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MULTICULTURALISM AND MIGRATION IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA

All contemporary societies are now culturally plural, with many ethnic, cultural, and religious groups attempting to live together in one civic space. The attention paid to how a reasonable degree of mutual acceptance can be achieved among these groups has been extensively examined by many disciplines: philosophy (e.g., [Kymlicka, 2007]); sociology (e.g., [Bloemraad, 2011]), and political science (e.g., [Vigdor, 2011]). Psychologists have also examined these issues, using concepts such as ethnic attitudes, multicultural ideology, perceived threat/security, and prejudice (e.g., [Berry, Kalin, Taylor, 1977; Berry, 2012; Stephan, Stephan, 2001; Pettigrew, Tropp, 2008] and many others). This study continues this psychological approach, while being rooted in the conceptualizations and findings available from these other disciplines.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia and other former Soviet republics faced new challenges of achieving mutual acceptance and adaptation among members of the larger society (representatives of the ‘host’ nations) and members of other ethnic groups as well as immigrants. In this paper, we portray the current context, including the immigration dynamics in contemporary Russia, as well as a description of migrants and the problems they face. We will then present the theoretical scheme underlying the study, including the hypotheses, the research methods, the main variables and the results of structural equation modeling.

Theoretical background and hypotheses of the research

There are two main approaches to visualizing intercultural relations in plural societies. One is the *melting pot*, which promotes the eventual assimilation of immigrants into the receiving society, resulting in a uniform culture, and a common national identity. The other is *multiculturalism*, which promotes two goals: the maintenance of cultural communities over generations, and the equitable participation of all groups and individuals in the life of the larger society [Kalin, Berry, 1982; Berry, 2012]. The Canadian policy of multiculturalism is rooted in these two principles

(diversity and equity), and has given rise to a framework that identifies three hypotheses that are amenable for psychological research [Berry, 1984]; this framework is presented in Figure 1.

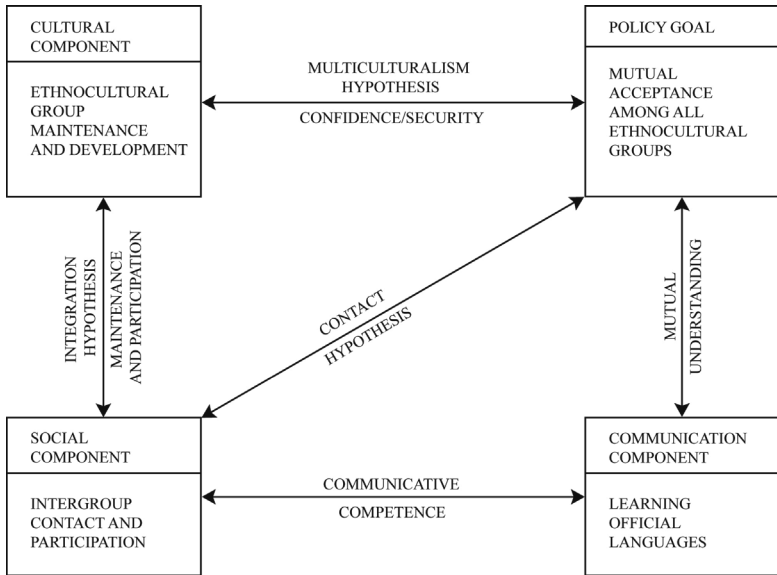


Fig. 1. Components and linkages in the Canadian Multiculturalism Policy [Berry, 1984]

The clear and fundamental goal of the multicultural policy is to enhance mutual acceptance among all ethnocultural groups (upper right component in Figure 1). This goal is to be approached through three other important components. On the upper left is the *cultural* component of the policy, which is to be achieved by providing support and encouragement for cultural maintenance and development among all ethnocultural groups. The second component is the *social* or *intercultural* component (lower left), which seeks the sharing of cultural expressions by providing opportunities for intergroup contact, and the removal barriers to equitable participation in the daily life of the larger society. The last feature is the *intercultural communication* component, in the lower right corner of Figure 1. This component addresses the need to have some common language(s) so that all groups and individuals can engage each other in the daily life of the larger society.

In addition to these components, there are links among the components that give rise to three hypotheses. The first, termed the *multiculturalism* hypothesis, links cultural maintenance with positive intercultural relations. This hypothesis proposes

that when people are secure in their own identity (i.e., when there is no threat to their culture and identity) they will be in a position to accept those who differ from them. This hypothesis is derived from a statement in the Canadian multiculturalism policy that when individuals are confident in their cultural and personal identities, this will lead to more positive intercultural relations (including a willingness for intercultural contact, respect for others, and the reduction of discrimination). Conversely, when people feel threatened, they will develop prejudice and engage in discrimination [Stephan et. al., 2005].

A second link in Figure 1 is the *integration hypothesis*. This links the cultural maintenance component with the intercultural component. This hypothesis proposes that when individuals and groups are ‘doubly engaged’ (in both their heritage cultures and in the larger society) they will be more successful in their lives, including a sense of personal wellbeing and sociocultural competence. In much research on intercultural relations and acculturation, the integration strategy has often been found to be the strategy that leads to better adaptation than other strategies [Berry, 1997]. A possible explanation is that those who are ‘doubly engaged’ with both cultures receive support and resources from both, and are competent in dealing with both cultures. The social capital afforded by these multiple social and cultural engagements may well offer the route to success in plural societies. The evidence for integration being associated with better adaptation has been reviewed [Berry, Sabatier, 2010]. [Nguyen, Benet-Martínez, 2013] carried out a meta-analysis across 83 studies and over 20,000 participants, has found that integration (‘biculturalism’) has a significant and positive relationship with both psychological adaptation (e.g., life satisfaction, positive affect, self-esteem) and sociocultural adaptation (e.g., academic achievement, career success, social skills, lack of behavioral problems).

The integration hypothesis is well supported in comparative research. For example, when second generation immigrant youth in Canada and France were compared [Berry, Sabatier, 2010], it was suggested that the national public policy context and public attitudes influence the young immigrants’ acculturation strategies and the relationship with their adaptation. In France, there was more discrimination, less orientation to their heritage culture (identity and behavior), and poorer adaptation (lower self-esteem and higher deviance). Within both samples, integration was found to be associated with better adaptation and marginalization with poorer adaptation. However, the magnitude of this relationship was less pronounced in France than in Canada. This difference was interpreted as being due to it being more psychologically costly to express ones ethnicity in France than in Canada, and to be related to differences in national policy and practices [Berry, 2012].

A third link portrayed in Figure 1 is the *contact hypothesis*. This links the intercultural participation component with positive intercultural relations. This hypothesis proposes that intercultural contact and sharing are considered to promote mutual ac-

ceptance under certain conditions, especially that of equality [Allport, 1954]. In national surveys in Canada, Berry and Kalin found substantial support for this relationship, especially when status is controlled [Kalin, Berry, 1982]. [Pettigrew, Tropp, 2008] carried out meta-analyses of numerous studies of the contact hypothesis, which came from many countries and many diverse settings (schools, work, and experiments). Their findings provide general support for the contact hypothesis: intergroup contact does generally relate negatively to prejudice in both dominant and non-dominant samples.

Together, and by balancing these components of the policy, it should be possible to achieve the core goal of the policy of multiculturalism: the improvement of intercultural relations in multicultural society. We define the main goal of our current research as testing and evaluating the relevance of the these three hypotheses in the Russian context.

The hypotheses of the research

1. The multiculturalism hypothesis is: the higher the confidence in one's identity is the higher a willingness to accept those who are different.

1a. The higher sense of security is, the higher the support of multiculturalism and ethnic tolerance are.

1b. The higher perceived discrimination/threat is, the lower the support of multiculturalism and ethnic tolerance are.

2. The integration hypothesis is: those who prefer the integration strategy have higher psychological and sociocultural adaptation.

2a. The higher the preference for the acculturation strategy of integration among immigrants, the higher their level of life satisfaction and better sociocultural adaptation.

2b. The higher the preference for multiculturalism among members of the larger society, the higher their level of life satisfaction.

3. The contact hypothesis: Intercultural contact and sharing promote mutual acceptance (under certain conditions, especially that of equality).

3a. The higher the level of intensiveness of contacts with host society members among immigrants is, the higher their preference of integration or assimilation strategies

3b. The higher the level of intensiveness of contacts with immigrants among members of the larger society is, the higher their preference for acculturation expectation of multiculturalism and the level of ethnic tolerance are.

Method

1. Participants

The study was conducted in Moscow. The sample included 1029 adult respondents: 651 were Russian Muscovites and 378 were migrants: 'internal' ones from the

North Caucasus (Karachai N = 100), and ‘external’ — immigrants from the South Caucasus states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia N = 278). Table 1 presents the ethnic composition of the participants.

Table 1. Sample composition

| Groups | Number of respondents | Age, M (SD) | Gender male/female |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| <i>Russian Muscovites</i> | | | |
| Russian | 651 | 25.9 (13.3) | 202/449 |
| <i>Ethnic Migrants</i> | | | |
| Armenians | 181 | 34.8 (12.4) | 79/102 |
| Azerbaijani | 50 | 36.7 (13.0) | 22/28 |
| Karachai | 100 | 22.7 (3.6) | 53/47 |
| Georgians | 47 | 30.5 (10.3) | 21/26 |
| Total | 1029 | 30.1(10.5) | 337/692 |

2. Measures

The study used the MIRIPS questionnaire, and the scales were translated into Russian and adapted for use in Russia in previous studies conducted by the authors [Lebedeva, Tatarko, 2009]. For this research we have used the following scales, responded to on a 5-point Likert scale: *Perceived security scale*. *Multicultural Ideology*. *Ethnic tolerance*. *Acculturation Strategies* (there are two versions of this variable — the *acculturation attitudes and the acculturation expectations scale*), *Sociocultural adaptation*, *Ethnic contacts*.

3. Data processing

For the testing of our three hypotheses, we used structural equation modeling (SEM). This allows the evaluation of a series of simultaneous hypotheses about the impact of latent and manifest variables on other latent and observed variables, taking measurement errors into account see [Bollen, Pearl, 2012]. For the testing of full versus partial mediation, this procedure is especially useful. In the present analyses, we used the SEM software AMOS version 20 [Arbuckle, 2010].

Results and conclusion

Our results assessing the multiculturalism hypothesis provide confirmation with the group of migrants, as well as with the members of the larger society (Muscovites). The sense of perceived security promotes support for multicultural ideology as well as tolerance toward other cultural groups. These findings are consistent with

the results of our previous research, showing that cultural security predicted tolerance, integration and social equality in both groups, but to a lesser extent among Muscovites [Lebedeva, Tatarko, 2013].

It is also consistent with research findings in other countries. In Canada [Berry et al., 1977; Berry, Kalin, 2000] and in New Zealand [Ward, Masgoret, 2009] measures of cultural security/threat and economic security/threat correlated positively with each other and with various intercultural attitudes. There are some interesting details in the model of dominant group — the level of ethnic tolerance among the dominant group members positively and significantly relates to the level of support for the multicultural ideology, which means that for the dominant group, the source of tolerance, beyond that of security, is sharing the ideology of multiculturalism. In order to prevent interethnic tension and anti-immigrant attitudes, the larger Russian society should develop and maintain such ideology in its social institutes and environment.

The second hypothesis has been partially confirmed in this research. Our results show that a preference for the integration strategy among migrants promotes their better sociocultural adaptation. However, the preference for integration among migrants and the preference for the acculturation expectation of multiculturalism among the dominant group has positive, but non-significant, impact on their life satisfaction. These results generally support the numerous findings of other researchers who reported the strategy of integration as being most conducive to wellbeing [Berry, 1997; Nguyen, Benet-Martinez, 2103; Sam, Berry, 2006]. Multiculturalism and integration appear to be the best strategies for everyone, not only for non-dominant groups in Russia, corresponding to the previous findings of [Lepshokova, 2012].

The third hypothesis assessed the role of contact in positive intercultural relations. Our results have provided some support for the effect of intercultural contact on acceptance of others, in both the dominant as well as non-dominant groups. Having friends among the Moscow population and the frequency of contacts with them promote the orientations of migrants to the integration and assimilation strategies; these two acculturation strategies involve the willingness of the migrants to be integrated into the receiving society. The frequency of intergroup contacts among Russian Muscovites promotes their preferences of acculturation expectation for multiculturalism and ethnic tolerance, which reflects their willingness to live in culturally diverse society. It also limits their acculturation expectation of the melting pot. These intergroup contacts also positively related to the ethnic tolerance among the members of the both groups, but this relationship is below the level of significance.

What may we say about Russia's migration and acculturation policy? First, we should recognize that such a policy has not even been articulated yet. The realization of multiculturalism in Russia requires taking care to preserving all ethnic cultures existing in Russian Federation as well as promoting the equal conditions for being

them to be integrated into the larger society. The hierarchical and vertically oriented character of Russian society poses a serious challenge to achieving a truly multicultural society, where all three elements are accepted. Such an achievement would require revising some of the basic values and principles that now characterize the ethos of contemporary Russian social and political life.

Despite these challenges, our data reveal the presence of relatively positive attitudes toward immigrants among Muscovites. Although the presence of immigrants does raise certain concerns and fears, Muscovites tend to adopt multiculturalism as their most preferred acculturation expectation; they show a kind of guarded tolerance toward immigrants. However, there are variations in this level of tolerance across ethnic groups. An analysis of the results using the ‘thermometer’ technique of emotional evaluations of various groups reveals there are ethnic groups that are perceived in a more unfavorable light than others [Lebedeva, Tatarko, 2013]. In other words, despite the fact that the Muscovites reported a willingness to include immigrants in their intercultural interactions, on an emotional level they perceive some ethnic groups as unpleasant, and evaluate them quite negatively. Considering the fact that Moscow-based immigrants do not take away the typical jobs of Muscovites, the reasons for such guarded negative attitudes toward immigrants are psychological rather than economic. This is thus a need to develop relevant psychological programs for both the sides included into intercultural contacts.

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