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# **A Story of Reefs and Oceans** A Framework for the Analysis of the “New” Second Generation in Canada

## **Discussion Paper**

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Policy Research Initiative

Paper one of a three paper series  
on the second generation in Canada and  
international experience

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## **Concepts and Definitions**

The three papers of this study will focus primarily on research examining the second generation. While somewhat limited in depth, sufficient findings are available to inform a discussion focused on identifying emerging issues and research gaps. Nevertheless, research on the integration of the children of immigrants, second generation or not, is also useful in certain contexts. These findings will be reflected in the analysis when appropriate within the confines of the definitions and connections described below.

### **Second Generation Canadians**

The term “second generation Canadian”, rather than “second generation immigrant”, is used throughout this paper. This is the result of an arbitrary decision on the part of the author that the term “second generation immigrant” is a misnomer. An individual is either an immigrant or not. If an individual is born here, they are Canadian. In terms of common usage, however, the term second generation Canadian and second generation immigrant are interchangeable.

### **1.5 Generation Immigrants**

The distinction between “second generation Canadians”, who are born here, and “1.5 generation immigrants” is complex. The 1.5 generation consists of individuals who were born elsewhere, but have spent most of their formative years in the host country. Typically, this means that they immigrated to Canada before their early teens. This is an inclusive definition that captures individuals from a number of different backgrounds with different characteristics. This presents a number of challenges. Cohort issues must also be taken into account. Studies may also use different age categories to define those who are 1.5 generation. This is particularly important, as age at immigration has been found to affect how well some members of the 1.5 generation integrate initially.

Nevertheless, in spite of these complications, research to date indicates that many 1.5 generation immigrants, particularly those who have spent a significant portion of their youth in Canada, appear to have attributes and outcomes similar to those of the second generation.

### **Visible Minorities**

As defined by the *Employment Equity Act*, the term “visible minority” refers to persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour. As already explained in the body of this paper, the story of the second generation is not simply an immigrant story. Visible minority status appears to be a key defining characteristic of the second generation youth of the future. As will be seen, such a marker appears closely associated with second generation Canadians experiencing challenges. Subsequently, research findings pertaining to visible minorities are applicable to this study, particularly when examining the challenges faced by the second generation.



## Overview

The immigrant story contains two broad narratives: the experiences of adult immigrants and that of their offspring. Much has been written about the barriers newcomers experience in adapting to their country of settlement, especially in regards to a lack of proficiency in the official language(s) of the host country, cultural differences, devaluation of credentials and experience acquired in their home country, and a lack of social networks. By comparison, the narratives of the second generation (i.e., those born to immigrant parents) and the 1.5 generation (i.e., those who immigrated at a very young age) are often described as positive with several common threads.\* Having spent their formative years in their adopted country, these individuals are believed to be spared the hardships their immigrant parents endured. Granted they would still need to reconcile the values of their country of ancestry, held by their parents, with those of the country in which they live. This is acknowledged as a significant challenge, particularly given that they must learn to balance these influences at the same time they begin to experience the complications and challenges of growing into adulthood. Nevertheless, on the whole, the second generation are expected to achieve a higher level of success than their parents and fully integrate into society, due in part to their parents' insistence on them excelling in mainstream society as well as due to their own perseverance. This is the expected storyline.

In the last few years, however, the experiences of the second generation have become an issue of some debate. The racial and ethnic composition of this group is fundamentally changing as a result of shifts in immigrant source countries. At the same time, recent research findings in Canada and other immigrant-receiving countries have revealed that the integration narrative described above is not always accurate and, in particular, fails to recognize the broader social integration challenges faced by second generation Canadians who are visible minorities. On the whole, it appears the pathways of integration for this group move beyond the narrow confines of the immigrant experience and diverge across ethnicity, culture and socio-economic status. Moreover, as the world becomes more connected, international events often have domestic impacts that must also be considered within the integration narrative. This is particularly applicable to today's youth, with their comfort and familiarity with information technology. Many members of the "new" second generation of tomorrow are today's youth. Taken together, it is clear that the time has come for a second look at the second generation.

This paper is the first of three that are planned to examine the "new" second generation in Canada and frame these findings within the international context. The focus of this, the first paper, is to establish an integration framework that can be used to assess research to date. It then uses this model to critically examine the integration environment in Canada towards the goal of identifying structural factors conducive or detrimental to positive integration outcomes, define policy implications and articulate key research areas. The second paper of the series will

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\* This paper is an expansion of a paper previously written by Jean Lock Kunz and Stuart Sykes entitled "A Second Look at the Second Generation". This paper was published in Volume 5:1 of Canadian Diversity.

utilize the model to evaluate existing evidence regarding how the second generation of today is integrating into society and flag important issues for consideration by policy analysts and researchers. Finally, the third paper will analyze the situation in other countries to provide additional context for the first two papers, clarify issues and dynamics that must be considered when considering developments overseas and identify what is possible and what is not in the Canadian situation.

## Why it is Time to Take a Second Look at the Second Generation

Current assumptions regarding the second generation are based on past cohorts. The composition of previous cohorts, however, is very different than the youth cohort currently entering adulthood. Future cohorts will likely differ even more; the second generation will increasingly be the children of visible minority immigrants from non-European source countries.

In 2002, among non-Aboriginal Canadians aged 15 and over, 17 percent (3.9 million people) were second generation. The largest group (36 percent) consisted of those with only European origins, particularly German, Italian, Dutch, Ukrainian and Polish decent, followed by those of British, French, or Canadian ancestry (32 percent). Fourteen percent reported European ancestry in combination with British, French or Canadian heritage. Finally, one in ten second generation Canadians had only non-European origins, most frequently Chinese or East Indian. This is largely a reflection of Canada's immigration trends up to the 1970s which were predominantly Euro-centric.<sup>1</sup>

Significant regional differences are apparent. One in four British Columbians aged 15 and over are second generation. Using the same measure, the proportion of second generation Canadians was 24 percent in the Prairie Provinces and 21 percent in Ontario. In comparison, 80 percent of the population aged 15 and over in Quebec had been in Canada for three or more generations. Reflecting the large numbers of British and European immigrants to Canada between 1901 and 1921, the second generation population of the Prairies had the highest proportion (42 percent) of European ancestry. In contrast, only 28 percent of second generation Canadians in British Columbia (BC) fell into this category, reflecting the large wave of Asian immigration to that province in the 1970s.<sup>2</sup>

The shifting composition of the first generation will result in visible minority status increasingly characterizing the second generation.

While this is the current situation, a number of profound shifts are currently underway that will transform the racial and ethnic composition of the second generation. In 2002, almost one in two (46 percent) first generation Canadians aged 15 and over reported non-European origins. Chinese, East

Indian, Filipino, and Vietnamese are the most common ancestral groups reported. By comparison, 31 percent of first generation Canadians were of European origins, mostly Italian, German, Portuguese, and Polish.<sup>3</sup> This shifting composition within the first generation will naturally change the composition of second generation youth that follow.

Like composition, distribution patterns also appear to be shifting. In both Ontario, with 34 percent, and BC, with 33 percent, the first generation constitutes a particularly large percentage of the population over the age of 15. This will likely result in future second generation cohorts playing a particularly large role in these provinces. In addition, while second and 1.5 generation Canadians are typically more urban than those who are third or later generations, this is especially true

among those who are visible minorities. At present, almost all (93 percent) second generation Canadians of non-European origins reside in the census metropolitan areas. In contrast, only two in three (68 percent) second generation Canadians who are not visible minorities can be found in these same urban areas.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, running parallel to this process of urbanization are increases in the numbers of distinct single ethnic neighbourhoods in these cities.<sup>5</sup> By extension, this suggests that current and future second generation youth cohorts are more likely to grow up in neighbourhoods predominantly populated by co-ethnics. Thus, this research indicates that the second generation, now and in the future, will have very different experiences integrating into Canadian society than the cohorts which preceded them.

Because of their changing characteristics, the second generation are on the leading edge of broader conceptions of social integration that focus less on transitions and more on personal characteristics.

From this preliminary survey of data, it is clear that the Canadian situation and experiences of the second generation are fundamentally changing at the national, regional and, in many cases, local levels. Visible minority status will come to define the country's second generation. The implications of this are profound; because of their changing characteristics, visible minority second generation Canadians today,

who are representative of future cohorts, appear to be best understood as at the intersection of two separate streams of inquiry. As in the past, they continue to exist on the trailing edge of research focusing primarily on the transitions associated with the immigrant integration experience. However, because of their changing characteristics, they are also on the leading edge of broader conceptions of social integration that focus less on transitions and more on personal characteristics. This intersection suggests the need for an expanded consideration of the challenges faced by the second generation. Nevertheless, despite a variety of research findings indicating that recent immigrants and visible minorities in Canada may be disadvantaged in a number of ways, little research has been completed on what this "new" second generation may experience.

Throwing this knowledge gap into even sharper relief is the fact that in other countries the experiences and challenges of the second generation are increasingly an area of study and debate. This is particularly so in European states, where the second generation have figured prominently in both media and scholarly reports on social unrest and terrorist incidents. Scholars in the United States have also been looking at this issue for the better part of a decade. As a result, a dearth of research on the experiences of this group in Canada would appear to be an issue that should be addressed.

### **Developing an Evaluative Framework**

Integration is a highly complex issue. It can be understood both as a process and as an outcome. It is also a concept with multiple personal, social and economic dimensions. As a result, if this issue is to be properly explored, it is necessary that a conceptual model be created in which findings can be evaluated.

A conceptual model can facilitate disparate data being considered together as a coherent whole towards identifying policy implications and knowledge gaps.

This is particularly important in regards to the second generation if policy implications and knowledge gaps are to be clearly identified. At present, there is a fairly sizable body of research examining issues that involve the second generation but these various findings have not been systematically integrated into a coherent analysis. As a result, a conceptual model can serve as an evaluative framework that facilitates disparate data

being considered together as a coherent whole towards identifying policy implications. Such a framework also supports the identification of knowledge gaps by clearly identifying areas and issues which are important but for which there is little information.

This framework can be built using research from a number of fields. Data and surveys of second generation nationals around the world have been used to map out the ways in which the second generation have, and have not, integrated into host societies. Utilizing this disparate data is a challenge; different attitudes and traditions regarding citizenship and immigration, distinct combinations of immigrant source countries, and disparate data sources make it difficult to make comparisons and apply lessons and research approaches in different national contexts. Similarly, some researchers have observed that the unique methodologies and approaches of the diverse array of disciplines, such as psychology, sociology and economics, involved in research to date may also affect where emphasis is placed on findings.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, as observed by many, including John Berry and Alejandro Portes, a number of elements are held in common across studies. These similarities, along with Canadian research pertaining to labour market integration, social capital, and community effects, form the basis of this paper's conceptual model and evaluative framework.

**The Building Blocks: Determinants of Integration**

When evaluating the challenges faced by the second generation it is useful to define the process of personal adaptation and broader social integration (a process described from this point forward as “acculturation”, described in Subject Box 1) as the product of interactions between two factors: internal personal characteristics and external environmental influences.

The importance of personal characteristics, such as emotional maturity, intellect, coping skills, knowledge, and human capital, should not be underestimated. These characteristics define how an individual perceives and reacts to their external environment. As a result, even if external influences encourage the adoption of a specific form of acculturation (or “acculturation pattern” as described in Subject Box 1) this does not mean that such influences are destiny.

Societal contextual factors are best understood as the ocean in which a fish resides, while the social milieu is the reef on which the fish experiences life.

Nevertheless, research has determined that certain external factors frequently exert powerful effects. While not always large or evident, external influences are always present. In general, these factors can be broken down into two separate but related categories; societal contextual factors which, in effect, form the backdrop and give context to the lived experiences of the second generation, and the “Social Milieu”, which is the more immediate environment in which the second generation directly encounters external stimuli. Put another way, societal contextual factors are best understood as the ocean in which a fish resides, while the social milieu is the reef on which the fish experiences life.

### **Subject Box 1: The Concept of Acculturation**

Acculturation is a concept rooted in the fields of psychology and sociology that refers to how individuals in a society and the society itself adapt to reach a positive equilibrium. It is a two way process. Individuals adjust aspects of their identity to reflect broader societal influences and norms. The host society adjusts its structure to make clear expectations and paths to broader social incorporation. Over time, characteristics of the individual, or groups of individuals, may alter these broader societal expectations.

It is commonly accepted that there are diverse patterns of acculturation and adaptation. Cultural loss by individuals is not predestined, nor is the homogenization of the larger society. For the individual, adaptation typically takes place in regards to two spheres of identity. The first is psychological adaptation, which refers to characteristics that are internal, such as few psychological problems, a sense of self-esteem, and life satisfaction. The second is socio-cultural adaptation, which refers to the quality of the relationships between the individual and their socio-cultural contexts, such as attitudes towards school, lack of problem behaviours in communities, and similar interfaces.

As explored in detail within paper one, certain environmental conditions and forms of social interaction influence how individuals acculturate. Often this process is portrayed as a “strategy”, where an individual chooses their path in response to inputs. Without passing judgement on this interpretation, this and the other papers of the series will instead describe acculturation processes and outcomes as “patterns”, which does not indicate one way or the other whether an individual has conscious control over the acculturation process.

*Source: John Berry, Jean S. Phinney, Kyunghwa Kwak, and David Sam. John W. Berry, Jean S. Phinney, David L. Sam, and Paul Vedder, Immigrant Youth in Cultural Transition: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation across National Contexts. Mahwah. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers. 2006. pp 3-14*

### **The Ocean: Societal Contextual Factors**

Looking at the ocean, societal contextual factors establish the confines and norms that dictate what is favoured within a society. The ocean does this largely by being filled with salt water, a characteristic that naturally affects what organisms can and cannot thrive. For example, fins and flippers are favoured over legs, although great variation is still possible, as demonstrated by differences between jellyfish,

turtles and the clownfish. But oceans are also defined by currents that, directly and indirectly, encourage and discourage fish and other wildlife to pursue certain paths. These sorts of characteristics can be equated with the influences and social constructs within mainstream society as a whole that affect how the second generation (as well as immigrants) engage and are engaged by society. Broad social attitudes and expectations regarding the concept of citizenship and how cultural groups should associate with society figure prominently in this dynamic. These attitudes are basically a product of two factors, namely history and current events.<sup>7</sup> A country's history defines its basic character and attitudes. From this perspective, countries can frequently be classified as either older "origin" societies or as younger "immigrant" countries. Older "origin" societies are frequently ethnically based with a shared sense of history and a more elitist concept of citizenship that can restrict full social and economic access. These societies are akin to uniformly salty oceans with a few strong currents. Younger "immigrant" countries, in contrast, are characterized by national myths about origins and development that revolve around immigration and a shared future rather than ethnicity and a shared history. Citizenship is much more accessible. Using the ocean analogy these societies would be best described as bodies of water that vary greatly from place to place in regards to depth and salinity and which are filled with many currents which are typically quite weak.<sup>8</sup>

Discrimination plays a particularly important role in acculturation.

Current events, both domestic and abroad, further refine governmental and societal attitudes towards specific groups. In particular, Portes and Rumbaut have observed that attitudes can differ towards different racial groups depending on perceptions of hardship, (refugees and asylum seekers), legality (legal versus illegal immigrants) and criminality (associations with drug trafficking, organized crime, terrorism, etc.).<sup>9</sup> Kymlicka has identified similar factors that can influence attitudes towards diversity, adding that cultural practices can also influence attitudes in host countries.<sup>10</sup> These discriminatory attitudes, particularly if they can be perceived as being endorsed or tolerated by mainstream society, can exert powerful influences on the acculturation process (see Subject Box 2).

Finally, while not fully explored, domestic and international policies also likely contribute to defining the broad societal context of the host country. Through either giving expression to the attitudes described above on the domestic and international stage or by actively supporting broader societal values that may not align with cultural beliefs held by some members outside of the majority, new stresses and social cleavages can be created.

### **Subject Box 2: Discrimination: An Oceanic Undertow**

Perceptions of discrimination have been found to be highly corrosive to both psychological (e.g., feelings of self-esteem and self-worth) and sociocultural (e.g., feelings of belonging to a larger group) acculturation. Indeed, more than one researcher has found that feelings of being discriminated against can be self-reinforcing, with those feeling persecuted turning in on themselves and towards their ethnic communities. This, in turn, can reinforce ethnic identities further highlight cultural differences and invite more discrimination. Through this process a self-reinforcing cycle can be created.

Discrimination is typically described as taking one of two forms: interactions between individuals and interactions between institutions and individuals. Research on acculturation has not really disaggregated whether perceptions of one form of discrimination is more closely associated with the patterns described above. Quite likely, when broader society appears to support or condone these discriminatory attitudes through “systemic” discrimination, or appears to not care enough to take serious action to remedy the situation, negative perceptions are more likely to take root. This hypothesis needs to be explored in greater detail.

Nevertheless, research on acculturation has clearly identified that feelings of discrimination play a disproportionate role in the adoption of acculturation strategies that result in outcomes where the second generation are not included within broader society. The implications of this finding for policy will be discussed in greater detail towards the end of this paper.

*Source: Paul Vedder, Fons J.R. van de Vijver, and Karmela Liebkind, Predicting Immigrant Youths' Adaptation Across Countries and Ethnocultural Groups, ”, from John W. Berry, Jean S. Phinney, David L. Sam, and Paul Vedder, Immigrant Youth in Cultural Transition: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation Across National Contexts. Mahwah. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers. 2006. pp 156-157.*

### **The Reef: The “Social Milieu”**

The attitudes, expectations and capabilities of the second generation are influenced and shaped by the “social milieu” in which they grow up, consisting of their parents, peers and resources of their ethnic community. This directly shapes the attitudes and expectations that will underpin their acculturation pattern.

As the ocean is full of reefs, so too is broader society filled with social milieus. Reefs are the anchor points for most life in an ocean; they shelter, nurture and protect. The social milieu plays a similar role in the acculturation process and is defined by the influences and attitudes experienced within the envelope of relationships and activities that defines one’s daily life. This includes attitudes and ideas that can be experienced in places such as the home, school or workplace from family, friends, peers, and co-workers. The media is also a component of the social milieu as that is where it is directly experienced but, conceptually, it is somewhat unique in as much as it is a medium of communicating information between actors within society and the milieu as well as an actor itself. These unique attributes are worthy of specific study.<sup>11†</sup>

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† The unique role of the media in multiculturalism was also identified as an area for research during a series of regional roundtables exploring the future of multiculturalism in 21<sup>st</sup> century Canada organized by the Policy Research Initiative in early 2007.

Taken together, these influences are best understood as having a more direct and immediate effect on the acculturation of the second generation than broader societal factors. This is because the milieu both filters broader societal factors as well as incorporates the specific social and economic environment in which the second generation resides. This helps define attitudes and expectations towards both their parent's cultural heritage and local perceptions of mainstream society.<sup>‡</sup>

The milieu, however, is constantly evolving. In part it is influenced by mainstream society. Just as ocean temperature, salinity and currents can influence the size and shape of a reef, broader societal barriers can act as influences by informing expectations and attitudes within the milieu. In addition, as is the case with organisms on a reef, the aggregated effects of many individuals can influence not only the individual but shape the milieu itself. For example, the language skills and labour market outcomes of the parents of the second generation have been found to affect hierarchical relationships in the home associated with delinquency and integration into groups at the margins of society.<sup>12</sup> Within the milieu, at the household level, these relationships affect the second generation child directly. Aggregated though, these same outcomes affect the character of the ethnic communities where many second generation Canadians come of age. In addition, “Ethical Capital”, which is a product of networks, norms and expectations within a defined ethnic community, can have particularly pronounced effects (see Subject Box 3). Subsequently, the social milieu, like the coral of a reef, is best viewed as organic. It shapes the lives of those who reside in it, but is also shaped by the aggregated effects of these individuals.

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<sup>‡</sup> It is necessary to note that perceptions of what is “mainstream” can vary significantly from place to place.

### **Subject Box 3: Ethnic Capital: The “School” in which the Second Generation Swim**

Much like a school of fish will influence the behaviour of an individual fish, networks facilitated or established by strong communities can create powerful social and economic connections and norms that can directly influence how members of the second generation interact with each other, their ethnic community and mainstream society.

Called “ethnic capital” by Borjas, this set of relationships influences both the outlooks of the second generation and the opportunities that are open to them.\* Ethnic capital is like social capital in as much as the networks it provides reduce the opportunity cost of transactions using these connections. Subsequently an individual may focus their efforts and attention towards activities that utilize these networks, thus shaping their acculturation pattern.

Ethnic capital is more, however. Networks based on ethnicity or religion are frequently imbued with norms and expectations that directly influence the attitudes of those within the network. As a fish that darts around inside a school will become bruised and exhausted, so too can second generation individuals when they violate ethnic capital norms. Specifically, attitudes in the broader community in which the second generation child is raised can affect decisions and behaviour, towards such matters as education and employment. These attitudes can be reinforced by one’s peers if they are also steeped in the same values and expectations associated with their ethnic capital. As a result, ethnic capital can play a large role in shaping acculturation patterns among the second generation.

*Source: Phinney, Berry, Vedder, and Liebkind, pp 80-81. Also Portes and Rumbaut, pp 64-69. Also George J. Borjas, Heaven’s Door: Immigration Policy and the American Economy. (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1999. pp 146-160.*

### **The Framework: Patterns of Acculturation**

This combination of factors, consisting of both social influences that affect personal attitudes and societal characteristics that affect how the second generation is received by society, interact in a manner that defines how a member of the second generation integrates (see Figure 1). Reflecting different national contexts, the importance and role of each factor has varied in studies of different countries. In the American context, Portes has placed a great deal of emphasis on family hierarchical relations and the presence in American society of “counter cultures” within urban ghettos that facilitate “segmented integration”.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, looking more broadly at a number of countries, Berry, Phinney, Sam and Vedder speak more generally about the role of peers and language.<sup>14</sup>

Distinct acculturation strategies have been identified.

Nevertheless, while emphasis, language and phrases vary, similarities are also apparent. Shared in common is the fact that three of the four forms of acculturation strategies that have been identified are markedly similar, as are the outcomes with which they are typically associated:

**Selective acculturation (also called “integrative”)** – Through strong support from their parents and ethnic communities and robust exposure to mainstream societal influences and opportunities, members of the second generation select characteristics of each when defining their identity. Typically, this pattern is

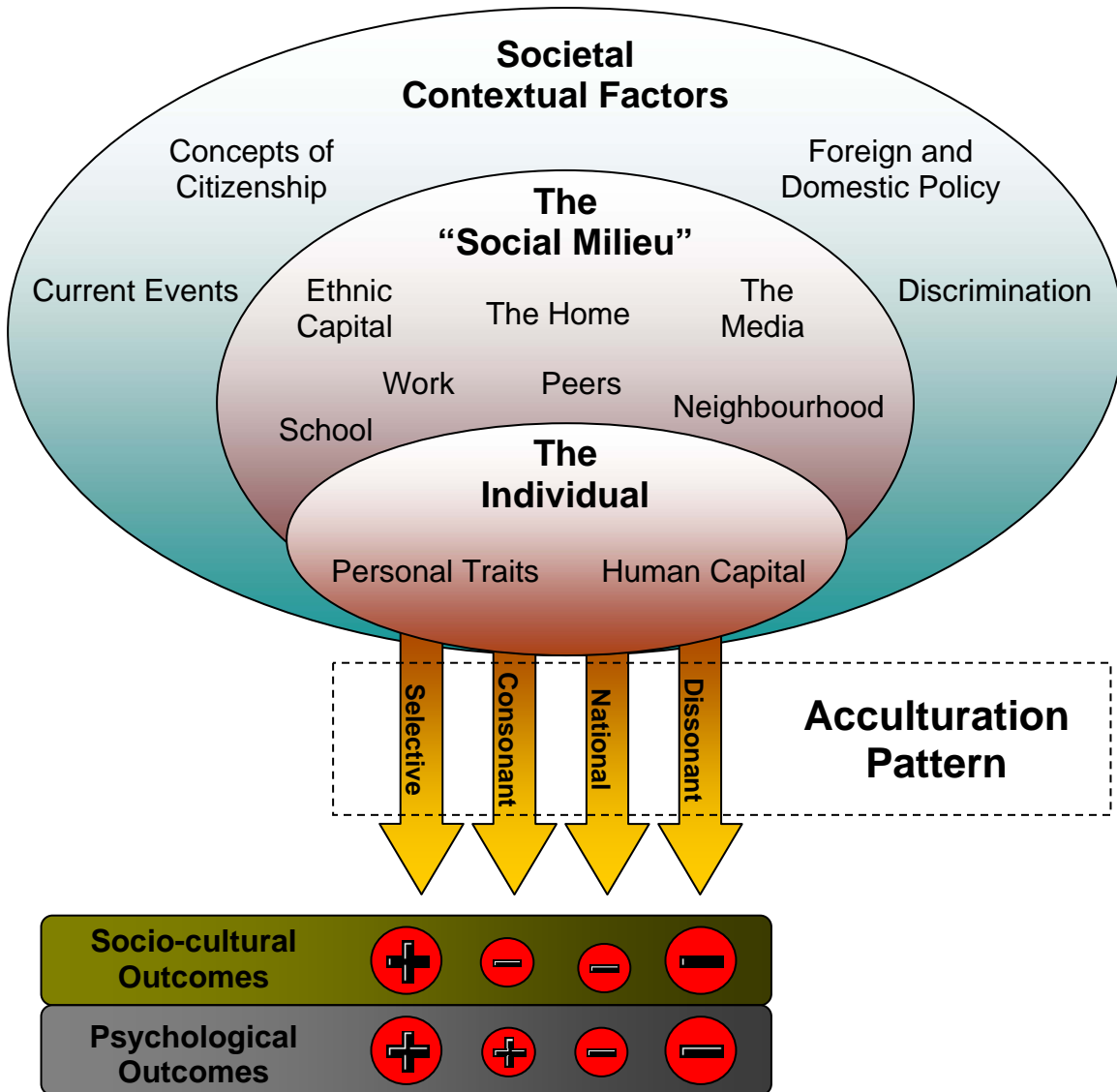
strongly associated with upward social integration and psychological adaptation, strong language skills in both one's ethnic and national language and a mix of peers from both communities.<sup>15</sup>

**Consonant acculturation (also called “ethnic”)** – Members of the second generation integrate primarily through their ethnic community and have a strong ethnic attachment. This form of acculturation, while generally resulting in relatively positive measures of psychological adaptation, such as self-esteem, still typically results in distorted integration into mainstream society and poorer socio-cultural integration. Weaker mainstream language skills and a preponderance of peers from one's ethnic community have been identified as characteristics of this profile.

**Dissonant acculturation (also called “diffuse”)** – Members of the second generation integrate into an existing societal underclass. This pattern underpins Portes' segmented integration model, but Sam, Vedder, Ward and Horenczyk have also identified a similar profile defined by poor proficiency in one's ethnic language, weak supports from one's ethnic community, and peers on the margins of society.

**National acculturation** – Phinney, Berry, Vedder, and Liebkind have also identified a fourth acculturation pattern which they refer to as “National”. In this profile, second generation youths have weak attachments to their ethnic community and language, instead focusing almost exclusively on integrating into the national mainstream society. Importantly, those who followed this path were found to be significantly less well integrated, both psychologically and socio-culturally, than those who followed the selective integration model. Consonant acculturation patterns are associated with better psychological outcomes and similar socio-cultural outcomes than National acculturation, making this form one of the two worst (see Figure 1).<sup>16</sup>

**Figure 1: The Acculturation Process - Factors, Patterns and Outcomes**



**Selective Acculturation – An Ideal Based Upon a Cultural Dialogue**

There can be no debate or personal discovery without the presence of difference.

When looking at the four patterns of acculturation and their outcomes a key defining characteristic of selective acculturation that becomes apparent is its discursive and open-ended nature. This observation aligns closely with those of Amartya Sen when discussing positive and negative ways to explore, define and reconcile one’s ever-evolving sense of identity. As articulated by Sen, individual well-being is best facilitated by an attitude and approach that is free and unhindered.<sup>17</sup> As those who pursue a selective acculturation pattern navigate their daily lives, their concepts of who they are change and adapt to new situations and stimuli. They are free to explore

their identities and affiliations without interference from either their cultural heritage or broader society.

From this perspective, it is not surprising that psychological and socio-cultural outcomes are so positive for those following this path. At worst, disparate cultural influences are seen as benign. At best, however, they are actually viewed as key enabling factors that feed the intellectual dialogues that contribute to identity formation. There can be no debate or personal discovery without the presence of difference.

This “cultural dialogue” can occur through the other acculturation patterns described above, but it will likely be rarer and shallower in depth. National, ethnic and dissonant strategies are all defined by the presence of normative influences and expectations wherein concepts of what is “normal” or acceptable are ever present. From Sen’s perspective, this would hamper the ability of the individual to fully explore their character and identity, resulting in a negative outlook towards life and society. This would logically lend itself to the poor acculturation outcomes identified by sociologists.

From this it is clear that selective acculturation is the best pattern to follow if an individual is to most successfully integrate. Due to the fact that those who pursue consonant acculturation patterns are somewhat psychologically acculturated, it is possible that this pattern may facilitate further integration at a later date. This is an intriguing possibility that warrants research. In contrast, however, neither national nor dissonant acculturation patterns appear to have any positive characteristics. This is a significant finding that should cause the concept of assimilation to fall into disfavour; there is no evidence that such an acculturation pattern, devoid as it is of parental cultural influence, is good for either the individual or their relationship with broader society. Instead, it is clear that positive outcomes are most likely if both ethnic and mainstream cultural traits and characteristics are embraced.

### **Implications for Analysis**

The advantage of this framework is that it facilitates a new, structured method to evaluate issues of second generation integration. It may also form the logic model for evaluation of policies and programs.

To begin with, it makes very clear that group characteristics, whether they are ethnically or religiously based, make a difference in regards to networks, expectations and norms, and ultimately will play a role in shaping the pattern of acculturation. This finding serves to reinforce the assumption that the “new” second generation cannot be treated the same as the old. As source countries change to include individuals of different ethnicities, nationalities and religious belief, research on acculturation confirms that their integration experiences will change as well.

Researchers and analysts have only partially incorporated this understanding into their analyses to date. Challenges associated with language skills and foreign credential recognition have been linked to new source regions.<sup>18</sup> However, the issue goes deeper than that as the networks, norms and expectations that together create ethnic capital must also be taken into consideration. The importance of this finding will be demonstrated shortly when we evaluate Canada's acculturation environment.

The acculturation model highlights the important role played by both broad societal factors (the ocean), and the social milieu (reefs).

The acculturation model also highlights the important role played by both broad societal factors (the ocean), and the social milieu (reefs). Individual socio-economic factors, while of importance when evaluating how effectively an individual has integrated into society, are not necessarily drivers of integration.

Subsequently, policies and programs that attempt to target these factors specifically in hopes of facilitating integration and inclusion may very well fail in their goals. Broad social contextual factors and the milieu in which the second generation child grows up and resides must be conducive to positive acculturation. If they are not, an intervention targeting the individual may still succeed for some; individual resourcefulness and resiliency can not be overlooked. But, on the whole, successful integration outcomes will likely be hit and miss and, because of ethnic capital for those belonging to some groups individually focused supports may fail completely.

Subsequently, rather than focusing only on individuals, policy must also consider and target key institutions of integration throughout society. The term "institution" is used broadly here. It refers not only to well-established and well-understood institutions, such as schools, the justice system and religion, but also to more abstract and new entities, such as sport and the workplace. Put succinctly, the term institution refers to the societal constructs through which interpersonal and intercultural interface occurs. Given the important role of the social milieu and the fact that these institutions are often the point of most direct contact between the individual and broader contextual norms, these institutions must be properly nurtured, supported and utilized if acculturation outcomes are to be positive as a rule rather than as an exception.

### **Canadian Multiculturalism: A Generally Healthy Ocean with a Murky Bottom**

With the above findings and conclusions in mind, it is possible to consider the Canadian situation. Overall, data on contributing factors indicates that Canada's "acculturation environment" is not hostile to selective acculturation among the second generation. What is known about the milieu also appears positive, but emerging trends must be closely examined and monitored to ensure that the Canadian approach to managing multicultural diversity continues to lend itself to positive acculturation outcomes.

## Indicators of Broader Social Contextual Factors: A Calm Sea

Current policies and expectations lend themselves easily to the inter-cultural dialogue which defines selective acculturation.

In regards to expectations and Canada's policy environment, the situation appears favourable. Expectations of the host society, as most clearly expressed by Canada's official Multiculturalism Policy, appear well aligned with positive acculturation outcomes. The policy explicitly states:

*"The Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada."*

*Preamble to the Canadian Multiculturalism Act*

By encouraging immigrants to retain their heritage, current policies and expectations lend themselves easily to the maintenance of the traditional cultural norms necessary for the inter-cultural dialogue which defines selective acculturation. In addition, the tone of debate surrounding immigration issues in Canada has generally been calm and informed. Debates about refugees, asylum seekers and illegal immigrants are generally muted. Elsewhere, in contrast, immigrants are frequently viewed as an economic burden or as criminals.<sup>19</sup> The historic absence of such discourse in Canada has resulted in a society receptive to cultural differences and cross-cultural dialogues.

Furthermore, from the perspectives of immigrants and visible minorities, Canada's domestic and foreign policies do not appear to discourage integration. This appears particularly so for Muslims. When surveyed, Muslims, even more than other Canadians, assert that Canada is going in the "right direction". They also express great pride in Canadian democracy, freedom, multiculturalism, peace, and humanitarianism, and their likes and dislikes about life in Canada closely parallel answers given by non-Muslim Canadians.<sup>20</sup> This is not to say that there are no irritants. In early 2007, the PRI held a series of regional roundtables investigating the state of multicultural diversity in 21<sup>st</sup> century Canada. At these roundtables it was noted that news reports and political statements denouncing certain religious, ethnic or national groups run counter to efforts to encourage integration.<sup>21</sup> On the whole, however, Canada appears to have successfully managed these socio-political cleavages.

Canadians do, however, sometimes assert that immigrants and their descendents do not adopt Canadian practices and beliefs as quickly or as fully as they may wish.

If there is an area of concern it is that Canadians, as a group, sometimes assert that immigrants and their descendents do not always adopt Canadian practices and beliefs as quickly or as fully as they may wish. Most Canadians (69 percent), and especially residents of Quebec (85 percent), are of the view that immigrants should be encouraged to integrate

and become part of the broader society rather than maintain their ethnic identity and culture.<sup>22</sup> This would seem to run counter to the word and the spirit of the *Multiculturalism Act*. Interestingly, it also appears to run counter to the pride Canadians typically profess for Canada's approach to managing diversity. Indeed, Canadians cite "Multiculturalism" as the second greatest source of pride about Canada after "freedom/democracy".<sup>23</sup>

How this apparent contradiction and ambivalence may be perceived by visible minorities will be explored in greater detail shortly. On the whole, however, despite some ambivalence about the realities of multiculturalism, the concept of multiculturalism and the principles underpinning it appear to be actively embraced by Canadians and appear rooted in Canadian society. This speaks well of the nation's ocean.

### **Evidence Speaking to the State of the Social Milieu: A Murky Picture**

As already explained, the social milieu in which the second generation individual resides is vitally important. It serves as a filter for broader social contextual factors; the positive broad social contextual factors described above will count much less if the social milieu distorts its positive effects. In addition, it is within the envelope of the social milieu that the second generation also establish and experience the social relationships, including family, friends and peers, which shape their orientation and expectations towards both their cultural heritage and mainstream society. Information on the social milieu is vitally important.

Unfortunately, however, the social milieu in which an individual finds themselves is also very personal and what research has been completed to date is cursory. There are case studies focussing on particular groups in specific geographic locations but, in general our view and understanding of Canadian reefs is cloudy. As a result, little information is available regarding the household relations, community supports and the social environments predominant in Canada. Much can still be learned, however, by linking together findings from various research "expeditions" to date. In particular, we can review recent research on immigrant households and neighbourhoods, both of which have been observed to influence the social milieu in ways that affect acculturation patterns.

The important role played by immigrant households in the acculturation of second generation youth has already been somewhat explained. Healthy, hierarchical relations between parent and child in the home are vitally important. Unfortunately, measuring the health of such hierarchical relations is difficult. Nevertheless, because contributing factors for positive and negative household environments have been identified, we can still explore this issue at a high level.

Based on research on the second generation in the United States (US), Portes has observed that poor family relations, where the parents are unable to support and guide their children, are primarily the result of parents not being able to integrate and interact with mainstream society. In large part it has been found that this is due to poorly developed language skills, resulting in the parents being dependent

on their second generation children for the most basic of interactions with entities outside of the home and ethnic community. Low parental education levels, which can affect socio-economic integration, can also contribute to such a role reversal. This phenomenon, which Portes describes as being relatively common within certain ethnic communities in the US, is associated with poor acculturation outcomes and, frequently, youth delinquency.<sup>24</sup>

Language and education should not present the same challenges as they do south of the border.

It is difficult to compare this situation directly to that in Canada because data sources are frequently not comparable. What information is available, however, indicates that the factors contributing to role reversals in immigrant households are likely less common here than south of the border. Reflecting differences between the immigrant selection system in Canada and the US, Borjas has argued that education and skill levels among immigrants in Canada are significantly higher than in the United States.<sup>25</sup> Conclusions about language fluency are more difficult to formulate. Nevertheless, English and/or French fluency are key selection criterion under Canada's skilled immigrant program. This compares favourably to the US, where language fluency and academic achievement are given no weight and admittance is based primarily on principles of family reunification and humanitarianism.<sup>§</sup> In addition, federal and provincial support in Canada for English and French language training is also a positive sign.<sup>26</sup>

On the whole then, while more research is required to explore these issues in greater depth, these differences seem to indicate that language and education should not present the same challenges as they do south of the border. This would facilitate healthier family relations and better acculturation outcomes. At the very least, it would appear that Canada's current immigrant selection approach and language training supports, whether by design or accident, are focusing on key determinants for positive acculturation.<sup>27</sup> \*\* This speaks well for the households in which the second generation are raised.

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<sup>§</sup> In the skilled immigrant application process, criteria are currently weighted as follows: Age: 10 points max.; University Education: 25 points max.; Trade Certificate or Diploma: 22 points max.; First Language English/French: 16 points max.; Second Language English/French: 8 points max.; Work Experience: 21 points max.; Arranged Employment: 5 points max.; Adaptability (spouse or common-law credentials, previous Canadian labour market experience, etc.): 10 points max.

\*\* It has been noted that the point system applies to only 20 to 25 percent of Canadian immigrants. This could cause some to argue that this reduces the relevance of the argument presented relative the United States. Nevertheless, as many immigrants who bypass Canada's point system are dependents of the principle applicant who entered Canada through the point system, it would appear that hierarchical relations in the home are still naturally strengthened by the Canadian selection system. This is further emphasized by the fact that a recent analysis by Daniel Hiebert of the economic outcomes of principal applicants to Canada has found that they catch up to native born Canadians in only a few years, particularly if they have strong proficiency in English and/or French. As Hiebert concludes, the point system has a pronounced effect on the outcomes of immigrants. This will logically shape the household environment in which the second generation come of age. For more information on these issues, please refer to "Beyond Polemics: The Economic Outcomes of Canadian Immigration", by Daniel Hiebert.

The communities in which the new second generation will grow up also appear positive, but there are some areas and knowledge gaps that are cause for concern.

Turning to the broader communities in which the new second generation of the future will grow up the story also appears positive, but there are some areas and knowledge gaps that are cause

for concern. In general, the types of communities typically associated with poor supports for selective acculturation, namely culturally monolithic neighbourhoods defined by socio-economic disadvantage, or “ghettos”, appear to be less prevalent in Canada than elsewhere. Certainly, on the surface, recent trends appear disconcerting. Census data indicates that single ethnic visible minority neighbourhoods (i.e., a census tract where 30 percent or more of the population are of the same ethnic origin), particularly of Chinese, South Asian and Black origin, have become much more prevalent in Canada’s largest cities since 1981. The number of enclaves increased from six to 137 in Toronto and Vancouver, of which three quarters were Chinese. Montréal had five such enclaves in 1996, three of which were Black.<sup>28</sup>

These numbers do not, however, tell the whole story. It has been observed that, in Toronto at least, ethnic enclaves are spread out much more throughout the suburbs rather than the down-town core as is traditionally the case in US cities. As a result, the physical segregation associated with massive US ghettos is not so much of an issue here.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, despite their increasing prevalence, ethnic enclave communities remain relatively rare compared to the United States. Many more visible minority Canadians live outside of these communities than inside them.<sup>††30</sup>

Most importantly though, unlike the United States and France, the defining characteristic of ethnic enclave communities in Canada is not, typically, the “push” of poverty but the “pull” of culture. Subsequently, it can be argued that ethnic enclave communities in Canada are not defined so much by disadvantage as by advantage. Often, those who live there choose to do so because it simplifies initial settlement. Those who are poor, in contrast, often live with other poor individuals from a variety of backgrounds and, eventually, move on to more affluent neighbourhoods where the composition of the population more closely reflects the mainstream.<sup>31</sup>

There is need for more study to determine how and when ethnic households and neighbourhoods can become isolated from mainstream society.

On the whole then, what evidence there is regarding the social milieu is relatively positive. Language skills among immigrants appear strong and ethnic enclave communities do not appear to display the negative structural characteristics

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<sup>††</sup> In Canada, less than 30 percent of all visible minorities, mostly immigrants, resided in such areas in 1996. This compares favourably to the United States where, in the same year, three in four Blacks and Hispanics lived in high poverty areas.

associated with them elsewhere. This does not, however, preclude more negative effects for individuals from some groups or in some situations. Indeed, it is not difficult to imagine a situation where poor language skills within a large enclave community could encourage isolation from the mainstream. This would undermine the inter-cultural dialogue required for selective acculturation and perhaps encourage an ethnic acculturation pattern among the second generation. At the national level there is little reason to think this is a common occurrence, but trends towards more ethnic enclaves in Canada, whether defined by poverty or not, should continue to be monitored. There is need for more study to determine how and when ethnic households and neighbourhoods can become isolated from mainstream society.

**Testing our Conclusions: The Acculturation Patterns of the First Generation**

As already discussed, information on the acculturation patterns of the second generation is not available. Information on the first generation, however, has been compiled. This information cannot be mapped onto the second generation; different life experiences will result in fundamentally different outlooks and responses to challenges and opportunities experienced with Canadian society. Nevertheless, from the perspective of evaluating Canada’s acculturation environment, these findings are useful in as much as they can serve as a yardstick to consider how well suited Canada’s approach to managing diversity is to positive acculturation outcomes.

On the whole, the broadly positive findings above appear largely reflected in the acculturation profile of Canadian immigrants. One in two, or 50.4 percent, of immigrants to Canada adopt a selective acculturation pattern; 22.1 percent and 16.4 percent adopt a national or diffuse acculturation patterns respectively. Finally, the ethnic acculturation pattern accounts for 11.1 percent of Canadian immigrants (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Distributions (percentages) of Four Acculturation Patterns Among First Generation Canadians; Selective Patterns Predominate but Results Vary by Ethnic Group**

Group	Selective	Consonant	National	Dissonant
All Immigrants	50.4	11.1	22.1	16.4
Vietnamese	44.2	5.2	19.5	31.2
Koreans	42.5	22.5	18.8	16.3
Indo-Canadian	63.2	5.7	27.6	3.4

Note: Ethnic groups identified reflect data limitations and should not be interpreted as flagging specific groups for attention. They are included only to illustrate how outcomes can differ between groups.

*Source: Phinney, Berry, Vedder and Liebkind, p 109.*

The fact that so many Canadian immigrants pursue selective acculturation and so few pursue consonant acculturation indicates that the conclusions above regarding the state of Canada’s immigrant households and ethnic enclave

communities are generally sound. These findings also speak well of the households in which the second generation of the future will come of age, reinforcing earlier conclusions regarding the positive environment such homes provide in the Canadian context.

Nevertheless, reflecting the caveats expressed above about emerging trends and potential differences between ethnic groups, the fact that almost two in five, or 38.5 percent, of Canadian immigrants adopt acculturation patterns that sever the cultural ties that have been found to contribute to the most positive psychological and socio-cultural adaptation outcomes is a cause of some concern. Significant differences between ethnic groups are also apparent. It is in these weak areas that implications for policy are most readily apparent.

### **Policy Implications**

Positive acculturation patterns and outcomes are best facilitated by the presence of a cross-cultural dialogue.

At its core, the acculturation model is grounded on a single conclusion derived through research and analysis: positive acculturation patterns and outcomes are best facilitated by the presence of a cross-cultural dialogue that permits individuals to fully explore their identities. For this process to occur, there must be substantive contact between the second generation individual and the cultures they are attempting to balance. As a result, the purpose of policy in this field should be to facilitate this process by nurturing these communities and encouraging the development of networks between communities.

Considering the implications of this understanding, it is useful to break the analysis down and separately look at initiatives that target broad societal contextual factors and the social milieu. Most policies focussing on multiculturalism appear to target broad societal contextual factors. At the federal level, these programs include Canada's formal Multiculturalism policy, employment equity legislation, anti-racism initiatives, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, immigration policy and related settlement supports, and similar initiatives. Reviews of provincial multiculturalism policies and programs have found that provinces typically focus on similar matters (although the tone of their debates and administrative structures vary significantly).<sup>32</sup>

As a result, it appears that the social milieu, consisting of social institutions such as schools, work and organized religion, as well as neighbourhoods, is reflected in both federal and provincial approaches to multiculturalism in only the most marginal of ways. Community based initiatives are few and far between and have typically not been consciously pursued by either order of government as a complement to initiatives targeting broad societal contextual factors. From the perspective of the acculturation framework this gap could significantly undermine the effectiveness of existing federal and provincial policies and programs "on the ground".

Canada's ocean is healthy but it is on Canada's reefs, inside the social milieu, where the character of our ethnic communities and the networks which define acculturation will be decided.

It could be argued that current policies and programs focussed on broad societal contextual factors are intended to stretch into people's daily lives. There is a difference, however, between policies and initiatives that affect the social milieu and those that effectively influence and nurture the milieu. At the PRI roundtables on Canada's

approach to managing multicultural diversity, a key finding was that, while the actual policy of Multiculturalism is well suited to the realities of today, Canadians do not really understand it. As a result, it was generally asserted that, in people's daily lives, the policy of Multiculturalism was not as effective in fulfilling its goals as it should be.<sup>33</sup> To frame these observations within the context of this discussion, broad contextual influences were being distorted by realities in the social milieus in which Canadians actually live. This assertion would seem to be supported by the polls discussed earlier indicating that Canadians, while supportive of the ideal, are ambivalent about many of the realities associated with multiculturalism.

This indicates that there is a need to focus more on what is occurring inside the social milieu. Canada's ocean is healthy and has been, generally, well nurtured, but it is on Canada's reefs, inside the social milieu, where the character of our ethnic communities and the networks which define acculturation will be decided. It means that, when designing policies and programs, strategies for engaging communities, whether they are geographically or culturally defined, should be developed as a key component of the initiative. As part of this exercise, the role of institutions that exist within the community, such as schools, churches, sports teams, and the workplace, should be more fully exploited. Similarly, non-multicultural policies affecting each of these institutions of integration should also be evaluated from the perspective of how change may affect the health of ethnic communities and/or the networks associated with the community.

This change in outlook, from the macro to the meso, is vitally important if both broad societal contextual factors and the social milieu are to be influenced towards the goal of optimizing acculturation outcomes. Implementation challenges, however, are also apparent. The constitution has clearly placed key pillars and aspects of the social milieu, particularly institutions of integration, such as schools, under provincial jurisdiction. Subsequently, it is clear that efforts to improve Canada's acculturation environment will require a coordinated federal-provincial approach. The shape of such an approach is uncertain; a formal framework for cooperation or shared strategy may not be required. At the very least, however, it is clear that governments should take into consideration how their programs and supports interact when planning policy and, perhaps, establish mechanisms through which they can share information and analysis.

Establishing links in communities is a pre-requisite before action can be taken.

Further complicating implementation is the often limited presence of federal and provincial governments in communities. Frequently relying on third party service providers to deliver services in communities, governments' ability to act on the reef, or even know about what is occurring on the reef, may be limited by their lack of immersion in the environment. Establishing links in communities is a pre-requisite before action can be taken. We also have much to learn about the character, breadth and depth of the social linkages between individuals and communities within Canada's multicultural society. This is particularly so given that, over the past decade, the connection between communities and networks have fundamentally changed. Where before geographically defined communities largely defined networks, today networks play a much larger role in defining communities, whether they are geographically based or not.

### **Knowledge Gaps**

A number of knowledge gaps fall out of these policy observations. As suggested above, much more needs to be known about the role played by networks or different types of communities in Canada. Given Canada's diverse nature, information on how networks are formed and acculturation experiences and patterns differ between ethnic enclave communities and non-ethnic enclave communities would be illuminating. More specifically, while the acculturation patterns of first generation immigrants cannot be mapped onto the second generation, more specific information on how these individual outcomes coalesce to affect the ethnic communities in which many second generation youth come of age needs to be better understood. The issue of ethnic capital in Canada, which is basically the web of social connections and opportunities within and between communities, also needs to be explored in greater detail. In particular, the situations in which such capital encourages positive or negative acculturation outcomes remains to be explored.

Finally, such research should also consider how recent socio-economic trends may affect the role different forms of communities play in encouraging certain acculturation patterns. For example, declining earnings among recent immigrant cohorts could contribute to poorer integration of the second generation's immigrant parents and affect certain ethnic communities disproportionately. Specifically, this could affect not only the hierarchical relations in individual immigrant households but also, when effects are multiplied across multiple households in a community, influence the opinions and attitudes of peers with whom the second generation will associate. The effects of developments such as these on acculturation patterns within communities must be studied and monitored. These issues will be more fully explored in the second paper of this research paper series.

## **Conclusion**

The acculturation framework presented in this paper greatly contributes to our ability to evaluate the situation of second generation Canadians. It permits us to integrate disparate research into a comprehensive analysis.

This paper, the first of three, focuses on the state of Canada's acculturation environment. Overall, the Canadian approach of embracing diversity and the nature of Canadian ethnic enclaves appears to support the cultural dialogues necessary for positive acculturation patterns. To build on these sound fundamentals, greater effort should be placed on both understanding and acting on the social milieu. In particular, specific focus should be placed on better utilizing existing institutions of integration and the new, non-geographically defined, networks that have emerged over the last decade. Ethnic enclaves and ethnic capital will also need to be explored in greater detail. This will likely entail coordination of federal and provincial resources.

In the second paper of the series, the experiences and socio-economic outcomes of the second generation in Canada will be explored in greater detail using the acculturation framework detailed in this paper. The third paper will then evaluate the acculturation environment in other countries to provide additional context.

## Notes

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<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada (2003).

<sup>4</sup> Monica Boyd (2006). *At the Starting Gate: Visible Minority Immigrant Offspring in Transition*. Presentation at the *1<sup>st</sup> Annual PWFC Symposium*, 23-24 March, 2006. Ottawa, Canada.

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada (2005). *A Multicultural Profile of Canada*. Presentation by Ivan P. Fellegi, Chief Statistician of Canada, March 22, 2005. <[www.cspc-efpc.gc.ca/events/archives/canada2017/fellegi\\_e.ppt](http://www.cspc-efpc.gc.ca/events/archives/canada2017/fellegi_e.ppt)> (Accessed February 20, 2008)

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<sup>13</sup> Portes and Rumbaut, pp 269-286.

<sup>14</sup> Phinney, Berry, Sam, and Vedder, pp 216-229.

<sup>15</sup> Portes and Rumbaut, 44-69. Also Phinney, Berry, Vedder, and Liebkind, pp 71-116. Also David L. Sam, Paul Vedder, Colleen Ward, and Gabriel Horenczyk (2006) "Psychological and Sociocultural Adaptation of Immigrant Youth". From John W. Berry, Jean S. Phinney, David L. Sam, and Paul Vedder. *Immigrant Youth in Cultural Transition: Acculturation, Identity, and Adaptation Across National Contexts*. Mahwah. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers. 2006. pp 132 - 142.

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<sup>17</sup> Amartya Sen (2006). *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. 2006. pp 18 - 39, 57 - 58, 170 - 178.

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