Views on Multicultural Principles and Problems – Implications for Research and Policy

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Summary of workshop presentation:

Newcomers to Canada and undergraduate students, in two surveys conducted in Regina, Saskatchewan, expressed support for principles of multiculturalism, had a mixed view about problems associated with multicultural policy, and made insightful comments about the meaning of multiculturalism. Where respondents viewed multiculturalism as problematic, these concerns were primarily related to limited job opportunities and to disagreement with programs aimed at reducing barriers to participation. Students tended to identify multiculturalism with social interaction and ways of living and working together; a smaller group identified multiculturalism with respect for and understanding of others. Few survey respondents considered multiculturalism to deal effectively with barriers to participation. The paper concludes with several recommendations – strengthening the traditional goals and principles of multicultural policy, conduct research on barriers to social participation, and expand the scope of multiculturalism to deal more effectively with overcoming barriers.

A. Introduction

1. Overview

Respondents in two surveys conducted in Regina, Saskatchewan expressed support for principles of multiculturalism, had a mixed view about problems associated with multicultural policy, and made insightful comments about the meaning of multiculturalism to them. The two surveys were conducted among newcomers to Canada who lived in Regina and among undergraduates at the University of Regina. A majority of respondents in each survey were familiar with multiculturalism and many recognized the multicultural principles of diversity and harmony. The multicultural principles of equality, diversity as a resource, and overcoming barriers to full participation were less commonly recognized but, when asked about these specific principles, respondents generally supported them.

Relatively few respondents in either survey were concerned about multiculturalism being divisive or a threat to national unity, or hindering integration of immigrants – issues that are often raised as problems associated with multiculturalism. Rather, the main criticisms of multiculturalism were in the areas of jobs and barriers to participation. Both newcomers and undergraduates expressed concern about limited job opportunities and the ability of multicultural policy to eliminate barriers to participation. Some newcomers stated that multicultural policy is unable to deal with power differences and may be a "smoke screen." Undergraduates' concerns about limited job availability and opportunities were associated with minimal support for policies such as affirmative action.

When asked about the meaning of multiculturalism, respondents gave interesting and diverse responses. Newcomers identified it with equitable participation, bringing cultures together, and equality. Undergraduates tended to look on multiculturalism in two ways – as a way of respecting or understanding cultures other than their own or as a guide for social interaction. In the latter case, respondents said that multiculturalism meant ways of working together, sharing, or uniting – a process whereby a new form of society can be created.

From a sociological perspective, these results are both encouraging and discouraging. We regard the widespread acceptance of multiculturalism and multicultural principles as helping to create a more open, understanding, and democratic society. At the same time, multiculturalism appears limited – to date it has not been able to deal adequately with overcoming barriers to participation and social inequalities.

Following a short discussion of our methodology, we report some of our survey findings. The paper concludes with policy implications – renewed emphasis on traditional principles of multiculturalism and an expansion of the meaning of multiculturalism. These emphases could help eliminate barriers and overcome boundaries, while building support for policies and programs addressing all aspects of multiculturalism.

2. Methodology

The survey of newcomers to Canada was conducted in 1993 as part of the Regina Refugee Research Project (RRRP). Graduate students interviewed fifty-five individuals who arrived in Canada as refugees between 1979 and 1992. The interview dealt with many aspects of the lives of newcomers – issues of language, jobs, health, community, and participation in Canadian society. Respondents were disproportionately from Southeast Asia and Central America and seventy per cent were males. Most of our information about newcomers' views on multiculturalism came from questions near the end of the interview – asking whether respondents were aware of multiculturalism and, if so, what multiculturalism meant to them. This survey was conducted for the Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies with funds from the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada. For further information on this survey, see Gingrich (1995, 1996).

A cross-section of undergraduates, with students completing a questionnaire in selected classes at the University of Regina, was surveyed for several years as part of an undergraduate methodology class in the social sciences. In 1997 and 1998, these omnibus surveys included questions about multiculturalism and immigration; the findings reported in this paper come from the Fall 1998 Survey of Student Attitudes and Experiences (SSAE). Seven hundred and twenty-six students responded and, for characteristics such as sex, program, and college, the survey was reasonably representative of the undergraduate student body in the Fall 1998 semester. The multiculturalism section of the questionnaire began with a question asking what multiculturalism meant to respondents, followed by a series of questions on principles, problems, policies, and practices of multiculturalism.

There were limitations to the undergraduate sample – some students did not respond to all questions, the survey missed some components of the undergraduate population, the questions were not subjected to rigorous testing in other circumstances, and errors of interpretation undoubtedly occurred. However, given the consistency of our findings and the reasonably representative nature of our sample, we feel confident that our findings represent views of a cross-section of University of Regina undergraduates. We have no indication how representative these views might be of the population of Canada or Regina. At the same time, it is worth noting that respondents were multicultural, with multi-European origins being most common, along with some visible minority and aboriginal respondents. Views expressed are internally consistent and the ancestral or ethnic composition of the sample closely matches that of the population of Regina (Table 1).

B. Principles of multiculturalism

In this section of the paper we first describe the extent to which respondents in the two surveys recognized principles of multiculturalism. From the student survey, we then present the findings of student views about aspects of multiculturalism.

1. Principles of multiculturalism

Multiculturalism has multiple meanings – it can be any of policy, program, practice, educational approach, sociological concept, symbol, ideal, ideology, theory, or description of society. Given these multiple meanings and given that multiculturalism is often narrowly identified with government funding of cultural festivals, we take a different approach. We identify multiculturalism as a set of principles – this sociological approach looks on multiculturalism as a way that individuals and groups can relate to each other and approach diversity in a peaceful, understanding, and positive manner.

One standard for identifying a set of multicultural principles is the approach taken in the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. In Table 2, we list five themes or principles that are contained in the words and phrases of sections of the *Act* – diversity, equality, overcoming barriers, harmony, and resource. Diversity has been a fact of life since before the founding of Canada, and without diversity there would be little need for a multicultural approach. Diversity can mean conflict or mere coexistence, but a multicultural approach is associated with harmonious social relationships. These may be difficult to establish and maintain without some degree of equality, at least some equality of opportunity. While no modern society has equality and there are always barriers to equal participation, one characteristic of a multicultural approach is that there will be attempts to reduce or eliminate barriers such as discrimination, racism, favouritism, and exclusivity. Finally, the *Act* recognizes that diverse cultures and backgrounds constitute a resource for Canadian society and Canada's future.

In the two surveys, respondents either stated or wrote what multiculturalism meant to them. In Table 3, we show how often respondents recognized each of the multicultural themes or principles in their responses. We include only those newcomers who had some familiarity with multiculturalism in this table. Most respondents understood that multiculturalism meant diversity and just under one-half recognized the harmony principle – an encouraging result from a multicultural perspective. What is less encouraging is the limited recognition of the other three principles. Newcomers were more likely than students to suggest that equality and culture as resource were important principles, perhaps because these have more meaning for newcomers than for those born in Canada. What is most discouraging is that almost none of the respondents in either survey considered overcoming barriers to be an essential aspect of multiculturalism – it appears that multicultural education and policy have failed in addressing this issue. We return to this finding later in the paper, when we suggest research and policy implications of the research.

2. Student views about multiculturalism

We asked students to state their degree of agreement or disagreement with a number of statements about multiculturalism. These statements dealt with principles and problems of multiculturalism and its connections with job opportunities and other policy matters. In this section we summarize the findings from student responses.

Students generally agreed with statements of multicultural principles (Table 4). Three-quarters agreed that diversity is an essential aspect of Canadian society; ninety per cent agreed that institutions should provide equal access; and eighty-four per cent agreed that having people from many cultural backgrounds enriches Canada. Three-quarters of students agreed that minorities should be provided opportunities to preserve their cultural heritage. Three-quarters also supported eliminating barriers to participation when they exist. Students were, however, split on the issue of government support for multicultural festivals.

There was limited concern among students about problems that multiculturalism might present for Canadian society (Table 5). Fourteen per cent said multiculturalism makes it hard to know what it means to be Canadian (confuses identity) and only seven per cent found retention of cultural practices to be offensive. Students were split on the issue of multiculturalism being divisive, with thirty per cent agreeing and thirty per cent disagreeing that it has divisive effects. Again, students were split about whether multiculturalism means immigrants do not acquire Canadian values and whether it addresses problems of discrimination and racism.

Support for multicultural principles was not matched by strong support for policies and programs aimed at overcoming barriers or improving prospects for members of racial or ethnic minorities (Table 6). There was only minimal support for affirmative action programs – fifty-seven per cent of students opposed requiring employers to provide a specified number of jobs to qualified visible minorities with only sixteen per cent agreeing with such a measure. And only one-quarter of students agreed that non-whites face restrictions in job and educational opportunities, although these same students supported eliminating barriers where they exist. The type of program that was supported by more students was government assistance to immigrants to help them develop the skills and knowledge they need for jobs – thirty-eight per cent supported such measures with only twenty-six per cent being opposed.

Male respondents appeared especially concerned about limited job opportunities. Over one-half of male students agreed with the statement that white males have lost jobs because of employment equity requirements and only one-quarter disagreed (Table 7). In contrast, only one-third of females agreed with the statement. Regardless of whether or not white males have been hurt by affirmative action or employment equity programs, concern about availability of jobs, especially among male undergraduates, appears to have had a negative effect on support for multicultural policy.

Few students interpreted multiculturalism as dealing with broader issues of diversity, such as equitable treatment and inclusion of women or gay people. While students were split on the issue of treating gay and lesbian couples as married for tax laws and job benefits (Table 8), those expressing support for such treatment were more likely to express support for multiculturalism (Table 9). This suggests that those who supported a wider interpretation of diversity also supported multicultural principles and did not view multicultural policy as problematic.

Finally, some connections between political and multicultural views are worth noting. Support for multiculturalism was greatest among those who supported the NDP, least among supporters of the conservative parties (PC, Reform, Alliance, and Saskatchewan parties), and between these extremes for supporters of the Liberal Party or no party (Table 10). While these differences were statistically significant, they were not as great as one might expect. For example, even supporters of the conservative parties expressed general support for multicultural principles and did not always look on multiculturalism as having major problems for Canadian identity or values (Tables 11 and 12).

We review these survey findings to demonstrate that support for multicultural principles is relatively strong, at least among the group of young respondents that we surveyed. These respondents indicated that multiculturalism had relatively limited problems associated with it, but provides a way for individuals and groups to relate to each other in a positive manner. At the same time, these findings suggest limits to a multicultural approach – it does not appear to deal adequately with job and equal opportunity issues.

C. Meanings of multiculturalism

In this section we provide examples and interpretations of survey participants' responses to questions asking what multiculturalism meant to them. We also note some implications of the way that different participants responded to this question.

From the student survey, here are four positive or neutral responses and three critical responses about what multiculturalism means:

- Many cultures joining together. (id 24)
- Persons of different cultures, races, etc. living together. (id 52)
- Many cultures brought together in an area. (id 65)
- Excitement, music, food, languages - a wide array of cultures living together and ideally respecting and embracing each other. (id 530)

- People fragmenting society by their claims to be unique. I prefer unity not division. However, I am happy there are many different types of people. (id 435)
- It is a myth. We are very separated by race, class, gender. Canada has a colorline. Aboriginal people are treated like dirt. (id 873)
- The government can con foreigns into coming here then screw them with bi-lingualism and lie everything denying the foreigners their culture and heritage. (id 953)

From six hundred and seventy written responses, we found relatively few negative responses of the latter type. Students generally gave descriptive responses such as the first three responses above. Many respondents gave thoughtful and insightful responses; for example, by writing

- Accepting each culture as equal and the desire to learn about how these cultures work together. (id 90)

one respondent recognized the principles of diversity, equality, harmony, and resource.

From the survey of newcomers, here are four responses, with varying degrees of support or opposition to multiculturalism implied:

- Different heritage, different culture, and different language are considered a good thing. (id 034)
- That people have freedom to speech, religion, culture, jobs, and education. (id 028)
- Government receives different people, different cultures and they promote it. There is not laws against it like in some countries. There is freedom of religion and culture. (id 121)
- [I] like and hate it at the same time. We can live in our culture but we are called minority groups. Appears on job applications. You are different. Never be part of the total. (id 071)

Each of the first three responses reflects the commitment of multiculturalism to diversity, equal participation and inclusion. As shown by the second and third response above, newcomers often mentioned freedom as part of multiculturalism, a connection that students rarely mentioned. Multiculturalism is not usually identified with freedom – in Canada this is more a background condition that is part of guarantees in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Given the prior experiences of newcomers who were refugees, it is no surprise that they connect freedom with multicultural principles. The final response demonstrates that not all newcomers have had positive experiences with multiculturalism. This response expresses the view that multiculturalism can be divisive and, for some, may be a factor in hindering equal participation.

Given that we had close to seven hundred student responses, it was necessary to organize responses into groups. After reading all these responses, it became apparent that students had two main ways of describing multiculturalism – a View aspect and an Expression aspect. The View aspect refers to ways of viewing or considering others in the context of diversity, whereas the Expression aspect refers to how individuals and groups of different background relate to each other in society. Four examples of the View aspect, followed by four examples of the Expression aspect follow, with the relevant words denoting each aspect noted in bold print:

View

- Canada being full of every race and hopefully, **not seeing one another as a colour**. (id 628)
- **Being aware of** other cultures having variety in society. (id 687)
- To some it means a greater diversity of cultures across a country therefore creating more **knowledge** and **acceptance** of other cultures. (id 150)
- **Being objective** and **fair-minded** to the traditions of different cultures. (id 286)

Expression

- Multiple cultures that **live** and **interact together**. (id 504)
- Many different cultures **living together** and **trying to get along**. (id 473)
- Many cultures **mixing together** and **being equal**. (id 470)
- Lots of ethnicity and people from all cultures **living**, **working** and **functioning together** in a society. (id 328)

The first set of responses demonstrates the View aspect, using words such as knowledge, acceptance, and fair-minded; these refer to ways that one considers or thinks about or views and considers others. In contrast, the latter set of responses are examples of the Expression aspect, stating ways that people come together, work together, or get along in society. These latter responses refer to ways that social interaction occurs, or should occur, in a multicultural society.

A major finding of the student survey is that students identified multiculturalism more with the Expression than the View aspect. That is, in saying what multiculturalism meant to them, more students identified multiculturalism with ways that individuals and groups interact in society than identified it as a set of attitudes. Approximately seventy per cent of written responses indicated that multiculturalism meant things like living together, working together, interacting, combining, mixing, or sharing; in contrast, only forty per cent (including some of the same responses) said that multiculturalism meant acceptance, respect, toleration, or appreciation. From a sociological perspective on multiculturalism, we consider this encouraging – students look on multiculturalism as not just a state of mind but as a way of interacting within Canadian society. Some students suggested that multiculturalism is a process of creating a unity or a societal whole – a process whereby a new type of society is produced. Examples of the latter type of response are:

- Several different cultures **coming together**, each **sharing** aspects of their culture until their cultures **merge** or **unite**. (id 244)
- All different cultures, interacting together and sharing but **not assimilating**. (id 256)
- A **melting pot** of cultures and beliefs and the collapse of the moral society. (id 431)

Note the variety of images in these three responses, with the last response implying a negative outcome.

Respondents in both surveys provided a wealth of images of multiculturalism, not all of which can be reviewed here. Before turning to research and policy implications, here are a few of the more imaginative images provided by students.

- Like a **tossed salad**, the more you add the better it is. (id 725)
- Like **mulligan stew**, a carrot there, a potato here a piece of meat there, some celery. (id 866)
- **Jazz music**. Because it's a combination of European harmony, African and Latin rhythms, instruments from every culture, East Indian philosophies. (id 453)
- A **web** of many cultures formed to create a whole society. (id 199)
- A **patchwork quilt** of cultures, people and activities. (id 472)

And from the survey of newcomers, here are examples of one positive and one negative image:

- Opportunities for all groups, cultures, or persons to develop or act within their community. The governments try to treat everybody as part of a 'great' large family. (id 070)
- A smoke screen for Canadians [which does] nothing for me. (id 043)

D. Research and policy implications

The analysis of written responses in the previous section indicates that students generally had a good understanding and appreciation of the meaning of multiculturalism. The earlier analysis of attitudes toward multicultural principles and problems implies widespread support for the principles of multiculturalism, limited concern about some possible problems of multiculturalism, and more serious reservations about some of the policies associated with multiculturalism. From the survey of newcomers to Regina, those who arrived more recently generally understood and supported multicultural policy, with a small group ambivalent or negative towards the policy.

These findings demonstrate that Canadian multicultural policy has been relatively effective in educating people about the policy and producing a broad level of support for a multicultural approach to social interaction in Canada. This leads to our first policy recommendation:

R1. Multicultural policy and programs continue to emphasize the traditional multicultural principles of diversity, harmony, equality, resource, and overcoming barriers.

In our view, understanding and adoption of multicultural principles has positively affected Canada, making our society more open, accepting, and democratic; there is much to be gained by continuing to stress these principles in educational programs, in daily life, and in the workings of business, government, and other Canadian institutions.

Our findings show minimal recognition of the multicultural principles of culture as resource, equality in participation, and overcoming barriers. Canadians should be especially concerned about limited recognition of these essential principles of multiculturalism, especially the latter two. While multiculturalism has been relatively effective in some parts of the cultural sphere and has contributed to greater openness and participation for newcomers and those outside the mainstream, there is still much to be accomplished. This leads to our second recommendation:

R2. Multicultural education place more emphasis on the principles of equality and overcoming barriers. Policies and programs at all levels of government and in business, educational, and other institutions aim to eliminate barriers to participation and find ways for all Canadians to have equal opportunities to participate in these institutions.

Respondents in each of the two surveys expressed concerns about availability of jobs and opportunities in education and the labour market. Newcomers stated that they were concerned about limited understanding of their background and credentials by Canadian individuals and institutions. One way that Canada could welcome newcomers would be to provide a more complete range of settlement and support services – language training, labour market preparation, and assistance with helping them understand Canadian society

and institutions. From the student survey, there appears to be support for such measures, although students generally did not favour affirmative action programs for minorities.

Students, mostly Canadian born, were concerned about job availability and, more specifically, that newcomers or equity programs might hurt job opportunities for these students. A two-stream policy approach is required to reduce these concerns – improving job availability and using educational efforts to inform people of the advantages of full participation for all. In the case of job availability, this would require linking multicultural and economic policy. In terms of education, research and policy could be better linked to show how all Canadians can benefit by eliminating barriers and having more equitable participation. This could assist in alleviating concerns of young males, some of whom appear to feel threatened by newcomers and equity programs. This leads to our third policy recommendation:

R3. Broaden the scope of multiculturalism to include providing newcomers with improved settlement, job preparation, and educational services. Ensure better job opportunities for all and improve educational and research programs to show that equitable participation and overcoming barriers can benefit all Canadians.

Our final recommendations concern research. Strictly speaking, the findings from our research apply to only a limited population – newcomers to Regina and undergraduates at the University of Regina. We suggest that our findings be compared with studies from other regions and groups, with investigation of specific policies and programs that would help multicultural policy to achieve more of its aims. If our findings are more generally applicable, then this suggests that multiculturalism has been an effective policy initiative, and one that needs to be extended rather than abandoned. Our final recommendations are that there be research in two areas:

R4A. Comparative research on the meanings, principles, problems, successes and shortcomings of multiculturalism among a variety of groups and regions in Canada. R4B. Investigate the specific ways that newcomers and others outside the social mainstream encounter barriers to full participation in Canadian society.

E. Conclusion

Our research indicates that a multicultural approach has helped Canadians understand and deal with diversity. At the same time, both newcomers and students have suggested that there are shortcomings to multicultural policy and programs. Our view is that the meaning of multiculturalism needs to be widened – to include links with economic and educational policy, and become more inclusive across governmental, business, and other institutions.   A widening of the understanding and scope of multiculturalism could assist Canadians in helping overcome differentials of power, opportunity, and condition. It is our hope that citizens and institutions across the country will welcome such a shift and work toward improving participation for all.

Regina and Calgary
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Table 1. Representativeness of the samples

Ethno-cultural characteristics	SSAE Fall 1998 Sample (n=715)		Regina
	Number	Per Cent of Sample	Per Cent of Total Population
Aboriginal origin	62	8.7%	7.5%
Visible minority origin	45	6.3%	5.7%
Other (multi-European)	608	85.0%	86.8%
Total	715	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2. Themes from the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*

Diversity

- Cultural and racial diversity of Canada. 3: 1 (a) (h) 3:2 (c) 5:1 (c)
- Preserve, enhance and share cultural heritage. 3: 1 (a) 5:1 (e) (h)
- Recognize and enhance development of communities of common origin. 3:1 (d)
- Respecting and valuing diversity. 3: 1 (e)
- Interaction between individuals and communities of different origin. 3:1 (g)
- Promote reflection and evolving expressions of culture. 3:1 (h)
- Languages: preserve and enhance; acquire, retain, use 3:1 (i) 5:1 (f)
- Multicultural reality 3:2 (d) (f)

Harmony

- Respect, recognition and appreciation. 3:1 (f) (h) 3:2 (c) 5:1 (d)
- Understanding. 3:1 (a) (g) 3:2 (c)
- Harmony. 3:1 (j)
- Sensitive and responsive. 3:2 (f)
- Exchanges and cooperation, sharing. 5:1 (c) (e)

Equality

- Equal treatment and equal protection under law for all individuals. 3: 1 (e)
- Full and equitable participation of individuals and communities. 3: 1 (c) 5:1 (d)
- Equal opportunity for employment and advancement in federal institutions. 3:2 (a)

Overcoming Barriers

- Elimination of any barriers to participation. 3: 1 (c)
- Overcoming discriminatory barriers, including race, national, or ethnic origin. 5:1 (g)
- Encourage institutions to be inclusive. 3:1 (f)

Resource

- Fundamental characteristic of Canadian heritage and identity. 3: 1 (b)
- Resource in shaping of Canada's future. 3: 1 (b)
- Participation in and contribution to evolution and shaping of Canadian society. 3:1 (c) 3:2 (b)
- Creativity. 3:1 (g)
- Historic contribution to Canadian society. 3:1 (d)
- Make use of language skill and cultural understanding. 3:2 (e)
- Value diversity. 3:1 (e)

Note: The numbers and letters in the box refer to the sections or subsections of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*.   Adapted from Gingrich and Fries (1996).

Table 3. Number and percentage of respondent recognizing each of five multicultural themes or principles – newcomers in Regina Refugee Research Project and Survey of Student Attitudes and Experiences

Theme or principle	Newcomers (n=24)		Undergraduates (n=620)	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Diversity	18	75%	578	93%
Harmony	10	42%	250	40%
Equality	7	29%	27	4%
Overcoming barriers	3	12%	8	1%
Resource	6	25%	51	8%

Table 4. Percentage distributions of responses to statements about multicultural principles – seven hundred students

View	Diversity	Equal access	Heritage	Overcome barriers	Festivals	Enrich-ment
Strongly disagree	1.5	0.6	1.7	1.4	13.0	0.8
Disagree	3.8	1.8	6.0	4.4	21.4	2.5
Neutral	19.1	7.4	19.9	17.7	28.7	12.9
Agree	35.0	25.3	33.0	34.1	21.4	32.0
Strongly agree	40.6	64.9	39.4	42.4	15.5	51.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 5. Percentage distributions of responses to statements about multicultural problems – seven hundred students

View	Multiculturalism:				
	Confuses identity	Is divisive	Maintains offensive practices	Means immigrants do not acquire Canadian values	Addresses racism and discrimination
Strongly disagree	31.5	9.1	29.0	9.6	3.9
Disagree	33.0	21.4	33.3	23.7	15.8
Neutral	21.5	37.9	30.7	43.9	50.1
Agree	8.4	23.9	5.3	20.0	24.4
Strongly agree	5.6	7.7	1.7	2.8	5.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 6. Percentage distributions of responses to statements about employment –
seven hundred students**

View	Jobs for visible minorities	Nonwhite jobs restricted	Government assistance for immigrants	White males lose jobs from equity requirements
Strongly disagree	33.5	20.1	8.5	14.4
Disagree	23.5	24.1	17.5	17.3
Neutral	27.3	31.4	36.5	27.7
Agree	10.7	17.8	26.2	23.1
Strongly agree	5.0	6.6	11.3	17.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

**Table 7. Percentage distributions of views of males and females about whether
while males are losing jobs because of employment equity requirements**

View about white males losing jobs	Per cent with each view	
	Males	Females
Disagree	24%	36%
Neutral	23%	31%
Agree	53%	33%
Total	100%	100%
Number of cases	262	439

Table 8. Percentage distribution of student views on statement "Tax laws and job benefits should recognize gay and lesbian couples as married"

View on tax benefits for gay and lesbian couples	Per cent of students
Strongly disagree	20
Disagree	13
Neutral	27
Agree	23
Strongly agree	17
Total	100

Table 9. Mean support for multiculturalism by view on "Tax laws and job benefits should recognize gay and lesbian couples as married"

View on tax benefits for gay and lesbian couples	Mean level of support for multiculturalism
Strongly disagree	2.00
Disagree	2.05
Neutral	2.18
Agree	2.27
Strongly agree	2.58
Total	2.22

Note: The index of support for multiculturalism has a three point scale with 1 denoting weak support to 3 denoting strong support.

Table 10. Mean support for multiculturalism by political party supported

Political party supported	Mean support at each level	
	Provincial	Federal
Conservative	1.98	1.98
Liberal	2.27	2.24
None	2.22	2.25
NDP	2.31	2.38

Note: The index of support for multiculturalism has a three point scale with 1 denoting weak support to 3 denoting strong support.

Table 11. Percentage of conservative students who agreed with each of six multicultural principles – fifty-seven students

Principle of multiculturalism	Per cent agreeing
Diversity	68%
Equal access	90%
Heritage	63%
Overcome barriers	71%
Festivals	23%
Enrichment	74%

Table 12. Percentage of conservative students agreeing with problems of multiculturalism – fifty-seven students

Possible problem of multiculturalism	Per cent agreeing
Confuses identity	28%
Is divisive	55%
Maintains offensive practices	13%
Addresses racism	22%
Helps acquire Canadian values	16%