Intercultural relations, nationalist orientation, collective threat, and accommodating attitudes toward ethnoreligious diversity in a sample of Canadian-born English and French-speaking residents of Quebec

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Preliminary Results

Abstract

Immigration is changing Quebec’s cultural landscape. An immigration influx results in greater ethnoreligious diversity, challenging Western democracies invested in protecting secular values. Earlier, survey responses of 395 Estrie residents revealed that although Francophones perceived ethnic and religious targets as more open to social contact than did Anglophones, they were less accommodating of ethnoreligious diversity. Their accommodating intentions were predictable from their perceptions of religious target openness. In this study, perspectives from acculturation, national identity, and collective threat research help explain, by way of a Quebec-wide sample, French/English differences in accommodating orientations. We explore whether these differences reflect different nationalist orientations.

Introduction

Immigration is changing Quebec’s cultural landscape, as is the growing secularization of beliefs, practices and values.

Within the 2012-2016 period, close to 260,000 immigrants were admitted to the province of Quebec, representing an increase of 0.80% annually.

An influx of immigrant results in greater ethnoreligious diversity.

Identifying ethnic groups with stereotyped faith traditions may cast immigrants as challenging the ideals of secularism.

Seeing the ‘other’ in religious terms and as a potential threat creates social distance and dampens motivation to meet accommodation requests.

Quebec provides a valuable context for examining intercultural relations given its recent history of open discussions and policy proposals for negotiating the accommodation of ethnoreligious minorities.

Recognizing religious freedom while enhancing co-skeletal remains the paradoxical challenge of a secular society.

Previous Research and Poll Results

As Angu-Reid 2013 poll focusing on the effects of accommodation requests found three-quarters of Quebecers (72%) agreeing that the values of Quebec society are at risk due to significant accommodation. Only 23% agreed that ‘reasonable accommodation enriches Quebec society’ while 65% thought that ‘laws and norms should not be modified to accommodate minorities’.

Temperatures have flared in recent times in Quebec over niqab, hijab, and kirpan controversies, upping the demand for cultural minorities to conform to the majority and to give up their customs and traditions.

Public opinion polls and research have converged in documenting greater resistance by French over non-French mother-tongue Quebecers to questions of reasonable accommodation.

When asked to consider accommodating cultural and religious diversity within Quebec society, a recent study shows that Southeastern Quebec Francophones’ confusion of immigrant ethnicity and religion tempts their willingness to accommodate immigrant special requests. Their accommodating attitudes were also predictable from their perceptions of religious target openness.

Objectives

1) To replicate the main findings of the previous study

2) To ascertain whether nationalist orientations differ along linguistic lines

3) To ascertain whether differences in acceptance of ethnoreligious diversity along linguistic lines reflect different nationalist orientations

4) To ascertain whether collective threat mediates the relationship between ethnocentric nationalism and openness to cultural diversity

Method

Quebec-wide self-selected convenience sample of Canadian-born adult Anglophones and Francophones whose current and only place of residence is Quebec.

Online anonymous survey of Canadian-born participants living in one or 17 of the Quebec administrative regions.

Sample

N=266
Mean
SD
Age
40
17.8
Sex
37.7
59.9

Gender
Female
43.2
1.2
Male
56.8
1.8

NATIVE
Anglophone
43.7
1.2
Francophone
56.3
1.8

Ethnicity
Canadian
100
0

Race
Caucasian
100
0

Religion
Christian
100
0

Acculturation
Aboriginal
4.1
Lanuaduirre
2.0
Tsimiskiemg
5.3
Ba-Saint-Laurant
2.0
Laurentides
3.2
Capitale-Nationale
8.3
Laval
5.1
Montreal–de-Quebec
14.4
Montreal
4.0
Chaudiere–Appalaches
3.1
Montreal
18.7
Cote-Nord
3.1
Montreal
56.8
Esterel
11.1
Montreal
18.7
Gaspesie–Iles-de-la-Madeleine
2.0
Saguenay–Lac-Saint-jean
13.0

Measures

a) modified Reverse Bogardus Scale™ (RB scale): revised five-item scale reflects participants’ perceptions of the acceptance of ethnoreligious groups in Quebec society, contact with them (accept them). Targeted ethnic groups: French, Chinese, Anglophones, Congolese, Afghan, Hawaiians, Israelis, Moroccans, Syrians, Americans, Lebanese, Colombians, Indians, East Asians, Francophones, Mexicans, Targeted religious groups: Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus.

b) collective threat (CT): targets perceived as more open to close social contact (more accepting).

c) low RA score = target group perceived as more open to close social contact (more accepting).

d) modified Collective threat scale™ (CT scale): four-item Likert scale 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree

*Examples: 'Immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in Quebec'

*High CT score = higher level of perceived outgroup collective threat

*Low CT score = lower level of perceived outgroup collective threat

e) modified National identity scale™ (NIS scale): eight-item Likert scale 1=most important to all, 6=not important. Examples of Ethic form of national identity item: ‘It is important for being truly Quebecois to respect Quebec’s political institutions and laws.

f) modified Collective threat scale™ (CT scale): four-item Likert scale 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree

*Examples: ‘Immigrants take jobs away from people who were born in Quebec’

*High CT score = higher level of perceived outgroup collective threat

*Low CT score = lower level of perceived outgroup collective threat

*Examples of Collective threat item: ‘It is important for being truly Quebecois to respect Quebec’s political institutions and laws.

*High CT score = higher level of perceived outgroup collective threat

*Low CT score = lower level of perceived outgroup collective threat

4. We should be tolerant concerning the conventions and customs of different ethnic communities in Quebec.

5. High RA scores = target group is more open to accommodate immigrant religious and cultural practices.

6. Low RA score = less willingness to accommodate immigrant religious and cultural practices.

7. Modified National identity scale™ (NIS scale): eight-item Likert scale 1=most important to all, 6=not important. Examples of Ethic form of national identity item: ‘It is important for being truly Quebecois to respect Quebec’s political institutions and laws.

8. High CT score = higher level of perceived outgroup collective threat

9. Low CT score = lower level of perceived outgroup collective threat

Analysis

Preliminary data analysis included the following:

1) Replicate the main findings of the previous study

2) Ascertain whether nationalist orientations differ along linguistic lines

3) Identify as a Quebecer

4) Respect towards which Quebec culture is threatened

5) Extent to which Quebec English culture is threatened

6) Civic identity

7) National identity

8) Ethnic identity

9) Collective threat

10) Multicultural ideology

Conclusion

1) As predicted from our previous research findings, and as demonstrated in the majority of opinion polls, we find that Quebec’s French-speaking majority is less open to cultural and religious diversity than are English speakers.

2) The social reciprocity thesis guides both linguistic groups when asked about their openness towards immigrants.

3) Francophones and Anglophones are less tolerant of those perceived to be less open to towards the host communities.

4) Muslims and Sikhs are viewed as lower to open close social contact than Buddhists and Christians suggests that, in terms of accommodation, head coverings and ceremonial knives are a losing battle against cruelties and spaces for mediation.

5) Though religion is less important for French speakers, they still maintain to a higher degree than Anglophones that “being Christian” is important for being “truly Quebecois”.

6) In terms of nationalist identity orientations, both English and French speakers are more ‘civic’ than ‘ethnic’. Although higher scores on ‘ethnic’ national identity predict less openness to cultural diversity for Francophones, collective threat mediates this relationship.

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Anu-Rev Opinion Poll (Nov 13, 2013). Quebecers say they’re too accommodating, according to a new Léger poll.

Public Internet Research, retrieved from http://www.lger.org/quebecerssaythey'retooaccommodatingothercanadiens/


