

Chapter 3

Discrimination, Ethnic Group Belonging, and Well-Being

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Within Canada, an explicit goal of the policy of multiculturalism is the promotion of social justice for members of all the diverse groups comprising Canadian society (Canada Multiculturalism and Citizenship 1990, 1991). Indeed, there is evidence that social justice, as defined by equal opportunity and access in different domains of the social system (e.g., employment opportunities) is regarded as one of the most important aspects of multiculturalism when Canadians have been asked about different aspects of this policy (Angus Reid Group 1991). Surveys on this topic have found that Canadians claim to disapprove of ethno-racial discrimination (Reitz and Breton 1989; Berry and Kalin 1995; Esses et al. 2001), yet some Canadian attitude surveys tell a different story. They show that Canadians do indeed have preferences for neighbours, colleagues and potential partners for family members (Kalin and Berry 1994).

Various surveys report that individuals encounter experiences of prejudice and/or discrimination in Canadian society (Dion 2001). Discrimination has been reported in a variety of contexts (see, Dion 1989). Dion and Kawakami (1996) found that visible minorities in Toronto reported significantly greater discrimination and prejudice than white minorities, for example, in obtaining work, wage rates and being passed over for advancement or a raise.

In this chapter, we draw upon the Ethnic Diversity Survey to look more closely at prejudice as a psychosocial stressor in Canadian society. More specifically, we examine whether there is a negative relation between experiencing discrimination and various indicators of well-being. We also test a multiple jeopardy hypothesis which predicts an incremental impact of prejudice: in other words, experiencing discrimination on more than one dimension should increase its negative relation to well-being. Finally, we seek to determine whether positively identifying with one's own ethnocultural group buffers the association between discrimination and well-being.

Authors' note: Ken Dion, who designed this study and proposed the hypotheses, died before he was able to complete this research. We, Karen Dion and Rupa Banerjee, completed his research by carrying out the analyses to test the predictions he outlined and by writing this chapter.

In the present study, the outcome variable of interest is well-being. We focus on three separate indicators of well being: social inclusion, trust in others, and overall life satisfaction. These three measures of well-being are important in determining social cohesion since they are known to be strongly related to pro-social behaviour and social ties at all levels. Helliwell and Putnam (2004) examined the relation between social capital-related factors and subjective well-being, using two indicators: happiness and overall life satisfaction. They found well-being to be associated with family, neighbourhood, religious and community ties. Specifically, well-being was significantly related to frequency of interaction with family members, friends and neighbours, membership in non-religious voluntary community organizations, and frequency of attending religious services. Subjective well-being has also been found to be related to pro-social behaviour within the workplace. Well-being measures such as job satisfaction and particularly trust have been found to be antecedents of organizational citizenship behaviours (Chen et al. 2005; Podsakoff et al. 2000; McAllister 1995). Essentially, these are acts that go above and beyond the job description to cooperate with and help others in the organization and promote organizational cohesion (Podsakoff et al. 2000).

We recognize that interpreting the direction of the relation between well-being and social cohesion is open to debate. It may be that social cohesion results in well-being. Alternatively, well-being may lead to greater social cohesion. Moreover, the relation between these two constructs may be bi-directional. In any event, feelings of well-being and social cohesion are intimately related. Therefore, to understand the impact of prejudice and discrimination on social cohesion, it is important to examine how experiences of discrimination affect well-being.

In the social and behavioural sciences, a great deal of research has been devoted to studying the causes of prejudice and discrimination. Often, researchers have concentrated on the personal and contextual factors contributing to the likelihood that majority group members will exhibit prejudiced attitudes and behave in a discriminatory manner towards minority group members. This emphasis, however, neglects an important perspective; namely, the perspective of those who are the targets of prejudice and discrimination. To address this issue, Dion and Earn (1975) examined the ‘phenomenology of prejudice,’ a term referring to the subjective experience of prejudice. At that time, there was little systematic research addressing this important issue.

There is now considerable evidence that experiencing discrimination can be conceptualized as a psychosocial stressor (see Dion 2002, 2003). As used here, the term discrimination refers to being treated inequitably or unfairly based on either one’s group membership or some other arbitrary characteristic (Dion 2002). In the present research, Ken Dion proposed that experiencing discrimination based on ethnicity/race should be negatively related to different components of subjective well-being and to a sense of social inclusion. In addition, experiencing discrimination was predicted to show a positive relation to own-group identification.

Being treated unfairly is stressful for several reasons. It can elicit appraisals of threat by imputing stable, negative motives to others. Moreover, the experience of

discrimination is often unpredictable and uncontrollable (Dion et al. 1992), and unpredictable stressors make greater coping demands on individuals than predictable, controllable ones (Glass and Singer 1972).

What effect does the experience of feeling discriminated against have on the individual? Does the relation between self-reported discrimination and well-being differ for members of different groups? What components of well-being are related to feeling unfairly treated by others? These questions are difficult to study for many reasons. One challenge is to examine the impact of the experience of discrimination on well-being using various approaches to control for the contribution of other variables that are also related to subjective well-being. In their research, Dion and his colleagues used an experimental procedure developed by Miller and his colleagues (Boye and Miller 1968; Miller et al. 1968) to examine experiences of prejudice and discrimination in the psychological laboratory. In this paradigm, participants (university students) experienced failure or a setback that could be attributable to discriminatory behavior or not, based on the identity of the others in the group setting and whether or not the participant's identity was known to them. As Dion (1986) noted, this approach creates in a research setting a situation similar to one experienced in daily life by members of various groups; namely some type of difficulty or setback occurs which can be attributed to prejudice as a function of other cues/information available.

For example, in Dion and Earn's (1975) study, Jewish undergraduate men believed they were interacting with several others (all Gentiles) who presumably knew of their group identity. In this condition, prejudice was a potential explanation for subsequently-experienced negative personal outcomes in the lab setting. In another condition, the identity of each participant was unknown during the group task. Participants completed various measures, including ratings of identification with stereotypic group-related traits and a measure assessing different components of affect. The findings were consistent with the view that experiences of discrimination are a source of a psycho-social stress. After having a failure experience in the lab context, presumably as a result of their interaction with the others, the Jewish men finding themselves in a context where the others' behavior toward them could be attributable to anti-Semitism reported feeling greater anxiety, sadness, and aggression, as well as greater self-consciousness compared to those who experienced the same negative outcome but in a context where attributions of prejudice were unlikely to explain the others' behavior. Moreover, a negative outcome that could be attributed to discrimination resulted in greater positive in-group identification than the same negative event that could not be explained by discriminatory behavior.

Additional support for the notion that the experience of discrimination is a stressor (Dion et al. 1978) was revealed by comparing the men's standardized scores on various components of affect in response to prejudice with findings in other research (Lazarus et al. 1962) examining affective reactions to a known stressor induced via film.

This early research conducted by Dion and his colleagues was important not only for stimulating much subsequent research on the psychology of prejudice from the perspective of the target but also for its use of an experimental paradigm. This

approach permits the inference that experiences of discrimination per se are a stressor unconfounded by the many other variables that might be related to experiencing discriminatory treatment, whether pre-existing individual differences and/or various situational factors.

There is now a growing research literature on the relation between the reported experience of discrimination on the one hand, and key indicators of personal well-being and social integration, on the other. For example, Pak et al. (1991) examined the relation between reported discrimination as experienced by Chinese university undergraduates and stress symptoms. The association between reported discrimination and attitudes towards one's own ethnic group compared to other cultural/ethnic groups also was assessed. Chinese students who reported having experienced discrimination indicated a higher level of stress symptoms compared to those not reporting discrimination, with this effect still occurring after including reported discrimination towards one's group and two life stress indices as covariates. Moreover, own group identification was greater for those who personally experienced discrimination compared to those who did not. Once again, this effect persisted when reported discrimination at the group level, as well as the two life stress indices, were included as covariates.

Research conducted by other investigators in the past two decades has found evidence that the experience of discrimination is associated with a number of negative psychological health correlates. To estimate the contribution of reported experiences of discrimination to well-being and a sense of social inclusion in the context of other potential correlates (such as occupation, income, education) statistical, rather than experimental, controls were employed using various multivariate research designs. For example, Williams et al. (1997) examined the contribution of several demographic variables, three indices of general stress and two indices of race-related stress to indicators of physical and mental health among black respondents and white respondents in the United States. The questions pertaining to discrimination were worded by referring to unfairness of treatment by others in three different contexts (such as job promotion) or unfair treatment in different aspects of daily living (e.g., receiving less courtesy compared to others, poorer service in a restaurant than others). Mental health was assessed by an index of psychological distress and a measure of subjective well-being (life satisfaction). After controlling for factors such as education, household income and other reported types of general stress, everyday experiences of discrimination (being treated unfairly in one's daily life) were found to be related to less well-being and greater reported psychological distress.

Similarly, Noh et al. (1999), looking at Southeast Asian refugees in Canada, found that after controlling for several demographic variables, self-reported discrimination was related to higher levels of depressive symptoms. In the survey conducted by Noh and his colleagues, the survey question pertaining to the experience of discrimination explicitly asked about discrimination based on race rather than the more general question concerning unfair treatment asked by Williams et al. (1997). Among Asian American undergraduate students, Lee (2003) found that reported personal ethnic discrimination was related to greater psychological distress

(depressive symptoms) and lower levels of personal well-being (self-esteem) as well as less social well-being (sense of connectedness in one's immediate social environment).

Within the context of employment, experiences of discrimination have been found to have significant negative effects on both employees and organizations. Pavalko et al. (2003) reported in their US study of sex discrimination at work that experiences of discrimination predicted more negative emotional and physical well-being. While emotional health (depression and anxiety) was found to be affected by recent experiences of discrimination, physical health (arthritis, heart disease and muscular-skeletal problems) seemed to be more affected by discrimination experienced years earlier.

Goldsmith et al. (2004) found that among female respondents, experiencing discrimination in previous job applications was negatively related to future attempts at finding work. Thus, perceived discrimination discourages potentially productive employees. In addition, experiencing discrimination has been found to be negatively correlated with task performance (Hannah 1974) and organizational commitment (Sanchez and Brock 1996). Sanchez and Brock (1996) found in their US study of Hispanic employees that reported discrimination was associated with higher work tension and lower job satisfaction. According to a study by Gutek et al. (1996), employees who perceived discrimination felt powerless and less prestige in their job. Mays et al. (1996) reported that black females who experienced racial discrimination from employers were less likely to engage in skill development or build effective relationships with coworkers and managers.

Similarly, Deitch et al. (2003) found that black employees' heightened perceptions of discriminatory treatment at work contributed to lower levels of job satisfaction and general well-being. Experiences of workplace discrimination may also result in grievances and legal action. Allen and Keaveny (1985) reported in their US study that employees who felt they were being discriminated against were more likely to file a grievance than those who felt they were treated fairly. Thus as these studies illustrate, there is significant evidence that the experience of discrimination is a psychosocial stressor (see Dion 2002, 2003).

However, not all studies have found negative psychosocial effects of experiencing discrimination. The attribution viewpoint, discussed by Dion (1975) in his Canadian study of women's experience of discrimination, asserts that attributing failures to discrimination rather than personal shortcomings may allow some individuals to preserve their self-esteem. In other words, perception of discrimination may actually protect one's sense of worth in some cases. This approach has also been called the "social discount" approach since it redirects responsibility for negative experiences from the individual to the collective and provides an external rationale for the experience (Crocker et al. 1998; Mesch et al. 2008). Subsequent studies found some evidence of this effect (see Crocker and Major 1989; Ryff et al. 2003), but it has been found to vary by minority group and situation (Dion et al. 1978) and was considered by Dion (2002) to be a weak effect.

In addition to psychological well-being, experiences of discrimination may also be related to ethnic group identification. There is evidence, including Dion and Phan

(Chapter 2, this volume), supporting the hypothesis that reported discrimination is positively related to identification with one's ingroup. Several of the studies reviewed above also document this association. It has been suggested that ethnic group identification, in essence a strong attachment and sense of belonging to one's ethnic group, may mitigate the negative relation between experiencing discrimination and well-being (e.g., Dion et al. 1992). The rejection-identification model predicts that self-reported discrimination reflecting a stable pattern of attributions (discrimination is thought to underlie negative outcomes across diverse social situations) heightens own group identification and lowers subjective well-being (Dion 1979; Operario and Fiske 2001). But own group identification should counter these losses in subjective well-being (Branscombe and Ellemers 1998).

Ethnic group identification is known to be associated with a positive sense of well-being, higher sense of community and social connectedness (Crocker et al. 1994; Ethier and Deaux 1994; Lee and Davis 2000; Lee 2003; Tsai et al. 2001). According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner 1985), ethnic group identification may buffer the negative effects of discriminatory treatment since the more an individual identifies with a chosen socio-demographic group, the more committed he/she is to emphasizing the positive attributes of that group. So, individuals with high ethnic group identification are more likely to feel positive about their group membership even in the face of discrimination. Individuals with low levels of ethnic group identification or belonging, on the other hand, may not have the psychological resources to appropriately deal with discriminatory treatment.

The hypothesis that ethnic group identification should counter the association between stable self-reported discrimination and well-being has been supported in several empirical studies. Using convenience samples of African Americans in the United States, Branscombe et al. (1999) found minority group identification to somewhat alleviate the negative psychological consequences of perceived racial discrimination. Mossakowski (2003) found that ethnic identity significantly reduced the impact of discrimination on depressive symptoms among Filipino Americans. Sellers et al. (2003) found ethnic centrality to buffer African American adolescents against the negative effects of discriminatory treatment. If race was not central to identity, perceived discrimination was positively associated with psychological distress. However, if race was a central component of identity there was no relation between perceived discrimination and psychological distress. In their 3-year longitudinal study of African American, Latino and Asian American high school students, Greene et al. (2006) found ethnic identity to moderate the relationship between perceived discrimination and changes in psychological well-being over time.

However, not all studies have confirmed the above findings. Lee (2003) did not find evidence that ethnic identity buffers the relation between reported personal or group discrimination and well-being for Asian American undergraduate students. In their research with South Asian refugees in Canada, Noh and his colleagues (1999) found that the interaction between ethnic identity and discrimination was positive when their joint impact on depression was examined. So, ethnic identity actually heightened the negative effect of discrimination. Similarly, McCoy and Major (2003) found that among Latino undergraduate students, strong ethnic group

identification intensified the negative psychological effect of discrimination. Operario and Fiske (2001) came to similar conclusions for Asian, African American and Latino students. Since individuals with high ethnic identity are strongly invested in their ethnicity, in some circumstances, discrimination based on this characteristic may affect them more negatively.

In summary, the groups for whom, and contexts in which, ethnic identity is likely to buffer the relation between experiencing discrimination and psychosocial malaise (as indicated by greater depression, lower life satisfaction, less sense of belonging to one's community at different levels) is open to debate.

Many of the studies discussed above have examined the impact of discrimination as a stressor in the context of particular groups, often various minority groups. With the Ethnic Diversity Study, however, it is possible to assess hypothesized relation between self-reported discrimination and different facets of well-being across groups representing different histories within the Canadian social structure; namely, charter groups (English and French) whose ancestors were the founding immigrant groups within Canada; white minority groups; and visible minority groups.

Experiencing discrimination should be negatively related to well-being for all of these groups. However, the hypothesized negative relation should be particularly evident for individuals from visible minority groups, followed by white minority groups and then, members of charter groups where they are in a majority position. In addition, according to the multiple jeopardy hypothesis (Pak et al. 1991), experiencing discrimination based on more than one dimension (e.g., religion and ethnicity) would be expected to have a more negative relation to subjective well-being and a sense of belongingness than discrimination based on one dimension. Thus, the first and second goals of this research are to understand the effect of self-reported discrimination on well-being and to test the multiple jeopardy hypothesis.

Since previous studies on the impact of ethnic group identification on the relation between discrimination and well-being have come to mixed conclusions, the third goal of this study is to examine the hypothesis that ethnic group belonging buffers the relation between the experience of discrimination and indicators of well-being or social inclusion. The presence of members not only of diverse visible minority groups but also of white minority groups as well as those from majority groups makes a more comprehensive and powerful assessment of this hypothesis possible than has been the case in much prior research.

Measures of Variables

This study used the Ethnic Diversity Survey to look at ethnic differences in the relation between reported discrimination, ethnic identification, and well-being. Ethnic background was divided into four categories: (1) Anglo; (2) French; (3) white minorities; and (4) visible minorities. Those who reported English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, or other British Isles ethnic ancestries and resided outside Quebec were considered 'Anglo.' Anglo respondents residing in Quebec were categorized as white

minorities. Similarly, respondents who claimed French ancestry and resided in Quebec were considered 'French.' Individuals of French ancestry who resided outside of Quebec were classified as white minorities. In addition, white minorities were considered to be any respondents reporting European backgrounds other than French (in Quebec) and 'Anglo' (outside Quebec). Consistent with the definition created by the Canadian Employment Equity Act, respondents claiming non-European ethnic ancestries were considered visible minorities. Visible minorities include Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Japanese, and Korean respondents.

It is important to note that these four categories are not mutually exclusive: respondents with multiple ethnic backgrounds may belong to more than one of the four groups. All analyses done for this study were conducted separately for the four categories, utilizing bootstrap weights supplied by Statistics Canada.

Well-Being

In this analysis well-being was measured using three constructs: sense of social inclusion, trust in others, and overall life satisfaction. The measure of 'sense of social inclusion' is the same as was called 'feelings of belonging' in Chapter One. There are three items. Participants were asked: 'Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means not strong at all and 5 means very strong, how strong is your sense of belonging to: a) your town, city or municipality, b) your province, and c) Canada?' A combined measure of sense of social inclusion was created from the average of these three items. The scores on this index ranged from 1 to 5 (for Anglos: $M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.92$; for French: $M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.24$; for white minorities: $M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.85$; for visible minorities: $M = 3.99$, $SD = 0.81$). The inter-item consistency of this index was found to be adequate ($\alpha = 0.76$).

The measure for trust in others was created using the average of two survey questions, which followed the question on trusting people in general, discussed in Chapter One. Participants were asked: 'Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means not strong at all and 5 means very strong, how much do you trust each of the following groups of people: a) people in your neighbourhood, b) people that you work with or go to school with?' The scores on this index ranged from 1 to 5 (for Anglos: $M = 3.96$, $SD = 0.82$; for French: $M = 3.71$, $SD = 1.11$; for white minority groups: $M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.77$; for visible minorities: $M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.74$). The inter-item consistency of this index was slightly low but adequate ($\alpha = 0.67$).

Life satisfaction was measured using a single item, as in Chapter One. Participants were asked: 'All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life these days?' Scores on this item ranged from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating very low satisfaction and 5 indicating very high satisfaction (for Anglos: $M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.88$; for French: $M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.08$; for white minority groups: $M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.78$; for visible minorities: $M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.77$). Prior to conducting multivariate analyses, the three measures of subjective well-being were each standardized ($M = 0$, $SD = 1$).

Ethnic Group Belonging

Sense of belonging to one's ethnic or cultural group was measured using a single item from the EDS.¹ Respondents were asked: 'How strong is your sense of belonging to your ethnic or cultural group(s)?' Scores range from 1 to 5, with one indicating very low sense of belonging to ethnic group, and 5 indicating very high sense of belonging (for Anglos: $M = 3.12$, $SD = 1.49$; for French: $M = 3.78$, $SD = 1.61$; for white minority groups: $M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.32$; for visible minorities: $M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.01$).

Experiences of Discrimination

Reported discrimination was assessed using a single item: 'In the past 5 years or since arriving in Canada,² do you feel that you have experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly by others in Canada because of your ethnicity, culture, race, skin colour, language, accent or religion?' Respondents were asked to provide a yes or no answer to this question. The scores on this item were either 0 or 1 (for Anglos: $M = 0.11$, $SD = 0.32$; for French: $M = 0.10$, $SD = 0.39$; for white minority groups: $M = 0.13$, $SD = 0.30$; for visible minorities: $M = 0.35$, $SD = 0.40$). From these descriptive statistics, it is apparent that visible minorities were much more likely than both charter group members and white minorities to report discrimination. See Fig. 3.1 for a pictorial representation of the percent of respondents reporting discrimination from each group.

In order to get a clear understanding of the reasons why respondents reported discrimination, the following item from the EDS was used: 'For which reason or reason(s) do you feel that you have experienced discrimination or been treated unfairly in Canada?' Possible answers included: (a) ethnicity or culture; (b) race or skin colour; (c) language or accent; and (d) religion. Respondents were permitted up to four responses. Among Anglo, French and white minorities, the more common

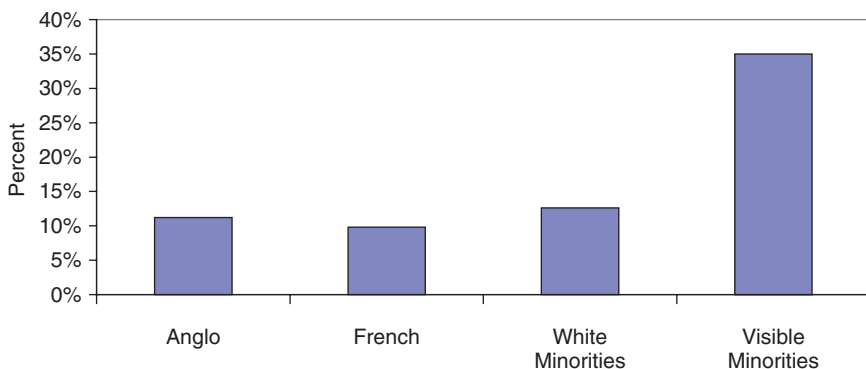


Fig 3.1 Reported discrimination by ethnic group

Source: Ethnic Diversity Survey 2002 (Statistics Canada and Department of Canadian Heritage)

bases for reporting discrimination were language and race or ethnicity. Whites who reported discrimination based on race may be claiming ‘reverse discrimination,’ or they may feel that undue advantages are given to racial minorities. Among visible minorities, race was the most common reason for reporting discrimination followed by language and ethnicity.

A pictorial representation of the bases for reported discrimination is presented in Fig. 3.2. It is important to note that each of the reasons depicted in Fig. 3.2 may have been reported as the sole basis for reporting discrimination, or it may be in combination with other bases. The EDS also provides a count of the number of reported bases for experiences of discrimination.

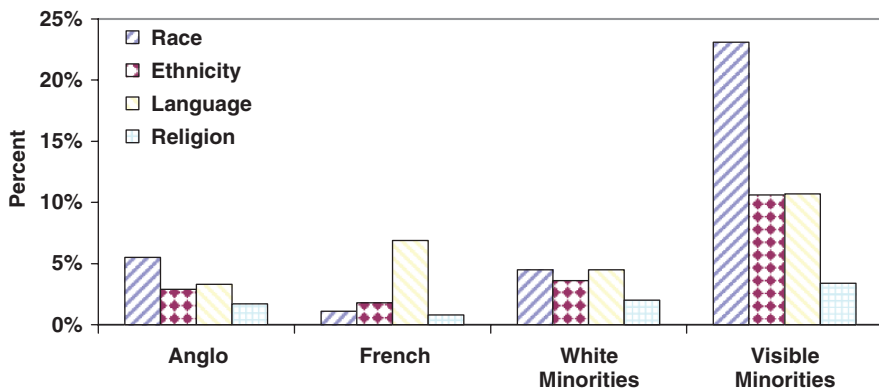


Fig 3.2 Bases for reported discrimination

Source: Ethnic Diversity Survey 2002 (Statistics Canada and Department of Canadian Heritage)

This item ranges from 0 to 4 (for Anglos: $M = 1.26$, $SD = 0.62$; for French: $M = 1.11$, $SD = 0.54$; for white minority groups: $M = 1.21$, $SD = 0.47$; for visible minorities: $M = 1.41$, $SD = 0.61$).

Findings

Effect of Reported Discrimination on Well-Being

In order to examine the effect of experiencing discrimination on subjective well-being for Anglos, French, white minorities, and visible minorities, regression analyses were conducted by ethnic category, with each of the three measures of well-being as the dependent variables, and reported discrimination as the key independent variable. Demographic and economic factors such as gender, age, education and household income were also controlled for, as they may affect both well-being and reported discrimination. For all four ethnic categories, reported discrimination was negatively related to all measures of well-being, and this relation was particularly strong for trust and life satisfaction. The results are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Effect of reported discrimination on well-being

	Anglo	French	White minorities	Visible minorities
	Coefficient (Standard error)	Coefficient (Standard error)	Coefficient (Standard error)	Coefficient (Standard error)
Social inclusion	-0.10* (0.04)	-0.17* (0.08)	-0.10* (0.03)	-0.16* (0.04)
Trust	-0.35* (0.04)	-0.23* (0.10)	-0.39* (0.03)	-0.48* (0.04)
Satisfaction	-0.26* (0.04)	-0.29* (0.09)	-0.28* (0.03)	-0.42* (0.04)

Note: Controlling for gender, age, education and household income. * $p < 0.05$.

Multiple Jeopardy Hypothesis

To test whether reporting discrimination based on more than one dimension or basis has additional negative effect on well-being, regression analyses were conducted by ethnic category only for respondents who reported discrimination, using each of the well-being measures as the dependent variables and the number of bases for which discrimination was reported as the key explanatory variable. This analysis was conducted for Anglos, white minorities and visible minorities. French respondents were omitted from this analysis since they were very unlikely to report multiple bases of discrimination. The vast majority of French respondents who reported discrimination indicated language as their only basis for experiencing discrimination. A small number reported two bases of discrimination, and very few reported more than two bases of discrimination.

The analyses revealed that among Anglos, there is some support for the multiple jeopardy hypothesis. Among Anglos who reported discrimination, the number of reported bases for discrimination was significantly negatively related to the sense of social inclusion and trust, but not life satisfaction. Among white minorities and visible minorities, the multiple jeopardy hypothesis was not supported since the number of reported reasons for discrimination did not have a significant additional negative effect on any measure of well-being. See Table 3.2 for a detailed account of these results.

Table 3.2 Effect of multiple bases of discrimination on well-being

	Anglos	White minorities	Visible minorities
	Coefficient (Standard error)	Coefficient (Standard error)	Coefficient (Standard error)
Social inclusion	-0.25* (0.11)	0.05 (0.04)	-0.08 (0.05)
Trust	-0.18* (0.07)	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.06 (0.04)
Satisfaction	-0.16 (0.10)	-0.07 (0.08)	-0.09 (0.06)

Note: Only respondents who reported discrimination were included in the analysis. French respondents are excluded since very few reported multiple bases for discrimination. Controlling for gender, age, education and household income. * $p < 0.05$.

Reported Discrimination, Ethnic Group Belonging and Well-being

In order to understand whether ethnic group belonging buffers the relationship between reported discrimination and well-being, suppression analysis was conducted with ethnic group belonging as the suppressor variable. A suppressor variable is defined as ‘a variable which increases the predictive validity of another variable by its inclusion in a regression equation’ (Tzelgov and Henik 1991). In this context, predictive validity is evaluated by the magnitude of the regression coefficient.

Suppression analysis is methodologically identical to mediation analysis (MacKinnon et al. 2000). However, in mediation analysis, a third variable is introduced in an attempt to explain or *reduce* the association between the independent and dependent variables, while in suppression analysis, the goal is to understand whether controlling for a third variable *intensifies* the association between the independent and dependent variables. Thus, suppression models have been referred to as ‘inconsistent mediation’ models (Davis 1985).

The most common model of mediation analyses (Baron and Kenny 1986) includes the following: a significant relation between the independent and dependent variables; a significant relation between the independent variable and the mediator; a significant relation between the mediator and the dependent variable; and a decreased relation between the independent and dependent variables when the mediator is added to the regression. Because of the fourth requirement, this model does not allow for suppressor variables. However, numerous studies have examined alternative forms of the model which allow for the possibility of suppression (see McFatter 1979; Breslow and Day 1980; MacKinnon et al. 2000). In the present analysis, the first three requirements of the classic Baron and Kenny (1986) model were met, but since the goal is suppression analysis rather than mediation analysis, the fourth requirement was not adhered to.

Before testing for the buffering effect of ethnic belonging on the relation between reported discrimination and well-being, the correlations between each of the main variables were examined. These correlations are presented in Table 3.3.

We then proceeded to test for suppression, using a series of regression analyses, and following the method outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). First, a regression was conducted with ethnic group belonging (the suppressor variable) as the dependent variable and reported discrimination as the independent variable. A second

Table 3.3 Correlations between variables of interest

	Social inclusion	Trust	Satisfaction	Discrimination	Ethnic belonging
Social inclusion	–	0.25*	0.21*	–0.06*	0.39*
Trust	–	–	0.28*	–0.16*	0.09*
Satisfaction	–	–	–	–0.13*	0.12*
Discrimination	–	–	–	–	0.05*
Ethnic belonging	–	–	–	–	–

Note: * $p < 0.05$.

group of regressions was conducted with both reported discrimination and ethnic group belonging predicting each of the three well-being measures. This series of regressions was conducted for each of the four ethnic groups and is represented pictorially in Figs. 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5.

The regression coefficients for discrimination on each of the well-being measures, while controlling for ethnic group belonging, represent the ‘direct effects.’ The ‘indirect effects’ were calculated by multiplying the regression coefficient of

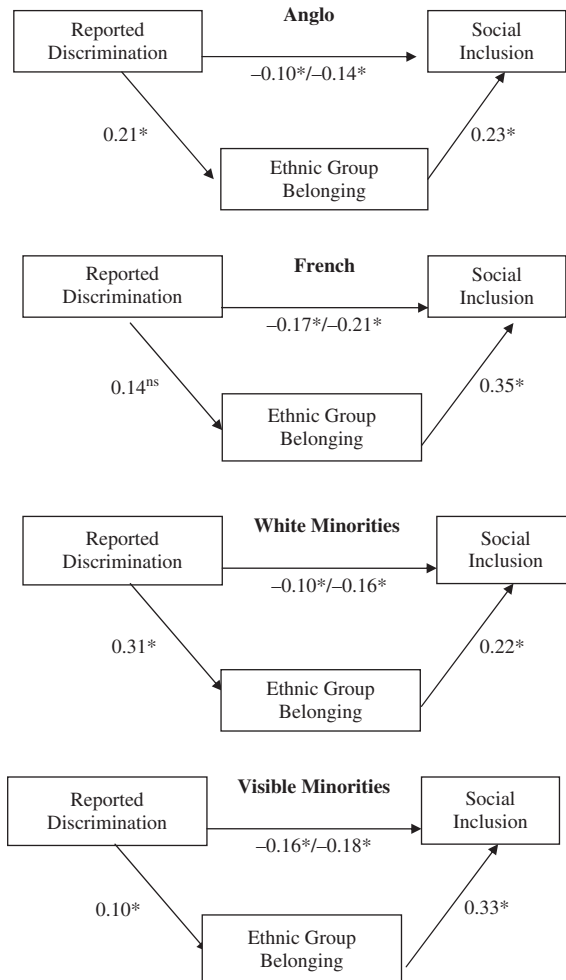


Fig 3.3 Reported discrimination, ethnic group belonging, and social inclusion
Note: The number on the left (right) of the slash indicates the association before (after) ethnic group identification is entered into the analysis; controlling for gender, age, education, and household income. * $p < 0.05$

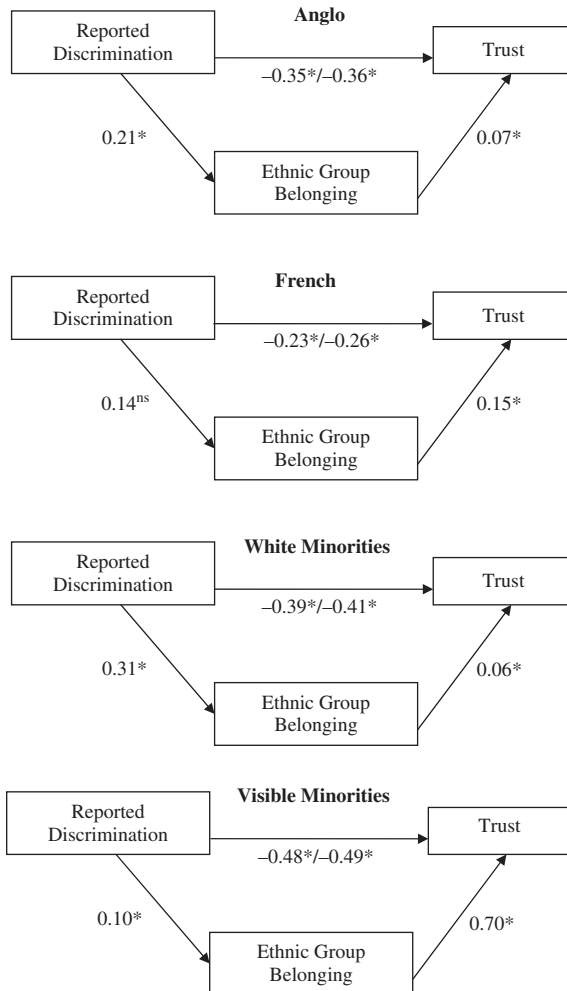


Fig 3.4 Reported discrimination, ethnic group belonging and trust
Note: The number on the left (right) of the slash indicates the association before (after) ethnic group identification is entered into the analysis; controlling for gender, age, education, and household income. * $p < 0.05$

discrimination on ethnic group belonging with the regression coefficients of ethnic group belonging on each measure of well-being while controlling for reported discrimination (MacKinnon and Dwyer 1993). The Sobel test recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986) was conducted for each measure of well-being among each ethnic group in order to test for the significance of the ‘indirect effect.’³ Table 3.4 contains the ‘direct effects’ and the ‘indirect effects’ for each measure of well-being and ethnic category.

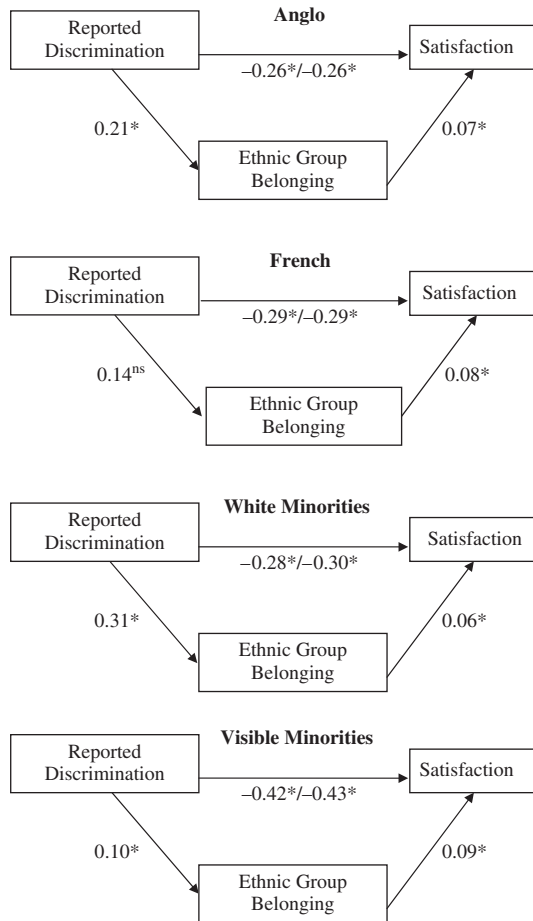


Fig 3.5 Reported discrimination, ethnic group belonging, and life satisfaction
Note: The number on the left (right) of the slash indicates the association before (after) ethnic group identification is entered into the analysis; controlling for gender, age, education, and household income. * $p < 0.05$

Overall, our data are consistent with the notion that reported discrimination has a negative direct effect on well-being and a positive indirect effect on well-being through ethnic group identification. However, there was no evidence of an indirect effect of ethnic group identification on well-being for French respondents, as there was no significant relation between discrimination and ethnic group identification for this group. Among the other ethnic groups, there was only evidence of partial suppression, as the magnitude of the association between reported discrimination and well-being increased only slightly when ethnic group identification was added to the analysis.⁴

Table 3.4 Direct and indirect effects

		Social inclusion	Trust	Satisfaction
		Coefficient (Standard error)	Coefficient (Standard error)	Coefficient (Standard error)
Anglo	Direct Effect	-0.14* (0.04)	-0.36* (0.04)	-0.26* (0.04)
	Indirect Effect	0.05* (0.01)	0.01* (0.003)	0.01* (0.003)
French	Direct Effect	-0.21* (0.07)	-0.26* (0.09)	-0.29* (0.09)
	Indirect Effect	0.05 ^{ns} (0.04)	0.02 ^{ns} (0.02)	0.01 ^{ns} (0.009)
White minorities	Direct Effect	-0.16* (0.03)	-0.41* (0.03)	-0.30* (0.03)
	Indirect Effect	0.07* (0.01)	0.02* (0.004)	0.02* (0.004)
Visible minorities	Direct Effect	-0.18* (0.03)	-0.49* (0.04)	-0.43* (0.04)
	Indirect Effect	0.03* (0.01)	0.01* (0.005)	0.10* (0.05)

Note: Controlling for gender, age, education and household income.

^{ns}not significant at the 0.10 level; * $p < 0.05$.

Missing Data

Individuals who did not answer questions measuring the variables of interest were removed from the above analyses. In order to assess whether there were significant and systematic differences between those who were included and those who were not, we examined the characteristics of those who were excluded from the analysis. Generally, individuals who were excluded possessed slightly lower levels of education. However, this difference was not statistically significant for all the models in the study. Excluded individuals also generally earned lower annual incomes and this was found to be statistically significant for most models in the study. In addition, those who were excluded were slightly older than those included in the analyses. There do not seem to be systematic differences in gender, immigrant status, parental education or size of area of residence. Overall, although there are some differences between individuals who were included in the analyses and those who were not, the magnitudes of these differences were not great.

Discussion

As stated at the start of this paper, we examined three hypotheses. First, prejudice was predicted to be a psychosocial stressor. Therefore there should be a negative relation between experiencing discrimination and different indicators of well-being. Second, a multiple jeopardy hypothesis predicted that there should be an incremental impact of prejudice; thus, experiencing discrimination on more than one dimension should increase its negative relation to well-being. Third, positively identifying with one's own ethno-cultural group should help to buffer the association between discrimination and well-being.

We found strong and consistent support for the first of these hypotheses. On each of the three indicators – social inclusion, trust, and life satisfaction – reported discrimination was negatively related to well-being. The consistency of this pattern

is of interest, since the three indicators represent different levels of reported well-being. Social inclusion reflects a sense of feeling 'at home' in place of residence both locally and nationally. The measure of trust reveals confidence in the people in one's immediate environment who are not family or friends. Finally, life satisfaction indicates a general sense of contentment with one's current ongoing life. The negative relation between reported discrimination and well-being is particularly strong for trust of others in one's immediate social world (colleagues and neighbours) and one's sense of satisfaction with one's life. The size of this negative relation was strongest for members of visible minority groups but reported discrimination was a negative correlate of well-being across each of the four groups examined.

These findings provide strong support for Dion's (2002, 2003) model of prejudice as a psychosocial stressor. Although these data are correlational, and therefore, the interpretation of direction of effect cannot be determined, the observed relation is consistent with a number of other studies reviewed earlier. Moreover, the earlier experimental work conducted by Dion and his associates (e.g., Dion and Earn 1975) provides clear evidence that awareness of experiences of discrimination influences affect, thus strengthening the causal interpretation.

For the multiple jeopardy hypothesis, an intriguing but unexpected finding occurred. There was some support for this hypothesis but among majority group members in Canadian society – Anglos outside of Quebec. Among minority group members, reporting discrimination on more than one dimension did not have a greater impact on well-being. Why did this pattern occur? One possibility is that the cumulative impact of reported discrimination may have a more negative impact on individuals who usually occupy or expect to occupy a more advantaged and/or comfortable position within their social world.

Williams and his colleagues (1997) have found evidence for 'differential vulnerability,' such that experiencing stressful events was more strongly negatively related to well-being for whites than for blacks. These researchers cited other work (Kessler 1979) which found that whites and high SES person fared worse in terms of mental health outcomes than nonwhites and low SES individuals, respectively, when confronted with similar stressful events in their lives. One interpretation offered by Kessler is a kind of adaptation level possibility; given a history of more negative life events, additional ones do not have the same effect for individuals from more disadvantaged groups. It is not possible to know if this interpretation accounts for the present findings, but it is one explanation that merits further investigation in future research.

Finally, concerning the buffering impact of ethnic identity, we found some evidence in support of this hypothesis. There was evidence of a positive indirect effect of ethnic belonging for three of the four groups (visible minorities, white minorities, and Anglos), but the size of this effect was not large. Hence, when this effect was controlled for, it did not have a strong impact on the relation between discrimination and well-being. As noted in the introduction, there is an ongoing debate as to the role played by ethnic group belonging as a potential counter to the adverse effects of prejudice and discrimination. These findings provide supportive evidence that the issue is worth pursuing.

Conclusions and Implications

As mentioned at the start of this chapter, an important component of Canada's multiculturalism policy is the goal of social justice, including equality of opportunity and mutual respect among members of the many groups comprising Canadian society. If there is a discrepancy between this goal and individuals' experiences, it has implications for social cohesion. In the Ethnic Diversity Survey, the measures focus on the individual level, rather than comparing indicators of social cohesion per se. However, the experience of discrimination at the individual level has the following implications for social cohesion.

First, the fact that discrimination was mentioned by survey respondents indicates the presence of a gap between the stated ideals/goals of multiculturalism and experiences reported by some individuals in their daily lives. Moreover, as is evident from these findings, this gap between ideals of mutual tolerance and respect, on the one hand, and experiences of discrimination, on the other hand, is greatest for members of visible minority groups.

Second, reported discrimination was negatively related to individual-level indicators of well-being that have implications for social cohesion, namely, social inclusion and trust of non-family members in one's immediate social environment. If individuals experience unfair treatment and/or disrespectful behavior from others based on group membership, these experiences may negatively contribute to a sense of being part of one's society and may be related to less confidence in, and connection with, others in one's society. Both factors might be predicted to weaken cohesion.

Third, there is some evidence that ethnic group belonging may help to buffer some of the adverse correlates of reported discrimination, but as noted previously, this is a weak buffering effect. Further research is needed to assess under what conditions ethnic belonging has a protective effect in maintaining well-being in the face of negative experiences related to one's group membership.

Finally, the relation between individuals' personal experiences of discrimination based on ethnicity, race, language, and/or religion and their perception of how their respective group(s) fare in society compared to other groups is an important issue which has implications for social cohesion. Dion (2003) pointed out in his review of the literature on prejudice, racism and discrimination that feelings of being deprived in different domains of life depend on the individuals or groups serving as the basis of comparison. As first proposed by Runciman (1966), a person may feel deprived compared to others in one's own group, or one may feel dissatisfied with how one's group is faring compared to other groups in the larger society (see Dion 1986 for a discussion of this theory and related research).

Dion (2003) suggested that "affective collectivistic" relative deprivation, namely, dissatisfaction and resentment at how one's group is treated compared to other groups is the strongest predictor of attempted social change compared to other types of relative deprivation. In the present research, there were no measures of perceived treatment of one's ethnic/cultural group compared to other groups so we could not assess the direct contribution of this factor. However, as Dion (1986)

noted, identification with one's group(s) and feeling a part of the group contribute to whether or not generalization occurs from the individual's own experience to how one's group's position is viewed.

We found evidence here documenting a relation between the experience of discrimination and heightened own-group identity, namely, a sense of belonging, for individuals from three of the four groups examined (visible minority groups, white minority groups, and Anglo majority groups). Dion and Phan (this volume) found that reported discrimination was related to a greater likelihood of ethnic self-categorization. Dion (1986) pointed out that the occurrence of greater own group identification as a response to experiencing discrimination makes it more likely that the sense of personal deprivation will generalize to perceptions of how one's own group is faring.

As noted above, Dion (2003) suggested that there was evidence supporting the importance of feelings that one's group was unfairly treated compared to other groups as predictive of individuals' desires to undertake actions to correct or remedy this situation; that is actions in favour of social change. An important direction for future research will be to identify the conditions under which these factors contribute to individual and collective approaches to foster structural changes that result in greater social cohesion.

Notes

1. Number of ethnic friends was also used as an indicator of ethnic group belonging, but failed to provide significant results.
2. For immigrants who arrived in Canada less than 5 years ago.
3. The Sobel test is used for testing the significance of the indirect effect instead of bootstrap methods because of the large sample size in this analysis.
4. Moderation analysis was also attempted using ethnic group belonging as the moderator between reported discrimination and well-being. This analysis showed that ethnic group belonging did not have a moderating effect on the relationship between discrimination and well-being. That is, regardless of the level of ethnic group belonging, the relationship between reported discrimination and well-being was the same.