

## Ethnic Identity and Psycho-Social Well-being among New Canadian Migrants

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### Abstract

*This article provides an overview of the theoretical and policy background on Construction of ethnic identity, exclusion and social well-being among New Canadian migrants. The article searches for the historical patterns of immigration policies and ideologies determined who should and should not be admitted to Canada as preferred immigrants. This study begins with the era of racial classification and categorization and goes until the era of multiculturalism, employment equity, and affirmative action acts of 1986. The research demonstrates that past historical practices pertained to social exclusion of groups based on ethnic identity, have paved ways to discriminatory policies that continue to affected progress of racialized immigrants socially, psychologically and economically to the present time. The article will also evaluate what has changed in these immigration policies throughout the history of resettlement and integration of migrants in Canada.*

**Keywords;** human psychology, race, identity, stigma, integration, ideology. Immigration, migration, exclusion

### Introduction

The contributions of immigrants to Canada in the areas of social, cultural, economic and politics have been acknowledged by many researchers. However, an 84-participant focus group study done by Kunz, Milan and Schetagne (2000) concluded that racialized minority migrants continue to face “difficulties with the demand for Canadian experience, evaluation of foreign credentials, and not being considered for promotion if employed” (p. 40). Another study on socioeconomic integration of racialized minorities, conducted by George and Doyle (2010), indicated that “racialized minorities, like Aboriginal peoples, are seriously disadvantaged in Canada's workforce; with large gaps between labor market prospects for racialized minority and non-racialized minority populations” (para. 9). The policies that have shaped the fabric of the current Canadian labour force, immigration process and its future prospects have led scholars, including Knowles (2007), to ask what Canada will look like decades or a century from now if changes are not introduced to strengthen the current immigration policies.

For purposes of this article, I want to discuss certain historical socio-psychological constructions of racialized minorities in Canadian society that underpin their current socioeconomic status and continue to hinder their successful integration as effective contributors in Canadian socio-cultural and economic development. According to Taylor (2008), the disproportionate success of majority groups on one hand, and the disproportionate failures of racialized minorities on the other hand, can be traced to inequalities, injustices and social crises founded in deep-rooted socio-political and cultural nationalism constructed by Canada's “founding fathers,” who demanded that any ethnic groups coming to Canada should fit socially and culturally into one of the two majority groups (French and English) to better integrate, or assimilate, into a *Canadian* society. With that rationale, the First Nations communities have remained isolated, as they have neither adapted nor assimilated into the Canadian mainstream.

The social, economic, and psychological disparity of Canadian society along ethnic lines has a long history and can be better understood within the historical perspectives of socio-political and cultural interaction between communities within the larger Canadian society. Key among these is immigration policies stretching from the colonial period to the foundation of the Confederation union, and into contemporary Canada. Charon (1983) noted that the fabric of Canadian society has been often cited as a union of the descendants of earlier French and English settlers/immigrants, the First Nations, who are the natives of the land, and the ethnic communities that were brought in by both the English and French to work and subsequently adapt to, or integrate into, the Canadian society.

Saint and Reid (1979) have added a new debate on population and migration in Canada, as they believe that there are still unresolved arguments which suggest that the native or the First Nations of Canada themselves migrated to Canada from Siberia during the Ice Age, when Siberia and Alaska were linked by land. Watson (1979), noted that the European explorers who first came into contact with the First Nations people in Canada thought that their faith was being tested, as they never envisioned the existence of human beings in this part of the world. Other scholars believe that Canada's earliest inhabitants, the indigenous people of Canada known as Indians, combining Métis and Inuit, migrated from Asia. The first European visitors were probably the Vikings, who arrived at Newfoundland in 1497. According to John Cabot's recorded history, the Vikings claimed Newfoundland for the British and eventually remained on the coast of Atlantic Canada. In 1534 Jacques Cartier, a French explorer, arrived and claimed the Gaspé Peninsula, Quebec, for the French and developed their community, called New France (Government of Canada, 2012). This historical contribution subsequently gives more social political and economic rights to French and English in Canada.

In 1759 the British pushed into New France and defeated the French. However, French people in the New France were permitted to conduct their legal system, use their own language, practice their religion and eventually become Canada's tenth province, which is currently known as Quebec. In that era, Canada was divided into Lower Canada (French), and Upper Canada (English). Later, in 1867, Canada was formed as a country to include four provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Subsequently, six more provinces joined, including Newfoundland in 1949, with the last territory being Nunavut in 1997. Canada has three territories, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, which cover nearly a quarter of Canada's land area (Government of Canada, 2012).

These facts are difficult to ignore when examining the social, political and economic construction of Canadian society. Further, they must be understood by migrants who are trying to integrate into Canadian society and contribute to its economic development, as they provide insights on social cultural norms and how communities' and ethnic groups' identities are socially and psychologically constructed within the larger Canadian society. Much progress has been made in terms of communities' improved receptiveness to a multicultural society, along with the establishment of laws that protect the basic human rights of minorities in Canadian society. These laws reinforce respecting human rights, even though not fully implemented in the case of racialized minority migrants, and have improved Canada's profile as a welcoming place for talented and highly educated immigrants worldwide.

Nonetheless, individuals' rights have been considered an important value in Canadian society and are well-protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Immigration Canada, 2009). These ideals and principles are enshrined within the Canadian constitution and lifted up as exemplary values of the society. These values have facilitated the progress of the racialized minorities in mainstream Canada: women, gays and lesbians. However, they have done little to address the social injustices facing the racialized ethnic minorities and the First Nations peoples in Canada due to continued marginalization, under-representation and lack of coherent policies to assist these groups to integrate socially, politically and economically into mainstream Canadian society.

Accordingly, it is reasonable to assume that the historical interpretation of ethnic groups' identity under the cluster of the racialized minority group has continued to widen the socio-cultural and economic gap between these groups and the mainstream Canadian communities within the contemporary Canada.

### **Psychological Construction of Racialized Identity**

The first founding settlers in Canada have identified themselves as Francophones and Anglophones, to distinguish themselves from the other two communities that are officially treated as distinct and unique people culturally, racially, ethnically, politically and economically. These two communities are the Aboriginal community and the radicalized visible minority community. According to the Government of Canada (Public Services Commission, 2009)

an Aboriginal person is a North American Indian or a member of a First Nation, Métis or Inuit, North American Indians, or members of a First Nation including treaty, status, or registered Indians, as well as non-status and non-registered Indians. (Para, 1)

In this classification, the radicalized visible minority is defined in the *Employment Equity Act* of 1986, adopted by the Public Services Commission of Canada to refer to the people who fall within the following criteria:

[S]omeone (other than an Aboriginal person as defined above) who is non-white in color/race, regardless of birthplace. The visible minority group includes: Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, South Asian-East Indian (including Indian from India, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, East Indian from Guyana, Trinidad, East Africa, etc.), Southeast Asian (including Burmese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai, Vietnamese, etc.), non-white West Asian, North African or Arab (including Egyptian, Libyan, Lebanese, etc.), non-white Latin American (including indigenous persons from Central and South America, etc.), persons of mixed origin (with one parent in one of the visible minority groups listed above), other visible minority groups. (para.3)

The terms *immigrant* and *migrant* were later constructed with certain disdainful social and political tones to refer to a political identities of ethnic racialized minority immigrant communities within the Canadian society. Likewise with the concept of ethnicity, this was apparently adopted to describe non-Caucasians, regardless of the actual meaning of ethnicity. Burnet and Palmer (1988) have acknowledged that “ethnic diversity” has been ignored in social policy and as a topic for further research in Canada until recent years and has not been treated as an issue of vital importance in Canadian society. The issues of French and English Canadians have been the main topics of discourse in social science research. The authors note that even though neither the French nor the British are ethnically homogeneous, they expect migrants who come to Canada to assimilate into one of their dominant ethnic groups. In this context, the reference to ethnic groups in Canada applies to neither French nor British, regardless of the broader definition of ethnicity. According to Schermerhorn (1970), ethnicity is:

a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood... Nonetheless, necessary accompaniment is some consciousness of kind among members of the group. (p. 12)

Under Schermerhorn’s definition, Francophone and Anglophone are also ethnic groups, the same as other Canadian ethnic groups (visible minority and First Nations).

According to Avery (1995), the concepts of identification and categorization of people according to their ethnic affiliation in Canada have been in place for years. The focus of the practice was on the origin of people and their ethnic affiliation. In the years 1967 and 1971, and through the year 1981, information about ethnic affiliations was recorded through the census; also, the official record of immigration contained information about ethnic origins. This practice then shifted to gathering information on country-of-origin for the purpose of clustering and the systematic classification of what is known now as visible minority migrants.

Belanger (2006) thought that the establishment of distinct ethnicity-centered communities within Canada was under the continuous scrutiny of the government and became a concern of the top political leadership in Canada because of difficulties with social integration, political participation, and inter-race relations (diversity). Belanger (2006) noted that most of the leadership opinions on *racialized* migrants in 1945 did not support inter-race relations and interaction between different races. Belanger supports his assertion with the speeches of former Prime Ministers of Canada and political leaders who expressed their opinions on immigrants in the pre-1945 run against inter-cultural and ethnic integration between Caucasian and non-Caucasian migrants.

For both practical and political purposes, immigrants entering Canada were classified into one of three groups: (1) the preferred category, which included British on the top of the list, followed by Americans and Western Europeans; (2) an acceptable but not preferred category, which included East Europeans from Russia, Ukraine, and Poland, and southern Europeans from Italy, Greece and Spain; and (3) the non-preferred and not acceptable category, which included members of any group that would now be classified as a racialized group. Each of these groups, according to Belanger (2006), experienced discrimination in Canadian society, ranging from standard interpersonal relations to dealings with government officials. The practice of clustering and categorizing people that divided the country along four distinct ethnic communities became engrained in Canadian immigration policies and is still in existence today. According to Kelly and Trebilcock (1998), Canadian immigration policies were always set to reflect public concerns about who is allowed to come to Canada, concerns based on the historic presumption of social, political and cultural assimilation of immigrants into the larger (French and English) society. In this context, Kelly and Trebilcock (1998) note that:

...the immigration act and regulations provided the government with enough flexibility to prevent access to prohibit naturalization, and to effect the removal of those who were perceived as lowering the standard of acceptable citizenry, by their nationality, race, or political opinions. Thus, nationals of countries with which Canada was at war ('enemy aliens') were interned and refused entry; African and Asian immigrants were almost entirely prohibited...Unfortunately, the view of Canadian society and perceptions as stated have continued to reflect on their social interaction with people they considered not a perfect fit socially, cultural and racially to what their society perceived as ideal Canadian society. (p. 166)

Therefore, it is important in any discourse of migrants' psycho-social construction of racial identity in Canada to not overlook past historical practices pertained to social exclusion of ethnic groups, and discriminatory policies that have affected the progress of racialized immigrants socially and economically to the present time. Of course, it is equally important to evaluate what has changed in these immigration policies throughout the history of resettlement and integration of migrants in Canada.

### **Inner-Perception of ethnicity and Grouping**

When comes to inner perceptions of ethnicity, categorization and marginalization, will find that Canadian society still cleaves along four distinct ethnic groups: (1) Anglophone, (2) Francophone, (3) First Nations, and (4) Visible Minority Communities. Ironically, perhaps, this social structure is upheld by misinterpretation in policies of the Multiculturalism Act of 1986, which encourages communities to remain socially, culturally and ethnically distinct. In this scheme, English and French were named as official languages of Canada, but the existence of official languages does not prevent communities or groups from reading and writing or speaking their own mother tongues, which are neither English nor French. This situation has further widened the social interaction gap between visible minority and mainstream communities in Canada because the dominant languages are English and French.

The extreme form of these interactions is the relationship between the Anglophones and the Francophones, in which both stress socially and politically the preservation of their heritage, language, and race as a distinct nation within Canada whilst expecting the ethnic minority migrants to integrate into undefined, mutually agreed-upon characteristics of Canadian culture. The First Nations believe that in this Psycho-racial construction their heritage and culture are being threatened by English and French cultures, as well as the influence of modernization, which renders them isolated and disadvantaged because the latest technology and its intellectual content is quite alien to their cultural heritage and therefore not well integrated. In this structure, the racialized minority communities were adopted into the Canadian society by virtue of their rights and responsibilities pertaining to their status in Canada under the Canadian Constitution. Accordingly, the influence of culture and ethnicity as an indicator of identity has remained the major factor for racialized minority communities, rather than Canadian nationality and citizenship. The common belief in Canadian society is that there is one Canada, one vast and homogenous society into which the ethnic minority communities are to converge, blend, and assimilate to become *real* Canadians. When new Canadian migrants come to Canada, they are expected to embrace and conform to the Canadian culture, yet what ethnic immigrants find when they get here is a country divided along four major lines. The concept of Canadianism, social relation and interaction among its citizens was only based on values of the rule of law rather than considerations of culture or ethnicity. However, within this segregation and psycho-social isolation of communities along an ethnic divide, economic opportunities and support services were concentrated within the Anglophone and Francophone communities by virtue of the political influence acquired over centuries of rule, going back as far as the founding of Canada.

### **Ideological Trends in the Migration Policies**

The trends of Canadian migration were for centuries dictated by the need to bring in new workers to fill the shortage of skilled workers within the Canadian labor market. The process was later socially and politically constructed by the policymakers to align with the ideological and socio-cultural inspiration of Canadian mainstream society and its vision of the future of migrants in Canada. As a result, migrants were classified into preferred nations, who were considered acceptable people to be admitted to Canada, and not preferred, who might not assimilate culturally, socially and politically into the Canadian society.

Therefore, priority of admission for migrants in general from 1900 to 1920 was not placed on ethnic group because they were not considered acceptable migrants to integrate, work and live in Canada. Europe and the United States provided the majority of the migrant population, as the government considered them the most desirable and acceptable migrant workers (Anderson, 1981). The process changed, however, in the 1960s due to changes that were introduced in immigration laws and policies, such as the introduction of the immigration Point System in 1967, which depended on knowledge of English and French, age of migrant (i.e., not too old or too young), arranged employment in Canada, having a relative or family member already in Canada, educated and having intention of migrating to regions with high employment prospects. These factors were also influenced by international policies and acts that helped in addressing issues of social justice and discrimination worldwide, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. In this context, the record of migration from 1921 to 1945 continued to reflect the ethnic variation in admission of the preferred and acceptable nations who were allowed to come to Canada. This historical review was incorporated to further provide some historical perspective and outline factors that made the ethnic minority community one of the most vulnerable communities within Canadian society (Anderson, 1981).

There were many other social, economic, and political factors that led to changes in Canadian immigration policies from 1980 to the 1990s and to the present, factors that changed the dynamics of the immigration selection criteria of people who should be admitted to Canada and provided racialized migrants with more opportunities to come to Canada. For example, the number of people migrating from the most desirable countries, such as the United States and the Great Britain, dramatically declined due to improvements in the economic situations in those countries, and as such, there was a considerable rise in number of people admitted from countries that were considered less desirable, or not accepted (Anderson, 1981).

In addition, the family class system of sponsorship that came with the Immigration Act of 1976 opened doors to migrants who would not normally pass the *point system* set by the immigration authority on who should be admitted to Canada as a migrant or a skilled worker. Another factor that helped in the admissions of more visible minority migrants to Ottawa, or Canada for that matter, was the introduction of family class sponsorship, which helped these migrants who had become *Naturalized Citizens*, or who had *landed* migrant (Permanent Resident) rights to sponsor their relatives overseas to join them in Canada. The priority under this Act was to allow spouses and dependent(s) of migrants with legal status in Canada to be sponsored and admitted to Canada. In this regard, being a spouse or dependent was the approved criteria, regardless of the applicant's ethnic or cultural background. The sponsoring individual, however, had to be working full-time and have the financial means to support the sponsored spouse and/or dependents for at least ten years after they arrived in Canada. Most importantly, the sponsoring spouse could not be unemployed or receiving any public financial assistance (Immigration Canada, 2009).

Other factors that supported the waves of ethnic minorities who migrated to Canada included admission to Canada as conventional Refugees, which according to Immigration Canada (2010a),

Are persons who fled their homeland due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. These people were unable or unwilling to return to their countries of birth or habitual residence. Conventional Refugees also included the asylum seekers, categorized as *Protected Persons (IMM5520)*, and those from countries experiencing ongoing civil wars and armed conflicts, who had documented records of experiencing human rights abuse. With proper documentation of such abuse, the applicant is accepted to live in Canada under either the Conventional Refugee Act or the Humanitarian Designated Class Act introduced by the federal government in 1997. Immigration Canada defines protected persons as those who are determined by the Immigration Refugee Board to be in need of protection. (para.7)

The refugees are required by immigration authorities to apply for refugee status, preferably outside, but sometimes refugees apply inside Canada. However, it is worth noting that the increase in the number of people who claim their refugee status inside Canada was also facilitated by the improvement in transportation, the affordability of traveling around the world, and new global economic and information revolutions. New factors resulting from globalization have made the world nearer the Global Village envisioned by McLuhan (McLuhan & Powers, 1992) in the 1960s and 1970s: a little village that is accessible to all nations worldwide.

It has also widened the choices of preferred destinations to migrants for reasons of employment, or simply to seek a better life within industrial nations. These prospective migrants come to Canada with skills, knowledge, and education that they believe will give them better opportunities.

The period between 1999 and 2001 indicates a great shift in the admission of migrants from the most preferred sources of migrants from the United States and UK, including Western Europe, to China, India and Pakistan. The United States and UK continue to contribute most preferred migrants to Canada, even though the shift clearly indicated that migrants from the least preferred countries were accepted in greater numbers than in the years from 1921 to 1945 (Statistics Canada, 2006).

China continued to lead the list of countries that contributed the most migrants in the year 2000, followed by India. The years 2000 and 2001 also witnessed a huge decrease in the number of migrants coming to Canada from the United States and United Kingdom, as well as an increase in the number of groups identified as ethnic migrants admitted to Canada. The last era, 1999-2001, has witnessed the highest immigration of ethnic group to Canada from underdeveloped countries. Still, the quest for equality and fair access to economic opportunities for members of this group continues to constitute a major challenge for policymakers and employment professionals. According to Winnemore and Biles (2006), the most effective initiatives to address social injustices in Canada were the Employment Equity Acts of 1985 and 1995, the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 and the Charter of Human Rights and Freedom in 1982, all of which unsuccessfully attempted to alleviate the social, economic and political exclusion and inequality experienced by members of ethnic migrant groups.

Ethnic migrants group do not think that the new immigration policies of inclusion and increases in their admission quota have perceptibly improved their integration into the local labor force nor reduced protectionism and exclusion from fair access to economic opportunities all over Canada. Even though only 14% of Canadians have experienced discrimination because of their ethno-racial origin, the Ethnic Diversity Survey of 2004 indicated that “about 36% of visible minorities have been subjected to discrimination because of their ethnicity, race, language or religion. Of these, 56% faced discrimination in the work place” (HRSDC, A6).

As noted, the discourse of immigration centered on integration, assimilation and psycho-social adaptation of the migrant within host countries, which has also become a concern of many scholars studying difficulties in migrants’ socio-economic integration in host countries. Several scholarly articles have been written on immigration-related issues, with emphasis on migrant psychological, cultural, economic adjustments in Canada, and none of these researchers have predicted any better future policy changes in employment of visible minority migrants in Canada.

The nature and magnitude of immigration and migrant-related issues varies from one host country to another and mostly depends on the policies established by the host country, social/political accommodation, and acceptance of the migrant in his/her new society. Furthermore, successful integration and adaptation of migrants depends on their ethnic, cultural and religious influence as perceived by the host country of resettlement, as well as the willingness of society to accommodate individuals’ differences. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in the United States and the rise of global extremism have further complicated the ethnic groups’ rights of movement and access to economic opportunities in North America. The ethnic profiling and new scrutiny measures have facilitated creations of highly invasive new policies detrimental to individual freedoms, and encourage, almost justify, discriminatory behavior in all aspects of socio-political and cultural interaction, nationally and internationally (Isani, 2011).

Nonetheless, the lack of institutionalized programs to facilitate assimilation and denounce socio-economic marginalization, and the social isolation of ethnic groups in many of the host countries have been cited as factors that encouraged the development of sub-culturally distinct community organizations, with distinct cultures and ways of life psychologically attached to culture in their countries-of-origin more than their new host, Canada. These new ways of life were considered alien by mainstream communities in Canada, and were therefore sometimes linked to the causes of cultural and religious intolerance (Jedwab, 2006). These new perceptions entailed adaptation of new security measures in Canada that led to difficulties in building harmonized social relations and constructed a stigmatized identity for all racialized migrants because of the new security concerns, which include constant profiling and scrutiny. According to survey conducted by the Department of Justice in Canada (2010),

the majority (73%) of respondents indicated that they were not personally affected by any of the post-9/11 security measures; however, more visible minority participants felt that they were affected when compared to the responses of non-minority respondents (31% vs. 25%). The most common ways the participants were affected was by increased security at airports/delays in air travel (54%) and increased checks at customs/delays crossing borders (44%). Larger proportions of non-minority respondents reported experiencing increased security/delays in air travel when compared to minority respondents (57% vs. 44%). (5.4 Impact, para. 2)

Even though most ethnic migrants become citizens in their host countries, citizenship does not improve their lives or facilitate access to social or economic opportunities (Winnemore & Biles, 2006). Furthermore, ethnic migrants as discussed within the global context have remained a distinct community culturally, socially and economically, with no prospect of change unless current practices of social economic marginalization and isolation within host countries, including Canada, are changed. According to Rifkin (2000), nothing changes unless these forces or practices change. In this context, he stated:

Discrimination against the minorities will not change as long as forces that determined the decisions of the gatekeepers are not changed. Their decisions depend partly on their ideology—that is, their system of values and beliefs which determine what they consider to be “bad” or “good”. Thus if we think of trying to reduce discrimination within a factory, a school system, or any organized institution, we...see that there are executives on boards who decide who is taken into the organization or who is kept out of it, who is promoted, and so on. The techniques of discrimination in organizations are closely linked with those mechanisms, which make the life of the members of an organization flow in definite channels. Thus, discrimination has a link to management, and the action of gatekeepers that determine what is done, and what is not done. (p. 180)

The difficulty of migrants’ integration into the host country’s social fabric and issues of resettlements are worldwide concerns. Even though views of politicians in Canada continue to run contrary to the reality of ethnic migrants in terms of access to fair treatment, rather, it is apparent that Canadian politicians continue to advocate for ongoing admission of migrants to Canada to fill skill shortages in Canada. Paul Martin, former Liberal Canadian Prime Minister (December 12, 2003 – February 6, 2006), stated that “Canada needs immigrants... and we need them to succeed, plain and simple” (CTV Report, 2006). What constitutes success, however, and accommodation of ethnic groups into the Canadian society, has yet to be defined in terms understood by policy-makers, mainstream communities, and the ethnic minority migrants.

### **Social and Economic Well-being**

Apparently, many researchers have emphasized that the ethnic groups in Canada are not well represented in all aspects of social and political institutions, nor granted fair access to economic opportunities and participation in the Canadian social and economic development (Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 2009). The quest for equal opportunities and representation continues to be one of the major setbacks for the progress of ethnic minority communities in Canada at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels. This discussion subsequently led to the question of whether or not the government in Canada and its institutions, as per past immigration policies and their applications historically, have invested in development of policies and programs that would foster social, cultural and economic opportunities for ethnic minorities in Canada. One is left to wonder if the process of effective integration of ethnic groups into the Canadian society and its workforce has been taken into serious consideration as a viable means for socioeconomic development.

These historical service gaps in immigration and integration policies could be also understood as contributing factors in the development of ethnic migrants’ perceptions concerning social exclusion, categorization and social injustices, as well as their thoughts relating to their social, cultural, political and economic marginalization within Canadian society. These given discourses on immigration policies and the integration of the clustered migrants have presented challenges in socio-cultural and economic integration for ethnic immigrants in Canada to successfully participate as effective members within their chosen new society. However, these discourses do not prove that all ethnic migrants in Canada do not do well, nor do they dispute those socio-cultural, political and psychological factors that determine the success of racialized immigrants’ integration and assimilation in Canadian societies. Rather, the problem remains that the process of social and economic integration in Canada is stalled.

The psycho-social analogy and illustration of four distinct cultural and economic communities of Anglophone, Francophone, First Nations and the ethnic migrants groups emphasizes the level of ethnic migrants' integration, interaction, social relations and accommodation within the mainstream communities (Charon, 1983). For example, did these interactions support a sense of belonging that facilitated degree of access and success in economic opportunities, or did a failure to integrate and assimilate lead to marginalization and social exclusions and psychological disparities? The proposal of the four communities analogy has presented a conceptual model and to outlined socio-economic powers concentrated within the mainstream communities by virtue of socio-cultural and historical linkages to the ancestral founding fathers of the state in Canada (English and French). In this regard, the other two communities (First Nations and ethnic communities) are viewed socially, politically, and economically as dependent communities that should, through naturalization and immigration, meet the requirements of citizenship to contribute to Canadian societal economic affairs. These complexities of social structure and wealth distributions in Canadian societies have been viewed by the disadvantaged communities, in particular the ethnic groups, as causes of socio-cultural injustices, marginalization, and exclusions.

### **Reflection on Policy Implications**

The Psycho-social, cultural and economic integration of ethnic groups requires historical review in context of how immigration policies in the past decades that were not in favor of envisioning intercultural relations and the creation of ethnic communities in Canada have changed. These changes should capitalize on immigration policies and factors that facilitated the acceptance of ethnic migrants during the decline in wave of migration from the two major acceptable sources of migrants to Canada (Great Britain and the United States).

Further, the new era of globalization, technological advancements, improvements in transportation, and new humanitarian policies under the United Nations Human Rights Protection Act of December 8, 1948 have facilitated continuous arrival of more ethnic minorities groups to Canada. Even so, I think the immigration policies remained unclear in terms of programs, plans, and strategies that support ethnic minorities' migrant participation and facilitation of meaningful transition into Canadian human resource pool as well improve their psychological and social well-being. As Knowles (2007) has stated, people who are coming to Canada, and the policies that the government has in place, will determine what the country (Canada) looks like 100 years from now. Contrary, the construction and adoption of racialized identity (ethnic minority groups) was later legitimized in immigration policies and served as the basis of socio-political identity in all forms of interaction, socially, politically and economically. This policy of categorizations continues to hinder ethnic migrants' abilities to effectively contribute in Canadian socio-economic development.

Therefore, there is a need for development of new understandings in the dialogue of race, immigration and socio-cultural integration in Canada. That is because the racialized migrants' perceptions about the social-cultural and economic integration were never considered, or incorporated as a body of knowledge, in the discourse of why they remained isolated, marginalized and disadvantageous. Most importantly the psychological scars resulted from such practices needed to be addressed, as migrant began to react negatively towards their dire conditions in their host country (Canada).

### **Conclusion**

The process of integration and resettlement into the Canadian socio-cultural and economic pattern can be described as a series of challenging transitions shared by the majority of ethnic immigrants to Canada. So far, there are no new insight that looks into the field of migrants' integration and immigration-related policies. This includes policies that intended to support and facilitate the integration of ethnic immigrants in Canadian society with a focus on their health and psychological well-being and economic attainment. The underlying assumption is that, these barriers to integration of racialized migrants in Canadian society and their emotional enormity are deep-rooted in history, social norms and political paradigm. Many researchers do not normally discuss such factors; hence their emphases have been mainly placed upon a quantitative approach to understanding barriers to integration, and resettlement in Canada. Minimum attention has been paid on the lack of access to economic opportunities, and on how this lack of access, or impact on feelings of social exclusion has affected migrants psychologically, socially and economically. Consequently, a study by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2009) has shown that immigrants are returning to their countries-of-origin, including those who possess talents, skills and experience required within larger Canadian cities. This study recommends that Canada needs a better understanding from the migrants' perspectives on what they perceive as barriers, problems or opportunities in order to develop plans for migrant integration and access to economic opportunity.



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