results of the regression analyses.

THE PREDICTION OF SOCIAL IDENTIFICATIONS

The sole predictor of ethnic identification for both samples proved to be the individual's motivation to retain her culture. For Haitian women the motivation to retain the heritage culture also was a positive predictor of immigrant identification and a negative predictor of Canadian identification. Haitian women who are motivated to retain their culture may attempt to make their ethnic group as distinct as possible. This can be achieved by identifying not only with the ethnic category, but also with the immigrant category, which they perceived as not being positively regarded in Canadian society.

We hypothesized that the experience of discrimination would be a better predictor of new identity perceptions than pragmatic factors. This hypothesis received more support from the Haitians than from the Indians. For the Haitians, the feeling of group discrimination was a negative predictor of Canadian identification and a positive predictor of immigrant identification. The new identity perceptions of Indians, on the other hand, were best predicted by a pragmatic model of identity formation. Indians who were younger when they arrived in Canada and who had received their Canadian citizenship were more likely to categorize themselves as Canadians and less likely to categorize themselves as immigrants. Nonetheless, feelings of individual discrimination played a role in predicting identification with the immigrant category.

Thus both social factors such as discrimination and practical factors such as citizenship status can have an impact on social identifications. These two categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. What remains to be explained is the discrepancy between the predictors of new identifications for the Haitian and Indian women. One factor that may have contributed to the different results is different visibility. Discrimination may have been more salient for the Haitian sample than for the Indian sample because the Haitians are a more visible minority by their numbers and therefore a more likely target of discrimination. The differential levels of discrimination reported by the two groups lend some credence to this interpretation.

Discrimination may play a greater role in the identity perceptions of Haitians because of the multiple disadvantages of being Black in North America (McConahay, 1986). With respect to the Indian sample, pragmatic factors such as age at arrival and citizenship status predicted new identity perceptions because they are less visible and therefore should have less difficulty integrating into the host society. To test this interpretation, the social identification of second-generation immigrants should be examined. The children of immigrants coming from more visible minorities should be less likely to see themselves as Canadians.

Certain additional differences between the samples might be used to interpret the results. On average, the Indians had been in Canada longer and were younger upon arrival. The Haitians may not have been in Canada long enough to feel part of the host nation. This is highly unlikely, however, because the number of years in Canada was not a successful predictor for individuals within each sample. It is also improbable that the younger age at arrival of the Indian sample can explain why this variable predicted new identity perceptions for Indian women but not for Haitian women, because both samples were on average well past adolescence when they arrived.

Other factors, not controlled in this study, might also shed some light on the results. The subgroups with which Haitians and Indians are attempting to acculturate may be different. If there are differences between French Canadians and English Canadians in their receptivity to immigrants, there would likely be differences in the social identifications of the immigrants who interact with them. Future studies should look at the quantity and quality of interactions between immigrants and different subgroups and the impact of such interactions on their social identifications.

Another factor that may influence the process of social identification is the communality of values between the incoming and established cultures. For example, one reason that the Indian sample showed a closer identification with the host culture than the Haitian sample may be that they share more fundamental values. Indian immigrants tend to be well educated and have probably acquired many of the values associated with industrialized nations. Haitians, on the other hand, come from one of the poorest nations in the world, and many of their fundamental values may be different from those of Canadians. This interpretation may partially explain why the Haitian women were more motivated to retain their culture than the Indian women.

The present investigation points to the following conclusions. First, it was shown that the comparison of self-perceptions and metaperceptions of identifications can provide a valuable index of the degree of social integration.

Second, heritage ethnic identity remained very strong for both groups, and it is probable that this is a basic finding that would replicate for different cultural groups in various host countries. Finally, the visibility of immigrant groups is an influential factor in multicultural settings.

NOTES

1. Other aspects of this project dealt with immigrant attitudes toward their physical environment (Moghaddam, Taylor, & Lalonde, 1989) and the discrepancy that exists between reports of personal and group discrimination (Taylor, Wright, Moghaddam, & Lalonde, 1990).

2. Results pertaining to the prediction of metaperceptions of identity are not reported in this article in order to achieve parsimony in the presentation of the data. The results of these analyses are available on request.

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