PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF MULTICULTURALISM

by

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Abstract

Teachers play an important role in implementing multicultural curricula. This role has been acknowledged by many writers, but none has systematically investigated teachers’ conceptions of multiculturalism.

The present study is an investigative research of pre-service teachers’ conceptions of multiculturalism and the relationship between their background characteristics and their conceptions.

A literature review identified five distinct conceptions of multiculturalism, distinct from one another in their views of nationhood, cultural preservation, group relations and the role of education. Using these conceptions as a framework, the researcher developed an instrument, consisting of five subscales, to measure conceptions of multiculturalism. The research instrument comprised 63 items on a four-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree), and eight questions concerning background variables such as age, sex, program of study and ancestry.

The data analysis showed the instrument to be internally consistent. An exploratory factor analysis supported the distinctiveness of the conceptions.
identified by the researcher. Multiple univariate analyses showed that sex was a significant variable at \( p < .006 \) for four of the five subscales.

One implication of this finding is that gender, that is, sex roles and socialization, may, in fact, influence how an individual conceptualizes multiculturalism.
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Chapter One: Introduction

A. Statement of the Problem

The present study contributes to the literature devoted to teacher beliefs about multiculturalism. It grew out of the researcher's interest in the role of educators in a multicultural society. It is important to assess their conceptions and preconceptions of multiculturalism because what teachers think may influence how and what they teach in the classroom.

Education is seen as one way to address issues of living in a plural society. Yet if teachers are to implement multicultural education programs, they need to be well prepared to do so. Knowing teachers' conceptions of multiculturalism can enable teacher education programs to better prepare pre-service teachers.

A number of writers (e.g. Lundgren, 1989; McLeod, 1989; Ouellet, 1989) have recognized the relationship between the role of the teacher and multicultural education, but no one has attempted to analyze teachers' conceptions of multiculturalism. Nor is it surprising that there are no instruments available to measure these conceptions. One objective of this study, therefore, was to develop an instrument to measure conceptions of multiculturalism. The second objective was to describe how students in the teacher education program at the
University of British Columbia think about multiculturalism. Finally, relationships between background characteristics and conceptions were examined.

B. Background

Much has been written about multicultural education and multicultural curricula. Coombs (1986) reviews three different kinds of multicultural education programs: 1) curricular multicultural education, 2) procedural multicultural education, and 3) social multicultural education. The first approach focusses on the differences among cultural groups; its goal is to enhance students’ awareness of and respect for cultural diversity. Procedural multicultural education requires schools to reflect the cultural diversity of the society they serve. This may take the form of language classes for children whose native language is not that of the school, classes conducted in the native language of students, or schools managed by members of the cultural groups they serve. The third kind of program is social multicultural education, for which the goal of social justice preempts that of cultural retention (Coombs, 1986).

McLeod (1987) has also identified three types of multicultural education programs: ethnic specific, problem-oriented, and cultural/intercultural. Ethnic
specific programs are those established by minority cultural groups to resist assimilation into the mainstream culture. The problem-oriented approach addresses the needs and "problems" of non-mainstream children in schools; its underlying intention is either assimilationist or integrationist. The cultural/intercultural model views multicultural education as an aspect of human rights education. Programs endorsing this approach try to prepare students for life in a pluralistic society (McLeod, 1989).

In addition to describing underlying philosophies, other authors have described specific classroom strategies for fostering positive relations among cultural groups. Kehoe (1984), for example, suggests ways to assess the multicultural needs in the school and the community and discusses classroom methodologies that can change ethnocentric or racist attitudes. Kehoe & Echols (1984) offer a stratagem to "reform ... the structure and climate of the school" (p. 137). They suggest curricular changes such as classroom activities to help develop cognitive-perceptive abilities, and structural change to dispel the assumption in the schooling system that all students come from an Anglo-Christian heritage.

Both philosophy and strategy are crucial to the success of any education program, but equally significant
are the people who implement the curriculum. In describing the teacher as "exemplary person" and as "methodologist" or "strategist" (McLeod, 1989, p. 17), McLeod underscores two very important aspects of the teacher's role. As exemplary person, the teacher brings to the profession an "open mind", the ability to recognize his or her own biases and prejudices. As "methodologist", the teacher must consider not only the content, but also the processes, of teaching. How the teacher treats students is as important as the knowledge he or she imparts. The implication for multicultural education is that behaviour, and hence, human rights, are teachable concepts (McLeod, 1989). Yet, as Buchignani (1982) has pointed out,

... unfortunately, teachers generally have little training, knowledge or interest in race relations and some are actively prejudiced. They are also an overworked interest group, who have generally argued that racism is a problem for students, not for them.... This leaves one with the difficult objective of addressing students through teachers who are generally ill equipped to do so (p. 57).

Ouellet (1989), reflecting on intercultural education in Quebec, speaks of the teacher as an "integrator and initiator of culture in gestation" (p. 3). Teacher education programs must prepare teachers to face the challenges of pluralism in the classroom.

That the challenges of pluralism must be addressed in teacher education is undeniable. In his analysis of
education policies in several multicultural societies, Lundgren (1989) shows that different models of teacher preparation produce not only different educational goals but also teachers with varying competence to work with multicultural populations.

Although authors such as McLeod, Ouellet and Lundgren all recognize the relationship between multicultural education and the role of the teacher, none has attempted a systematic investigation of teachers' conceptions of multiculturalism. For a teacher education program to adequately prepare teachers for work in a multicultural and multiethnic society, it must address teachers' attitudes to both cultural diversity and to students from backgrounds different from their own. It needs to know what multiculturalism means to pre-service teachers in order to equip them for a pluralistic society. In a context such as Canada, and especially, British Columbia, where the diversity of cultural and ethnic backgrounds has never been so prominent, the impact of multiculturalism on education and on teachers must be heeded. Assessing teachers' conceptions and preconceptions of multiculturalism is therefore important.
C. Research Questions

The research questions of this study were:

1) To what extent does the study substantiate the conceptions of multiculturalism discussed in the literature?

2) What does the instrument reveal about the extent to which pre-service teachers in the Teacher Education Program at the University of British Columbia subscribe to a particular conception of multiculturalism?

3) To what extent are background characteristics such as age, sex, and program of study related to a person's adherence to a particular conception of multiculturalism?

D. Limitations

One of the limitations of this study concerns the instrument. The five conceptions were derived from the researcher's interpretation of the literature and therefore are not an exhaustive list.

A second limitation stems from the data collection method. As subjects participated on a voluntary basis, it is not known if the views of non-participants may have been different.

Third, the four-point Likert scale used in the survey imposed a constraint on the ability of the
researcher to collect more detailed information for some of the items.

Finally, the researcher recognizes that this study cannot be generalized to other populations of preservice teachers. The present sample is a culturally heterogeneous one, all studying in a large and multicultural university.
Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

This section reviews two areas of literature relevant to the present study. It begins by describing the different interpretations of Canada's multiculturalism policy. The second section compares and contrasts assumptions about multiculturalism and their different beliefs about nationhood, group relations, the preservation of minority culture, political participation by non-charter groups, and the role of education in a plural society. From this body of literature, the researcher identified five conceptions of multiculturalism. These five conceptions form the framework for the multiculturalism conceptions scale.

A. Interpretations of Canada's Multiculturalism Policy

At the provincial level, most governments have a formal policy concerning multiculturalism or have established some initiative that recognizes the province's cultural and linguistic diversity (Davies, 1986). In Quebec, the provincial policy stresses French language and culture development; multiculturalism is interpreted as helping other cultural communities integrate into Quebec society (Davies, 1986). In education, the province funds programs whose primary
interest is to help non-French students integrate into the francophone culture (Davies, 1986).

In the other provinces and two territories, each Ministry of Education has guidelines concerning at least one of the following four areas: language programs (English as a second language training, heritage language programs, bilingual education), curriculum (materials or methodologies), multicultural events or activities in schools, and the goal of fostering in students and teachers attitudes that promote multiculturalism (Davies, 1986).

In her survey of school districts in British Columbia, Davies (1985) found that board policies tend to deal with both race relations and multiculturalism. School districts that have implemented multicultural programs have focussed on heritage languages, arts, music and crafts (Davies, 1985). At the board level in British Columbia, then, the term 'multiculturalism' refers to both cultural celebration and human rights.

Fisher & Echols' (1989) evaluation of the Vancouver School Board’s Race Relations Policy, however, illustrates the disparity between promoting multiculturalism in theory and in practice. For example, while the board acknowledges that multiculturalism and Canadian society are inseparable, the two authors found that some secondary school teachers were reluctant to
introduce multicultural themes or materials in their class because they felt it was not relevant to their area of specialization (p. 75). The authors also found a tendency among administrators, students, staff and parents to deny that racism was a problem in the school (p. 142). Fisher & Echols conclude that this denial reflected an uncertainty about what constitutes a racist incident and a desire on the part of school members to avoid controversy (Fisher & Echols, 1989).

The contrast between board policy and the findings of Fisher & Echols' report points to multiple interpretations of multiculturalism and conflicting expectations for the role of education in a multicultural society. The Report vividly illustrates the uncertainty about the meaning of multiculturalism.

As federal policy, multiculturalism guarantees cultural freedom and equal treatment for all individuals. Provincial governments encourage cross-cultural relationships among ethnic communities. Ministries of Education have designed pro-active initiatives to develop sensitivity to and awareness of cultural differences, encourage second and heritage languages and to promote positive intergroup relations. Yet at the school level, one sometimes finds that confusion and hesitation are evident.
B. Conceptions of Multiculturalism

The following section discusses the literature devoted to multiculturalism and multicultural education. From this diverse body of literature, the researcher identified five conceptions: assimilation, ethnic specific, entrenchment of multiculturalism, promotion of cultural diversity, and multiculturalism as a moral concern. The labels were chosen to reflect the scope and diversity of the related views within each conception.

In constructing the multiculturalism conceptions scale, the researcher placed the five conceptions along a continuum.

1. Assimilationist Perspective

Also referred to as the 'melting pot theory' (Porter, 1987), this conception of multiculturalism advocates the eventual elimination of cultural diversity. It believes that minority cultural groups within a society should abandon their past traditions in favour of adopting or creating new ones (Porter, 1987). The theory actually has two forms. The first calls for a creation of a new nation and a new national type. The second, known as 'assimilation', encourages minority groups to incorporate into the host society (Porter, 1987).

Assimilation involves adopting the norms and values of society's dominant group, thereby becoming like the
mainstream (Li, 1990). It assumes that an individual or
group has chosen not to maintain cultural
distinctiveness, choosing instead to belong to the larger
society (Berry, 1984). Gordon (in Young, 1979) describes
seven dimensions of assimilation. 'Cultural or
behavioural assimilation' occurs when groups absorb the
culture or behaviour patterns of the dominant society.
'Structural assimilation' refers to entrance into the
institutional activities and general civic life of
mainstream society. The third form is 'marital
assimilation'. A fourth pattern, 'identificational
assimilation', occurs when an individual identifies
exclusively with the mainstream society. 'Attitude
receptional assimilation' and 'behaviour receptional
assimilation' refer to the absence of prejudice and
discrimination, respectively. The final pattern, 'civic
assimilation', precludes value or power conflict. Gordon
(in Young, 1979) suggests that behavioural assimilation
is the most likely to occur; if accompanied by
structural assimilation, the other forms will inevitably
follow.

Underlying the assimilation perspective is a strong
belief in nationalist ideology. Thorburn (1989) calls
assimilation a 'nation-building tool'. Regarding
diversity as an impediment to national unity, opponents
of cultural pluralism advocate assimilation (Kallen,
When mainstream society favours and encourages assimilation by minority cultural groups, the process ceases to be voluntary. In the context of English Canada, such a process is known as 'Anglo-conformity' (Li, 1990).

Some authors (Burnet, 1975; Porter, 1975) have claimed that Anglo conformity was the key to social equality for the members of some groups. According to Porter (1975), adopting the norms and values of society's dominant groups facilitated mobility and opportunity for minority groups; assimilation countered the inevitable class stratification that resulted when ethnicity is an organizing principle, a phenomenon he called the 'vertical mosaic'. When ethnic origin is inconsequential, concern for individual achievement, not group rights, predominate, thus ensuring all members of society not only occupational but also political and economic equality (Porter, 1975).

The implications for educational institutions are to emphasize individual achievement rather than group solidarity (Wyatt, 1984). Rather than develop ethnic consciousness or encourage cultural retention, public schooling aims to help students adjust to Canadian society as quickly as possible (Wyatt, 1984).

As an conception of multiculturalism, the 'assimilation' perspective is in fact antipathic to
cultural pluralism; its main goal is the modification and eventual absorption of minority cultures. Ignoring cultural retention and interchange, this conception of multiculturalism assures two of the four goals—to help members of all groups to overcome cultural barriers to full participation in Canadian society, and to assist immigrants to acquire at least one of the two official languages—enunciated in Canada’s Policy of Multiculturalism.

2. Ethnic Specific Conception

In direct contrast to assimilation is separation, or withdrawal (Berry, 1984), characterized by the voluntary isolation of minority groups to maintain cultural distinctiveness (Berry, 1984; Roberts & Clifton, 1990). McLeod (1984, 1987, 1989) uses the term 'ethnic specific' to highlight this characteristic.

The impetus for separation comes from the desire to counter assimilative forces from the mainstream culture and the wish to reject interaction with other cultural groups (McLeod, 1984). Although extreme forms of the ethnic specific conception advocate total isolation, often interaction between groups does occur.

In their discussion of four ideals of multiculturalism, Roberts & Clifton (1990) identify a pattern which they label "institutionalized
multiculturalism" (p. 125). In this form of multiculturalism, members belonging to an ethnic group have internalized the group's norms and values. Cultural and social-structural conformity is both commanded and achieved (Roberts & Clifton, 1990). This rigidity illustrates the divisive intent inherent in this conception of multiculturalism.

In his examination of various theories of cultural diversity in Canada, Mallea (1984) discusses 'political pluralism' and 'democratic pluralism'. Both ideologies describe a society in which each cultural group functions in relative independence of the state. According to Mallea, these forms of pluralism engender not only cultural maintenance and retention but also the sharing of economic and political power with minority groups (Mallea, 1984). Thus, both separation and interaction are fostered.

An extreme expression of the 'ethnic specific' conception is 'ethnic segmentation' (Breton, in Kallen, 1982), in which each group is culturally distinct and institutionally complete. Cultural and structural pluralism (Kallen, 1982) characterize this view.

According to critics, however, a society in which each ethnic group is culturally and politically complete would be 'multi-unicultural', not 'multicultural' (Porter, 1975). Kallen (1982) uses the term
'multinationhood' to describe a society in which independent collectivities coexist within a common federal framework.

The educational implication of this conception is a school system which focusses on cultural heritage and cultural preservation (McLeod, 1984, 1987). Educational programs may take the form of supplementary heritage language classes, community festivals, or a curriculum which promotes cultural maintenance as well as in group/out group differentiation (McLeod, 1987). The more extreme views of institutionalized multiculturalism or ethnic segmentation would seek independent schools as a way to maintain clear group boundaries (Roberts & Clifton, 1990).

As a conception of multiculturalism, 'ethnic specific' interprets Canada's Multiculturalism Policy as a guarantee of cultural independence. The goals of contributing to Canadian society, participation, cultural interchange and official language acquisition are largely neglected.

3. Promotion of Cultural Diversity

When the word 'multicultural' is used in its descriptive sense, it means a society consisting of a multitude of cultures (Roberts & Clifton, 1990). As an evaluative term, however, multiculturalism implies value
(Roberts & Clifton, 1990; Wilson, 1984). The conception, 'promotion of cultural diversity', reflects this meaning and regards multiculturalism as a reality that should be embraced and nurtured.

This conception treats multiculturalism as an aspect of human rights, a guarantee that individuals from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds will have the right to dignity and fair treatment (McLeod, 1984). It emphasizes the universality and equality of all cultures (Davies, 1989; Kehoe, 1984). Its goals are to shape a society aware of and sensitive to differences among people (Davies, 1985; Kehoe, 1982) and further, to develop in Canadians an appreciation for cultural diversity (Kehoe, 1982).

In education, this conception treats multiculturalism as an ethic that underlies all education programs (McLeod, 1984, 1987). More than simply accommodate cultural differences, this interpretation of multiculturalism requires the larger society to adjust to and encourage cultural diversity (McLeod, 1984). As a commitment to human rights, multicultural education means equality of learning and success for all children (McLeod, 1984).

In the 'cultural/intercultural' approach (McLeod, 1987), educational programs are distinguished by their comprehensiveness, duration, clientele, and motive or
objective (McLeod, 1987). Multiculturalism is an integral part of subjects at all levels and grades (McLeod, 1987). School curricula stress the importance of teaching about the underlying assumptions, values and beliefs that produce cultures' forms of knowledge (Davies, 1989). The approach further requires that multicultural education address all students (McLeod, 1987; Ouellet, 1989). The aim of multicultural education, therefore, is "to foster understanding, acceptance, and constructive relations among people of many different cultures" (Kehoe, 1982, p. 2).

Mirroring the same goals, Ouellet (1987) uses the term 'intercultural education' to describe programs that promote "mutual understanding and communication between people of different cultural and religious backgrounds" (p. 131).

As a reification of Canada’s multiculturalism policy, 'promotion of cultural diversity' meets the four goals enunciated by Prime Minister Trudeau in 1971. Deeming multiculturalism as human rights ensures that cultural groups wishing to perpetuate their traditions or contribute to Canadian society will be encouraged to do so. The emphasis on universality and mutual understanding will assist groups to overcome barriers, whether linguistic or cultural, and to interact with other peoples in Canadian society.
4. **Entrenchment of Multiculturalism**

'Entrenchment of multiculturalism' regards multiculturalism as a movement for social reform (Kallen, 1982). This conception makes a distinction between cultural pluralism and structural pluralism (Mallea, 1984). Societies that consist of many cultures, such as Canada, are culturally pluralistic. Structural pluralism, by contrast, refers to independent institutions among the cultural groups. Such a distinction acknowledges that differences between groups concern not only culture but also power and conflict (Mallea, 1984; Young, 1979): structural pluralism is seen as a way to increase the power of minority groups (Young, 1979).

According to Moodley (1983) power relations concern not minority cultural groups, but persons occupying minority caste status. For immigrants relegated to poorly paid occupations and marginalized by mainstream society, ethnic affiliation and cultural distinctions become secondary to class. The result is the emergence of what she calls the 'new ethnicity' (Moodley, 1983, 1985a). As a movement for social reform, multiculturalism needs to support the new ethnicity's struggle for equal access to power and status positions (Moodley, 1983).
In its extreme form, structural pluralism may resemble the ethnic specific perspective: separation of a cultural group from general society as a way to reinforce cultural boundaries (Young, 1979). Such a view has been advanced by Stent (in Young, 1979), who suggests that cultural separation may be a necessary first step to equality in an open society.

An argument for this kind of pluralism comes from D'Oyley (1984) who writes:

... the time has come for the (Canadian) society to so define itself that its organizations and bureaucracies, including school systems, may be more dynamically representative, manageable, prone to redevelopment, responsive, and capable of being systematically evaluated (p. 162).

He proposes changing the present charter duality of French and English groups to a 'hand' of Canadian society. Each 'finger', sharing political power with one another, represents one of the five main cultural/ethnic and racial groups: 1) Aboriginal 2) Anglophone 3) Francophone 4) later European and 5) later visible minority or African/Asian (D'Oyley, 1984).

Multiculturalism as a political movement regards the school as the "crucial battleground" (Moodley, 1983, p. 326) on which the struggle for social equality and racial justice takes place (D'Oyley, 1989). The classroom is a public place in which the realities and conflicts of the larger society are reflected, in which the cultures,
histories and contributions of all groups must be legitimized (D'Oyley & Stanley, 1990). The goal for education is to promote equality of opportunity and equality of condition (Moodley, 1985b).

A concomitant goal is the creation of a school climate conducive to academic success for students of all backgrounds (Young, 1979). An active role of the school is to support the maintenance of cultures, and where the school is independently managed by an ethnic community, to resist the forces of assimilation (Young, 1979; McLeod, 1984) from the mainstream. Though such a goal resembles that of the ethnic specific view, in general, most advocates of education for structural pluralism are committed to an integrated society (Young, 1979).

As an interpretation of Canada’s Multiculturalism Policy, 'entrenchment of multiculturalism' redefines and reshapes its stated goals and aspirations. More than minority group participation and contribution, multiculturalism would change the current relations between and the status of the 'others' and the French/English duality.

5. Multiculturalism as a Moral Concern

'Multiculturalism as a moral concern' transcends the goals of cultural retention, interchange and appreciation. Unlike the human rights perspective, it
does not insist that all cultural values be respected. Nor does it seek equality among groups, as entrenchment of multiculturalism does. Rather, this conception stresses moral principles that protect and govern individual rights in a culturally diverse society.

Central to this conception is the theme of social justice (Coombs, 1986). According to Coombs, (1986) a culturally pluralistic society embodies the values of equal opportunity, equal liberty, democratic institutions, fairness and respect for persons (p. 11). Irrespective of ethnic and cultural affiliation, such a society supports the rights and freedoms to which all members are entitled.

'Multiculturalism as a moral concern' espouses cultural relativism over ethical relativism (Kehoe, 1979; Wright & LaBar, 1984). Cultural relativism maintains that individuals are entitled to choose their cultural beliefs as long as their choices do not violate the rights of others (Wright & LaBar, 1984). Accordingly, multiculturalism must examine the "moral justifiability" (p. 114) of cultural values and, further, requires that cultural practices be subordinated to moral principles. Multiculturalism involves deciding how people of various cultural backgrounds are to be treated and their conflicts resolved (Wright & LaBar, 1984). It calls for equal treatment for all individuals unless relevant
differences justify unequal treatment (Wright & LaBar, 1984). The conception 'multiculturalism as a moral concern' means a society must guarantee equal opportunity and equal consideration of individual interests (Coombs, 1986).

The goal for a culturally plural society is twofold. First, it requires the sensitization of social institutions so that they treat members of any cultural background in a 'culturally sensitive way' (Coombs, 1986). Second, a culturally pluralistic society must accept that all persons have a right to choose his or her cultural beliefs (Coombs, 1986) as long as the choices do not violate the rights of other individuals (Wright & LaBar, 1984). According to this conception, multiculturalism means a society must guarantee equal opportunity and equal consideration of individual interests (Coombs, 1986).

In education, "the whats, hows and whys of human culture" cannot be taught in a way that is "value neutral" (Wright & LaBar, 1984, p. 116). Thus, the responsibility of the school is to instill in students the concept of social justice (Coombs, 1986; Ungerleider, 1989). One approach is social multicultural education, which involves both a moral and a political component (Coombs, 1986). As moral education, programs try to foster both belief in the freedom of association
and tolerance for diversity. Additionally, they must emphasize that cultural differences are immaterial when considering fundamental rights (Coombs, 1986) and must encourage students to accept all cultural practices except those which are unethical (Kehoe, 1982). As political education, the goal of the school is to enhance students' knowledge of and commitment to justice (Coombs, 1986).

Achievement of these goals requires that students acquire certain knowledge, competencies and dispositions (Wright & Labar, 1984). It also requires students to develop the modes of reasoning that will enable them to make judgments about how people of different backgrounds should be treated (Wright & LaBar, 1984). This conception overlooks such ends as teaching about cultural traditions or promoting intergroup relations.

Wright & LaBar (1984) describe five components of a social multicultural approach: 1) promoting good reasoning skills, 2) developing the concept of person, 3) developing the concept and sense of self worth, 4) developing the concept of society, and 5) understanding concepts such as prejudice and stereotyping. Connors (1984) discusses a multicultural curriculum that echoes similar goals. As action for social justice (Connors, 1984), multicultural education promotes teacher and student inquiry into the meanings, values and objectives
of multiculturalism. Another type of educational program is the transformative curriculum (Banks, 1989), which aims to help students develop the knowledge and skills to critically analyze and act upon human experience from diverse perspectives. Ultimately, the aim of such an educational program is to 'achieve' multiculturalism through student action and participation (Banks, 1989).

More than advocate the Multiculturalism Policy's goals of cultural freedom, support for cultural group development and commitment to intergroup harmony, this conception stresses that acceptance of these goals is a moral obligation. In a culturally diverse society such as Canada, opportunity, liberty, fairness and respect must prevail. At the same time, all individuals must have the right to choose his or her cultural affiliation and to decide whether to expand or minimize contact with other groups. The overriding concern is fair treatment, not only for members of minority cultural and ethnic groups, but for all members in the society.

C. Summary

Interpretations of Canada’s Multiculturalism Policy have been shaped by the divergent interests and objectives of the cultural and ethnic groups in this country. These interpretations have created institutional, social and educational policies that are
sometimes conflicting and irreconcilable. Diverse constructions of 'multiculturalism' exist. Five fundamentally different conceptions, distinct in their views of nationhood, cultural preservation, group relations and the role of education, have been identified.

The 'assimilation' perspective, for which a strong national identity and national unity are main concerns, highlights the Policy's commitment to help cultural groups contribute to Canadian society. To assimilationists, cultural pluralism and ethnic group affiliation hinder the development of a Canadian identity and impede individual achievement; "melting" into the dominant culture ensures minority groups equal opportunities and quality of life. Multiculturalism is a temporary condition in society while immigrants gradually assimilate. As such, this perspective is in reality antithetical to multiculturalism.

The conception, 'multiculturalism as a moral concern', like assimilation, denies any intrinsic value in cultural diversity. This conception follows moral principles to develop educational and other social policies. It supports the Multiculturalism Policy's commitment to promote cultural pluralism, provided that the maintenance of cultural traditions does not infringe on the rights of any individual. Like assimilationists,
this interpretation of multiculturalism also emphasizes the individual over the group.

By contrast, the conception 'promotion of cultural diversity' values and encourages the diverse cultural traditions in Canada. Regarding multiculturalism as an aspect of human rights, it seeks equality for groups and fair treatment for individuals. The Policy's goals to enhance group harmony and interchange, as well as its commitment to help groups participate in Canadian society, are all fundamental concerns.

'Entrenchment of multiculturalism' is committed to the Policy's goal to help minority groups overcome barriers to full participation in Canadian society. In addition, it seeks a fair distribution of power and status positions among all groups in Canadian society. More than pursue cultural retention and maintenance, this view seeks the empowerment of minority groups.

Finally, the 'ethnic specific' conception, which interprets the Policy's commitment to cultural maintenance as support for culturally and institutionally independent communities within Canada. In direct contrast to the assimilationist perspective, this view encourages ethnic affiliation and resists interaction with the dominant culture. In extreme cases, it advocates withdrawal from the larger society.
The many interpretations of and different ways to reify Canada's Multiculturalism Policy have caused confusion for the public in general and educators in particular. Such a range of competing conceptions underscores why Canadian society has confronted pluralism in so many ways, the choice of which often reflects current conflicts. Thus, employment equity, striving for equal representation among the various ethnic groups in Canada, realizes the entrenchment conception of multiculturalism. The current movement by the World Sikh Organization in Canada to resist the label 'Indo-Canadian' and to identify Canadians of Sikh background as 'Sikh-Canadians' reflects the ethnic-specific conception. Equally, discussions of First Nations self-government exemplify an extreme interpretation of both the 'ethnic specific' and 'entrenchment' conceptions. At the school board level, however, multicultural policies focus on cultural celebration and cross-cultural relations, realizing yet another conception.

That so many interpretations of multiculturalism do exist challenges the assumption by educational policies that multiculturalism is one consistent theme to which all segments of Canadian society concede. What needs to be recognized is that different visions of a plural Canada exist. With this in mind, the present study used the five conceptions identified in the literature as a
framework to develop a multiculturalism conceptions scale.
Chapter Three: Procedures

A. Instrumentation

One of the objectives of this study was to develop an instrument to measure conceptions of multiculturalism. Another purpose of the study was to identify background factors that are related to conceptions of multiculturalism. Finally, the study tried to describe how one sample of students currently enrolled in the Teacher Education Program at the University of British Columbia conceptualizes multiculturalism.

A review of the literature on multiculturalism and multicultural policies in Canada identified five conceptions of multiculturalism. Using these conceptions as a framework, the researcher prepared approximately 100 items, focusing on the themes of nationalism, immigration, cultural preservation, education and equal opportunity. The result was one survey made up of five subscales. A sample item (item 63) reads: *A major goal of multiculturalism is to promote positive relationships among Canada’s diverse groups.* The response categories for each item were: "Strongly agree", "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly disagree" (see Appendix A).

Colleagues of the researcher, who were instructors of English as a Second Language at UBC’s English Language Institute, an institute which runs English language
programs for international students, reviewed these items. Their comments about the content and format of the scale helped the researcher revise the instrument, resulting in a 72-item scale. In addition to these items, the survey contained eight questions seeking information about the subjects' personal and academic background.

In February, 1991, a pilot study with 29 subjects was conducted in an undergraduate education class. All subjects completed the 72 randomly ordered items anonymously. Results from this pilot study were analyzed with the computer program, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Norusis, 1988), to determine the internal consistency of each subscale.

According to J.D. Willms (personal communication, June, 1991), an acceptable reliability coefficient depends on the type of decision to be made. For formative decisions, a lower reliability value is tolerable; with summative decisions, a more stringent Cronbach's alpha is demanded. Gronlund (1985) offers similar guidelines for deciding the acceptability of a reliability coefficient. According to him, low reliability is tolerable when decision making is 1) of minor consequence, 2) in its early stages, 3) reversible, 4) confirmable by other data, 5) concerns groups, and 6) has temporary effects (p. 109).
The present study meets all six of Gronlund's criteria and is not intended to inform summative decisions in the Teacher Education Program. In assessing if items had been placed into the appropriate subscale, items with a Cronbach's alpha of .10 or higher, a figure arbitrarily chosen by the researcher, were retained in that subscale; those lower than .10 were relocated to another subscale where a value of .10 or greater was obtained. Nine items were eliminated, reducing the number to 63, with the subscales consisting of 10 to 15 items.

B. Subjects

The participants in this study were students enrolled in two of the three teacher education programs at the University of British Columbia. The University of British Columbia offers a Two-Year Elementary Teacher Education Program, a 12-month Elementary Teacher Education Program, and a 12-month Secondary Teacher Education Program. The researcher collected data from students enrolled in the latter two programs. A total of 212 people participated.

Data collection took place in July, 1991, when the students were near the end of their teacher education program. At the time of data collection, all of the pre-service teachers had completed coursework in the
theoretical bases of modern educational practice, curriculum and instruction, and communications skills, as well as their extended practicum. Additionally, prior to entering the 12-month Elementary and 12-month Secondary Programs, all students had completed an undergraduate degree.

C. Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaires were personally administered by the researcher, during class time, with the consent of the instructor. At each class visit, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and invited students to participate. Each test administration lasted approximately 30 minutes.

D. Data Analysis

Analysis of the data involved two steps. The first assessed the internal consistency of the instrument. The second step explored the relationship between background variables and conceptions. Data for eight background variables were collected and analyzed using multiple univariate analyses to identify those factors or combination of factors that are related to conceptions of multiculturalism. Using the information from this analysis, the researcher described how this sample of pre-service teachers conceptualizes multiculturalism.
Huberty and Morris (1989) describe four situations justifying the use of multiple univariate analyses of variance rather than a single multivariate analysis of variance. According to them, the use of multiple univariate analyses of variance can be justified if a) the dependent variables are "conceptually independent" (p. 303), b) the study is exploratory in nature, c) if some or all of the dependent variables had been studied in univariate contexts and d) if the study was a comparative evaluation.

Conditions "c" and "d" are not applicable to the present study. The criterion of precedence is inappropriate as this is the first study to empirically examine conceptions of multiculturalism. Similarly, condition "d" is irrelevant as the present study is not a comparative evaluation. The first two situations discussed by Huberty and Morris, however, are pertinent, and both support the present researcher's decision to use multiple univariate analyses to examine the significance of the background variables.

First, this study is clearly exploratory in nature, and hence meets the second condition. Second, the dependent variables are conceptually independent, each subscale being fundamentally different from the others and measuring one distinct aspect of something called 'multiculturalism'.
Each of the five scales was developed to measure one aspect of multiculturalism. For this reason, the scales correlate with one another, as Pearson’s test shows. However, each scale measures an aspect of multiculturalism that is relatively unique from one another.

The disparate beliefs and goals among the conceptions underscore the uniqueness of the scales. Assimilation believes that minority groups should become like the mainstream, while the ethnic specific scale emphasizes retention of cultural distinctiveness. Entrenchment focusses, not on cultural maintenance, but on achieving equality for minority groups. Promotion of multiculturalism stresses interchange and appreciation, whereas the moral scale regards multiculturalism as an ethical issue.

That all scales measure the same concept, multiculturalism, does not preclude conceptual independence. Just as the two measures of intelligence, verbal and spatial ability, are intercorrelated but conceptually different, these five scales, though intercorrelated, are conceptually independent.

Norusis (1988) discusses two drawbacks to using multiple univariate analyses over a multivariate design. The first is that multiple ANOVAs ignore the interdependencies among the dependent variables. This
warning is not a crucial one, however, given the argument of conceptual independence. The second objection she raises is that multiple ANOVAs increase the probability of a Type I error. In the present study, this warning has been anticipated with a more stringent alpha.
Chapter Four: Results

A. Analysis of the Five Scales

A test for internal consistency was performed for each scale. The Cronbach alpha for all five scales ranged from .70 to .85 (see Table 1).

Table 1

Intra-scale Reliability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>No. of items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.7995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic specific</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.7005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrenchment of multiculturalism</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.7459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of cultural diversity</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.8537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Concern</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.8280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ‘assimilation’ scale, consisting of 13 items, yielded an alpha of .7995. The ‘ethnic specific’ scale with 10 items, yielded an alpha of .7005. For ‘entrenchment of multiculturalism’, with 11 items, alpha was .7459. The fourth scale ‘promotion of cultural diversity’, with 14 items, yielded an alpha of .8537. The final scale, ‘multiculturalism as a moral concern’,
was made up of 15 items, and alpha was .8280. According to J.D. Willms (personal communication, June, 1991) and Gronlund's (1985) criteria of acceptance for Cronbach's alpha, these coefficients are tolerable.

A correlation matrix was also computed to show the relationships among the five subscales (see Table 2).

Table 2  
Correlation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Assim Ethnic</th>
<th>Entrench</th>
<th>Promote</th>
<th>Moral</th>
<th>Total Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assim</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>-.2934</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrench</td>
<td>-.4538</td>
<td>.5065</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote</td>
<td>-.5876</td>
<td>.4362</td>
<td>.6901</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>-.4917</td>
<td>.3574</td>
<td>.6512</td>
<td>.8372</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Scale</td>
<td>-.2655</td>
<td>.6420</td>
<td>.8153</td>
<td>.8395</td>
<td>.8409 1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the five subscales were constructed to measure one aspect of multiculturalism, and hence were expected to be correlated with one another, the researcher wanted to assess the strength of the relationship among them. It was felt that 'assimilation', being antithetical to
multiculturalism, would correlate negatively with the four 'pro-multiculturalism' scales.

As expected, Pearson's correlation test showed a negative correlation between 'assimilation' and each of the other four scales, the strongest correlation occurring with 'promotion of cultural diversity' ($r = -.59$). The other four scales correlated positively with one another, ranging from $r = .35$ to $r = .84$.

B. Factor Analysis

While a test of internal consistency can assess each scale's inter-item reliability and hence justify the a priori classification of items, it does not identify the instrument's underlying constructs. To identify these constructs, or factors, the researcher conducted an exploratory factor analysis using a principal components extraction with varimax orthogonal rotation. A six factor solution produced variables that were clearly distinct from one another. The researcher also attempted an oblique rotation that yielded no results, indicating that the factors, unlike the scales, were not intercorrelated. Such a finding is interesting given the strong correlations that were found among the five subscales using Pearson's test, indicating that the factors and the conceptions are only crude approximations of one another.
The varimax orthogonal rotation procedure maximizes the tendency of each item to load highly only on one factor and assumes that factors are distinct and unassociated with one another (Hedderson, 1987). Unlike the test for internal consistency, however, factor analysis is independent of how subjects respond to each item. Rather, factors are extracted based on the semantic similarity among the items but ignore their underlying intent. Thus, item 44, which reads: "Minority ethnic and cultural groups in this country should encourage new immigrants to become part of their established communities", was consistent with the 'ethnic specific' scale, but fell into the Assimilation factor. The factor analysis procedure recognized the words "encourage ... to become part of ..." but failed to distinguish the inherent difference between conformity to the majority and conformity to a minority group.

Earlier, the researcher stated that a test of internal consistency ensured that each scale was reliable, whereas a factor analysis could only extract common underlying variables, or factors, from the set of items. The two procedures were not intended to demonstrate perfect correspondence between factor and scale items but only to show the validity of the items. That some correspondence was found between the factors
and the conceptions identified in the literature suggests that the instrument is indeed valid.

Parallels were found between the results of the factor analysis and the literature review. Both the factors and the conceptions focussed on the themes of morality, assimilation, cultural preservation, and group rights. One of the factors, Benevolent Multiculturalism, had originally been identified from the literature as an independent scale but was subsequently collapsed with the 'assimilation' scale because of the small number of items and low internal consistency. The following is a partial list of the six factors and a few example items:

Factor one: Moral Multiculturalism

item 11. Cultural groups have the right to continue their cultural practices provided that they do not cause harm to other individuals.

item 12. Teaching students about racism, prejudice and discrimination is a necessary part of a multicultural curriculum.

item 67. Eliminating social injustice is essential in a multicultural society.

Factor two: Sponsored Cultural Preservation

item 23. Canada should help minority ethnic and cultural groups retain their cultural traditions.

item 43. School curricula should include the history and traditions of Canada's diverse cultural groups.

item 54. Schools with a large number of students from a minority cultural group should provide linguistic instruction in English (or French) and in that group's mother tongue.
Factor three: Assimilation

item 10. Immigrants should adopt the norms of mainstream Canadian culture.

item 24. Schools should help students from minority ethnic and cultural groups assimilate into mainstream Canadian culture.

item 42. To reduce the discrimination they face, immigrants should conform to mainstream Canadian culture.

Factor four: Benevolent Multiculturalism (after Gibson, in Young, 1979)

item 34. Helping new immigrants adjust to life in Canadian society is sufficient commitment to multiculturalism.

item 56. A multicultural education program is needed only if a school has problems with racism.

item 65. Tolerating cultural differences is sufficient commitment to multiculturalism.

Factor five: Cultural Self-preservation

item 32. Minority ethnic and cultural groups that wish to educate their children in their own schools should be able to do so.

item 41. Minority cultural groups have the right to restrict the behaviour of their own members as a means to preserve their culture.

item 48. Minority ethnic and cultural groups in Canada should be able to establish institutions that serve their own needs.

Factor six: Politicization of Multiculturalism (after Moodley, 1983)

item 16. Multiculturalism means recognizing minority cultural groups as equals to Canada’s two charter (English & French) groups.

item 20. Governments in Canada have a responsibility to provide job training programs to help recent immigrants.

item 33. Political representation among minority ethnic and cultural groups should be a major goal in Canadian society.
The labels reflect the researcher's interpretation of the factors. The descending order indicates each factor's relative strength in explaining the total variance.

Of the 63 items in the instrument, 28 items share the first factor, Moral Multiculturalism, which concerns social justice, intergroup harmony and ethical relativism. This factor emphasizes society's responsibility to ensure fair treatment for all cultural groups.

The second most dominant factor is Sponsored Cultural Preservation. The focus of this factor is official help to enable cultural groups to preserve their uniqueness. Eleven items share this factor.

The third factor, Assimilation, is similar to the scale of the same name. All items concern conformity to mainstream Canadian culture and modification of unique cultural characteristics. Seven items reflect this theme.

Factor four, Benevolent Multiculturalism, reflects a laissez-faire attitude: cultural diversity is a reality neither to be denied nor affirmed. Six items belong in this category.

The fifth factor, Cultural Self-preservation, highlights the themes of retaining group distinctiveness and reinforcing group boundaries. This perspective differs considerably from that of moral multiculturalism
and state-sponsored multiculturalism. Five items belong in this factor.

The last factor, Politicization of Multiculturalism, stresses the themes of political power and equal status for all groups in Canadian society. Six items share this factor.

Factor 1 explained 20.7% of the observed variance while factor two accounted for 8.3%. Factors 3 and 4 explained, respectively, 5.0% and 3.4%. The fifth factor accounted for 3.0% and the final one, 2.9%. Together, these six factors explained 43.3% of the observed variance.

C. Description of the Sample

Information pertaining to eight background variables was collected. These were: the subject’s age, sex, current program of study (elementary or secondary), academic background, ancestry, whether the subject was Canadian born, length of residency in Canada, and his/her subjective evaluation of intercultural experience.

Past studies have shown that certain background variables, in particular, age, sex, field of study (academic background), and intercultural experience, are related to conservatism, tolerance and racism (e.g. Eysenck, 1975; Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Grabb, 1980; Nilsson & Ekehammar, 1986; Nunn, Crockett & Williams,
One of the assumptions the researcher made was that tolerance was a necessary condition for acceptance of multiculturalism. Conservatism or intolerance might lead to rejection of multiculturalism. For this reason, the variables birth and length of residency in Canada, expected to influence willingness to understand, tolerate or accept cultural diversity, were included.

Ancestry was included as an indicator for upbringing and family culture. Finally, current program of study was included to assess differences between students in the elementary and the secondary programs.

The sample reflected an unequal number of female and male subjects. Two thirds (66.5%) of the 212 participants were female and one third (33%) were male. One subject did not respond to this item.

The age variable was divided into four categories, 20-24, 25-39, 30-34 and 35+. Twenty-four percent of the subjects fell in the 20-24 age group while 36.5% belonged in the 25-29 group. Eleven percent indicated they belonged in the 30-34 group and 27% in the 35+ age group. Three subjects did not provide this information.

Another background variable was subjects' program of study. Approximately one half of the subjects, 52%, were students in the 12-month elementary teacher education
program while slightly more than one quarter, 27%, were enrolled in the secondary teacher program. Three of the students indicated they were in the Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP). One fifth of the subjects (20%) were experienced teachers currently working full time in the school system. This category of subjects was excluded from the analysis as the researcher did not have data on the type and amount of teaching experience they had.

Academic background referred to the students' field of study prior to entering the teacher education program. Forty-eight percent of the students indicated their field of study was in the social sciences or humanities while 21% had majored in a pure or applied science. Only 3% and 7% of the subjects indicated that they came from a commerce or fine arts background, respectively. Finally, approximately one fifth, 22%, chose the "other" category, indicating they had majored in a combination of fields or in one not mentioned above.

The five categories for the ancestry variable were: African, Asian, Native, Northwestern European, and "other". The majority of subjects, 65%, indicated they were of Northwestern European ancestry. Eleven percent indicated they were of Asian ancestry. Only one subject chose the African category and only six subjects chose
the Native category. Twenty percent indicated they belonged in the "other" category.

The majority of the participants, 85%, were born in Canada while only 14% indicated they were foreign born. One subject did not respond to this item.

Similarly, 94% of the subjects had lived in this country since infancy or early childhood. Only 5% had moved to Canada in their teen or later years. Again, one subject did not respond to this item.

In their subjective evaluation of intercultural experience, 9% indicated they had little or no experience with people of ethnic/cultural backgrounds different from their own. Twenty-six percent had a moderate amount of experience. Sixty-five percent reported a considerable amount of intercultural experience.

Table 3 shows the frequency for each variable. Some of the categories were subsequently collapsed during data analysis.
Table 3  
Description of Sample  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background variables</th>
<th>N (212)</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Sex</td>
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<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>66.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>male</td>
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<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 - 24</td>
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<td>25 - 29</td>
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<td>30 - 34</td>
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<td>35+</td>
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<td>Elementary</td>
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<td>Secondary</td>
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<td>NITEP</td>
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<td>experienced elementary &amp; secondary teachers</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>20.0</td>
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<td>pure and applied sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>other</td>
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<td>20.0</td>
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Table 3, cont’d

Description of Sample

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<th>%</th>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>181</td>
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<td>since infancy/childhood</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>94.3</td>
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<td>since teen or later years</td>
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<td>.5</td>
</tr>
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</table>

D. Analysis of Background Variables

Prior to running the univariate analyses, some of the groups within the variables were collapsed due to small sample size. One variable, length of residency in Canada, was not included for the same reason. The remaining seven background factors are sex, age, program, academic background, ancestry, birthplace, and amount of intercultural experience.
The following table shows the alphas for each variable. Stringent application of Bonferroni suggests that alpha should be \( p \leq 0.006 \) (Huberty & Morris, 1989).

Table 4 shows the results from the multiple univariate analyses.
Table 4
Results from Multiple Univariate Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background variables</th>
<th>Assim</th>
<th>Ethnic</th>
<th>Entrench</th>
<th>Promote</th>
<th>Moral</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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<tr>
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<td>8.09</td>
<td>12.32</td>
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<td><strong>Program</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig of F</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.38</td>
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<td>.88</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
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<td>.41</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig of F</td>
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* p < .006
Sex

Sex was found to be significant in the four pro-multiculturalism scales, the 'ethnic specific', 'entrenchment of multiculturalism', 'promotion of cultural diversity' and 'multiculturalism as a moral concern' scales. Women were more likely than men to indicate agreement with these four scales.

Program

The NITEP program was excluded from the analysis due to small sample size. Experienced teachers were also excluded because it is not known whether they taught at the elementary or secondary level. No significant differences concerning program of study were observed in any of the scales, nor did any pattern emerge.

Age

No pattern indicating age differences could be identified.

Ancestry

Because of small sample size, the African, Asian and Native categories were collapsed.
Academic background

Due to sample size, the social sciences and humanities category was collapsed with fine arts, while pure and applied sciences remained intact. The other categories (commerce and 'other') were not used in this analysis for the same reason.

Canadian born

No pattern could be identified for this variable.

Intercultural experience

Like the previous variable, no pattern could be identified.

E. Group Membership

To describe the sample's conceptions of multiculturalism, the researcher used the compute function of SPSS. The five scales were weighted to allow a comparison of subjects' scores on each of the five scales, with a low score indicating stronger agreement. 'Strongly Agree' was assigned the value of 1, "Agree" was 2, 'Disagree' was 3 and 'Strongly Disagree' had the value of 4. The lowest of the five scores determined group membership for each subject. In instances where a subject received a similar score on two or more scales, that subject was classified into the one with the lowest
score. As this occurred on a number of occasions, this method of determining group membership is, at best, only a crude approximation.

Of the five scales, conceptions four and five were the most common choices among this sample (see Table 5). Fifty percent of the subjects fell into the 'moral concern' conception. Forty-four percent of all respondents belonged in the 'promotion of cultural diversity' conception. 'Assimilation', 'entrenchment', and 'ethnic specific' were chosen by only a small minority of respondents.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
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<td>Promotion of cultural diversity</td>
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<td>Ethnic specific</td>
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F. Summary of Results

In this exploratory look at conceptions of multiculturalism, five distinct conceptions were identified from a literature review. These were: assimilation, ethnic specific, entrenchment of multiculturalism, promotion of cultural diversity, and multiculturalism as a moral concern. An instrument consisting of five scales was then developed to measure these conceptions. In the first step of data analysis, the researcher attempted to ascertain if each scale and the instrument as a whole were reliable.

A test of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) was performed. Results from this test showed high inter-item reliability for each scale. Pearson's correlation test found intercorrelation among the scales, with a negative correlation between the assimilation scale and the other four.

The researcher also performed a factor analysis to substantiate the conceptual validity of the five a priori labels. A varimax orthogonal rotation extracted six factors that paralleled the five conceptions. These were: Moral Multiculturalism, Sponsored Cultural Preservation, Assimilation, Benevolent Multiculturalism, Cultural Self-preservation, and Politicization of Multiculturalism. The fourth factor, Benevolent Multiculturalism, was one that had been collapsed with
the assimilation scale. The consistency in themes between the factors and scales was considered support for the instrument’s validity.

To examine the relationship between the background variables and conception of multiculturalism, the researcher ran multiple univariate analyses. Data for eight background factors were collected (sex, age, program, academic background, ancestry, whether the subject was Canadian born, length of residency in Canada, and intercultural experience), but the residency variable was not included in the analysis due to the homogeneity in responses.

Using a stringent application of Bonferroni, sex was the only variable found to be significant. Women consistently showed greater acceptance for the four pro-multiculturalism scales. Though the alphas failed to meet the more stringent criterion, the study also found that women were more likely than men to disagree with assimilation.

Using the compute function of SPSS, the researcher described how this sample of pre-service teachers conceptualizes multiculturalism. It was found that a majority of the subjects favoured the ‘promotion of cultural diversity’ and ‘moral multiculturalism’ conceptions.
Chapter Five: Summary & Conclusions

A. Instrumentation and Classification of Subjects

The present research was a study of conceptions of multiculturalism. Two of the objectives were, first, to develop an instrument to measure beliefs about multiculturalism, and second, to identify background factors that are associated with conceptions of multiculturalism among pre-service teachers studying at the University of British Columbia.

Past studies have looked at the role of teachers in a multicultural society and the importance of preparing teachers for such a context. None has looked at teachers' conceptions of multiculturalism. Yet it is generally accepted that what teachers think about multiculturalism influences how they behave in the classroom. If teacher education programs are to prepare teachers for the culturally diverse classroom, it is important to understand pre-service teachers' beliefs about multiculturalism. The present study ascertained in an exploratory manner what conceptions pre-service teachers have of multiculturalism and attempted to identify the background variables that are related to these conceptions.

Based on conceptions identified in a literature review, the researcher developed an instrument to measure
five conceptions of multiculturalism, each differing from one another in philosophy and goal. These five were: 'assimilation', 'ethnic specific', 'entrenchment of multiculturalism', 'promotion of cultural diversity', and 'multiculturalism as a moral concern'.

The first step in the data analysis involved assessing the empirical validity of the instrument. A test of internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha) showed high inter-item reliability within each scale.

Pearson’s correlation test showed modest to high intercorrelation among the five scales, demonstrating consistency within the instrument. The four pro-multiculturalism scales correlated positively with one another but negatively with the assimilation scale. A view which discourages pluralism and advocates surrender of cultural distinctiveness, assimilation is antithetical to promotion of diversity. The negative correlation (r = -0.59) between these two scales is therefore not surprising.

Both 'ethnic specific' and 'entrenchment of multiculturalism' firmly advocate cultural retention and group distinctiveness. A positive and moderately strong correlation (r = 0.51) was found between the two scales.

A factor analysis extracted six orthogonal factors that closely paralleled the five conceptions. The conceptions were: assimilation, ethnic specific,
entrenchment of multiculturalism, promotion of cultural diversity, and multiculturalism as a moral concern. The six factors were: Moral Multiculturalism, Sponsored Cultural Preservation, Assimilation, Benevolent Multiculturalism, Cultural Self-preservation, and Politicization of Multiculturalism. One of the factors, Benevolent Multiculturalism, was a conception that had been identified in the literature review but subsequently collapsed with the assimilation scale.

The 'moral concern' scale was supported by a majority of the subjects, followed by 'promotion of cultural diversity'. The 'assimilation', 'ethnic specific' and 'entrenchment' scales received little support.

Sample bias might partly explain these findings. The present sample consisted of students who experienced a common teacher preparation program and who had just returned from an extended practicum in schools that were ethnically and culturally diverse. It is possible that their recent educational experiences affected their conceptions of multiculturalism.

Moreover, the subjects were predominantly of Northwestern European ancestry, and almost all subjects were Canadian born or had lived in Canada since infancy. The lack of variation in these background variables might be one reason for the homogeneity among their
conceptions. The small sample size for subjects of African, Asian and Native background meant that group membership by ancestry could not be determined.

A possible explanation for the positive response to 'moral multiculturalism' is its abstract nature. Items tended to dwell on principles rather than specify initiatives that promote group rights or cultural maintenance or political empowerment. The conception is one which exacts little financial commitment and requires less personal involvement than those which require political or social action.

Similarly, membership in the 'promotion of cultural diversity' scale was high. Emphasizing appreciation of cultures, this conception, like the one discussed above, requires little political involvement and personal commitment.

The contrast between group membership in these two scales and the other three conceptions supported the researcher's belief that multiculturalism as an ideology is readily embraced by most people while state-supported multiculturalism, requiring financial commitment, is not. Thus, as celebration of culture or as a democratic principle, multiculturalism is readily accepted. It is interesting to note that such was the finding of the Spicer Commission ("The Forum", 1991).
Research indicates that, among the middle class, attitudes toward non-economic issues tend to be more liberal than those of working class people, but in economic issues, the middle class tends to be more conservative (Eysenck, 1975). It is likely that almost all the subjects in this study come from a middle class background. If such is the case, it may be one reason why they supported multiculturalism as a democratic principle but resisted it as an economic reality.

'Assimilation', which believes in modifying unique cultural characteristics in favour of the characteristics associated with mainstream culture, was chosen by few subjects, a finding expected of an educated, middle-class, and hence more tolerant, sample.

Willingness to promote multiculturalism did not extend to the radical measures that 'entrenchment of multiculturalism' advocates. Nor did subjects support the 'ethnic specific' conception. Perhaps political empowerment of minority groups is too confrontational and reinforcement of group boundaries is too restrictive. Perhaps, too, the movement away from multiculturalism as cultural celebration and moral concern is discomfitting.

The unalterable finding of the present study, however, is that, for these subjects, multiculturalism means appreciation for cultural diversity and passive support for cultural retention. As structural pluralism-
-group distinctiveness as well as equal status with the two charter groups--multiculturalism was rejected by virtually all respondents.

B. Background Factors

The prominence of sex differences in the 'pro-multiculturalism' scales--'ethnic specific', 'entrenchment', 'promotion of diversity' and 'moral concern'--duplicated previous findings that women are generally more tolerant and less conservative than men (e.g. Sidanius & Ekehammar, 1980; Torney, Oppenheim & Farnen, 1975). The finding from the present research also supported the researcher's assumption that tolerance would be associated with willingness to accept multiculturalism.

That women were found to be more accepting of multiculturalism may reflect the socialization which girls undergo. In general, since childhood, girls are expected to be more nurturant, more conciliatory, and more willing to compromise than boys. It is likely that these traits developed into greater tolerance for differences and diversity.

Perhaps another explanation for the observed sex difference stems from the inequality between sex roles. Generally forced into a 'minority' status, women may, for
this reason, be more sympathetic to the plight and concerns of members of marginalized ethnic groups.

However significant the variable sex is, it explained only 4 to 5% of the observed variance. As no other background factors were found to be significant, it is safe to presume that factors other than the ones studied here may explain some of the variance.

Previous findings have shown that younger people are more tolerant than older people (e.g. Eysenck, 1972; Nunn, Crockett & Williams, 1978). The finding in this study, however, failed to find any age differences.

Past studies have found a relationship between field of study and conservatism (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Nilsson, Ekehammar & Sidanius, 1985). Again, the present study did not find this variable to be a significant predictor.

One of the expected findings in this study was that program (whether Elementary or Secondary) would be a significant predictor. The researcher had felt that selection of teacher education program would be related to such traits as empathy, liberalism and nurturance. It was felt that teachers who chose to work with young children would be higher in these traits, and hence be more acceptant of multiculturalism. The findings from this study, however, did not confirm this expectation.
The researcher had expected to find interaction effects between ancestry and variables such as length of residency in this country and whether or not the person was Canadian born. Such a finding did not emerge.

Almost all subjects were Canadian born and had lived in this country since infancy or early childhood. Thus, the absence of variation in these background measures meant that these relationships could not be tested adequately.

Of the background factors studied, the researcher had expected intercultural experience to be a strongly significant variable. The researcher thought that encounters with cultural practices and beliefs different from one's own would increase an individual's willingness to accept cultural differences. However, findings from the present study were inconclusive and no response pattern could be identified.

Two weaknesses concerning the measurement of this variable are possible explanations why no relationship was found between intercultural experience and conceptions of multiculturalism. First, the item sought each individual's subjective evaluation of his or her level of intercultural experience. The problem of interpreting 'high', 'moderate' and 'low' experience might have contributed to the inconclusive finding. Second, the item did not ask subjects to indicate whether
their experiences were positive or negative, nor did it specify type of interaction. More specific questions may have yielded some conclusive results.

Since sex, the sole variable found to be significant, explained only a very small portion of the observed variance (ranging from 4% to 5%), it is likely that factors other than sex are associated with one’s conception of multiculturalism. Possible variables are: social class, cultural background, upbringing, parents’ attitudes toward multiculturalism, culture of the schools attended (atmosphere, teacher attitudes, demographics of student population), type and amount of intercultural experience, as well as context in which intercultural contact was experienced (age, etc).

C. Summary of the Study

The present research was an exploratory study of pre-service teachers’ conceptions of multiculturalism. A pen and paper instrument for measuring conceptions of multiculturalism was developed from a literature review and administered to students enrolled in The University of British Columbia’s Teacher Education Program. Several analyses were performed to determine group membership for the subjects and to assess the effect of background variables on their conceptions of multiculturalism.
The findings from this study suggest that, for this group of subjects, multiculturalism in Canada is valued as an ideology and as celebration of cultural diversity. That most subjects identified with the 'promotion of cultural diversity' and 'moral concern' conceptions indicates that there is a high degree of tolerance and acceptance for multiculturalism. Yet few subjects identified with the 'ethnic specific' and 'entrenchment of multiculturalism' conceptions, seeming to indicate a reluctance both to grant equal status to non-charter groups and to maintain or further cultural distinctions. It seems that multiculturalism is valued, but only as something that enriches the Canadian mosaic. Cultural backgrounds other than the Anglo-Christian are still not recognized as a part of the mainstream culture.

D. Limitations of the Present Study

The present study could have benefitted from improvements in two areas, an increased sample size and refinement of the research instrument.

One weakness of the instrument was it reflected the researcher's interpretation of the literature devoted to multiculturalism; hence, the five conceptions that the instrument explored do not fully represent all conceptions.
Another limitation of the research instrument became apparent after the data analyses. Questions concerning the background variables could have been more precise, for example the item regarding intercultural experience, which did not specify the nature of the experience.

A larger sample size might have provided a more heterogeneous group of subjects. The lack of variability among subjects in the present study meant some of the background measures such as ancestry and length of residency in Canada, could not be adequately explored. Similarly, the unequal number of female and male subjects, especially in the Twelve-month Elementary Program, limited the researcher’s ability to draw conclusions about the variable sex.

E. Recommendations for Future Research

The findings from the present study suggest that certain background factors are associated with an individual’s conception of multiculturalism. Future research, perhaps involving personal interviews, is needed to explore in greater detail to what extent background variables, and which ones, affect these conceptions.

A valuable study would be to administer scales that measure subjects’ level of tolerance or prejudice. This
would help assess the concurrent validity of the multiculturalism conceptions scale.

The present study focussed on pre-service teachers who were studying at a large and culturally and ethnically heterogeneous university located in an ethnically diverse city. As such, their perceptions and conceptions of multiculturalism were likely to have been shaped by the social and educational experiences unique to this environment. A study comparing students from the University of British Columbia's teacher education program with pre-service teachers from a different university environment might be able to identify other variables other that are associated with an individual's conception of multiculturalism.

A forced-choice test might be one way to determine which areas people are likely to be open-minded and receptive and other areas where they are not. Such a study might yield a more accurate picture of how people conceptualize multiculturalism.

The present sample included experienced teachers currently working in the public school system. The absence of information about the amount and type of experience they had as teachers, however, meant that teaching experience could not be treated as one of the background factors. Including this variable in a future study would provide valuable information.
The sex difference observed in the present study suggests that the gender socialization process that children undergo affects men and women’s tolerance for and acceptance of diversity. Future research could investigate aspects of gender socialization that ultimately influence a person’s conception of multiculturalism. One implication of research in this area is that attitude change—particularly with respect to race relations—can be achieved through education.
Bibliography


Appendix A: Survey Instrument

CONCEPTIONS OF MULTICULTURALISM

This survey is part of a research project for an M.A. degree in the Department of Social & Educational Studies. It was developed to measure conceptions of multiculturalism.

Your participation in this project is completely voluntary and anonymous. If you choose not to participate in this study, your standing in this course and in the teacher education program will not be affected in any way.

The questionnaire will take no more than 20 to 30 minutes to complete.

Thank you for taking the time to help me with my research work.

Carrie Jung, M.A. Student
Department of Social & Educational Studies

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The questions in this section seek information about yourselves. I will be using this information to help interpret the data collected. Please do not leave any question unanswered.

Please choose the corresponding number on the answer sheet.

1. Which program are you enrolled in?

12 month elementary teaching program 1
Secondary teaching program 2
2. What is your academic background?

- social sciences and/or humanities 1
- pure and/or applied sciences 2
- commerce 3
- fine arts 4
- other 5

3. Please indicate your sex:

- female 1
- male 2

4. What is your age?

- 20 - 24 1
- 30 - 34 3
- 25 - 29 2
- 35 + 4

5. What is your ancestry?

- African 1
- Asian 2
- Native 3
- Northwestern European 4
- Other 5

6. Were you born in Canada?

- yes 1
- no 2

7. How long have you resided in Canada?

- since infancy 1
- since childhood 2
- since teenage years 3
- came to Canada as an adult 4

8. On a scale of 1 - 5, please indicate your experience with people of ethnic/cultural backgrounds different from your own.

1 2 3 4 5

- no intercultural experience at all
- daily contact in all kinds situations
MULTICULTURALISM CONCEPTIONS SCALE

Please read each item carefully and choose the response which most closely reflects your opinion. The four possible choices are:

1  Strongly agree
2  Agree
3  Disagree
4  Strongly disagree

9. School curricula should focus on the culture of Canada’s two charter (English and French) groups.

10. Immigrants should adopt the norms of mainstream Canadian culture.

11. Cultural groups have the right to continue their cultural practices provided that they do not cause harm to other individuals.

12. Teaching students about racism, prejudice and discrimination is a necessary part of a multicultural curriculum.

13. Canada should encourage cultural groups to share their cultural traditions with one another.

14. Having hiring quotas is one way to ensure that members of minority ethnic or cultural groups are considered for jobs.

15. Schools should encourage children from all cultural and ethnic backgrounds to be proud of their own heritage.

16. Multiculturalism means recognizing minority cultural groups as equals to Canada’s two charter (English & French) groups.

17. Institutions in Canada should make an effort to understand the customs of this country’s diverse cultural groups.

18. Canadian institutions have no responsibility to ensure that minority ethnic or cultural groups receive special consideration.
19. Minority cultural groups in this country should abandon their unique characteristics.

20. Governments in Canada have a responsibility to provide job training programs to help recent immigrants.

21. Immigrants who continue their cultural traditions in this country weaken national unity.

22. Canada must be willing to assist ethnic and cultural groups achieve equal status in society.

23. Canada should help minority ethnic and cultural groups to retain their cultural tradition.

24. Schools should help students from minority ethnic and cultural groups assimilate into mainstream Canadian culture.

25. School have a responsibility to help eliminate social injustice.

26. Multicultural education must include students from both mainstream and non-mainstream Canadian cultures.

27. Multicultural education is necessary only if there are communication difficulties in a school.

28. Political empowerment of minority ethnic and cultural groups is one way to achieve equality for these groups.

29. duplicate item

30. Students should be discouraged from wearing clothing unique to their culture or religion in school.

31. Schools should try to reduce the tendency of people to judge other groups according to their own group’s standards.

32. Minority ethnic and cultural groups that wish to educate their children in their own schools should be able to do so.

33. Political representation among minority ethnic and cultural groups should be a major goal in Canadian society.
34. Helping new immigrants adjust to life in Canadian society is sufficient commitment to multiculturalism.

35. Becoming a part of Canadian society means adopting the cultural norms of mainstream Canada.

36. Canada should help new immigrants learn the norms of this society.

37. Canada should promote interchange among its cultural groups.

38. If there are barriers preventing members of minority groups from employment, the barriers should be eliminated.

39. Minority ethnic and cultural groups should help their children develop a sense of pride in their heritage.

40. Having their own schools is one way to help minority ethnic and cultural groups to retain their own culture.

41. Minority cultural groups have a right to restrict the behaviour of their own members as a means to preserve their culture.

42. To reduce the discrimination they face, immigrants should conform to mainstream Canadian culture.

43. School curricula should include the history and traditions of Canada's diverse cultural groups.

44. Minority ethnic and cultural groups in their country should encourage new immigrants to become part of their established communities.

45. A multicultural education program should focus on the cultural differences of other peoples.

46. Cultural practices that might cause harm to other individuals should be modified.

47. A main goal of multicultural education should be to encourage students to retain their own culture.

48. Minority ethnic and cultural groups in Canada should be able to establish institutions that serve their own needs.
49. Multicultural curricula should help students from minority ethnic or cultural groups become active participants in society.

50. Multicultural education is an important way to legitimize the culture of minority ethnic and cultural groups.

51. When necessary, schools should help immigrant children adapt to their new life in Canada.

52. Minority cultural groups in Canada should preserve their cultural traditions.

53. Government hiring practices should treat members of both minority ethnic and Canada's two charter (English & French) groups in the same manner.

54. Schools with a large number of students from a minority cultural group should provide linguistic instruction in English (or French) and in that group's mother tongue.

55. A main purpose of multicultural education programs is to provide information about the cultural practices of other peoples.

56. A multicultural education program is needed only if a school has problems with racism.

57. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act should support "multiculturalism" and "multilingualism".

58. Children from minority ethnic and cultural groups should attend schools that encourage them to maintain their cultural practices.

59. Institutions in Canada should treat the minority cultural groups in this country as equals to the two charter (English & French) groups.

60. Canada's national identity is strengthened by its cultural diversity.

61. Canadians should be tolerant of different cultural practices.

62. Multicultural education is a moral responsibility.

63. A major goal of multiculturalism is to promote positive relationships among Canada's diverse cultural groups.
64. The existence of cultural diversity in a society automatically means it is multicultural.

65. Tolerating cultural differences is sufficient commitment to multiculturalism.

66. Minority cultural groups should resist adopting the norms of mainstream Canadian culture.

67. Eliminating social injustice is essential in a multicultural society.

68. It is important to respect other cultural traditions provided that they do not infringe on the rights of the individuals.

69. Schools should teach children from minority ethnic groups to feel proud of their own ethnicity.

70. It is important to foster appreciation for cultural diversity.

71. To enable minority ethnic and cultural groups to fully participate in society, governments must provide English or French language training for them.

72. Canada needs to ensure that all ethnic and cultural groups are treated in a culturally sensitive way.

73. Minority cultural groups in this country should adopt the norms of mainstream Canadian society.

74. Proportional political representation for minority ethnic and cultural groups is essential in Canada.

75. Appreciating cultural diversity is an essential feature of multiculturalism.

76. The main principle of multiculturalism in Canada is tolerance for people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

77. Canadian institutions must treat people in a culturally sensitive way.
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

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POSITIONS HELD:

PUBLICATIONS (if necessary, use a second sheet):

AWARDS:

Complete one biographical form for each copy of a thesis presented
to the Special Collections Division, University Library.