
Articles

Discrimination in Leisure and Work Experienced by a White Ethnic Minority Group

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Previous research has shown that discrimination against racial and ethnic groups can affect their leisure choices and compromise benefits that would otherwise be realized if discrimination were absent. However, most studies have focused solely on the problems of racial minorities (Blacks, Hispanics, or Asians). The present multi-stage, multi-method study examines issues related to leisure and discrimination among white ethnic minority group: the Polish community in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The findings show that the pattern of discrimination experienced by this group differs from that of well-established racial minorities both in terms of the types of discriminatory treatment and the locations where such treatment takes place. In particular, white ethnic minorities tend to experience markedly less discrimination in leisure settings than in other locations. The low incidence of discrimination in leisure can be partly attributed to "ethnic enclosure" which serves to attenuate the potential for contact with members of other groups and therefore the occasions in which discrimination might be experienced. The study shows that there are important differences between ethnic and racial minorities and emphasizes the need to distinguish between race and ethnicity when conducting research of this kind.

KEYWORDS: *Discrimination, ethnic minorities, leisure*

Introduction

For more than three decades, differences in the recreation and leisure behavior of ethnic and racial groups have been the subject of study. During the 1960s and 1970s research focused primarily on comparing participation patterns in recreation activities between African Americans and whites (Mueller & Gurin, 1962; Washburne, 1978). In general it was found that Blacks tended to participate less frequently in wildland recreation activities than the white population (Kelly, 1980; Meeker et al., 1973; Washburne, 1978). In the 1980s and 1990s the scope of studies on the leisure of minority groups expanded to include a wider range of ethnic and racial minorities,

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such as Hispanic and Asian groups (Allison & Geiger, 1993; Hutchison, 1987; Irwin et. al, 1990; McMillen, 1983).

As part of this literature, and beginning in the late 1980s, issues related to the influence of racial and ethnic discrimination on leisure participation and enjoyment have been accepted as a legitimate area of study (West, 1989). Since that time an increasing number of research projects have attempted to tackle this phenomenon. In varying ways, these studies have shown that discrimination enters into leisure choices and may compromise the benefits that would otherwise be realized if discrimination were absent. The present study may be viewed as a contribution to continuing research on relationships between racial and ethnic discrimination and leisure.

Background and Objectives

From Comparative to Holistic Approaches

Early studies in the leisure of ethnic/racial minorities adopted a comparative approach in their analysis of differences in participation patterns between whites and minority-group members. The majority of the research employed Washburne's (1978) marginality-ethnicity thesis to account for these observed differences (Klobus-Edwards, 1981; Stamps and Stamps, 1985). During this period the leisure behavior of ethnic/racial groups was viewed largely as a static phenomenon that was uniform within a particular group and thus could be meaningfully compared with the "typical" leisure behavior of the white mainstream. Since the beginning of the 1980s, research on the leisure of minorities has evolved toward a more holistic approach to studying phenomena associated with minority recreation. In more recent studies, the leisure of ethnic populations is perceived to possess dynamic characteristics of its own and to change constantly as a function of many factors, such as the level of assimilation of its members. This "dynamic" approach has been adopted in a number of studies devoted to analysing the effects of assimilation on leisure preferences and participation patterns among ethnic and racial minorities (Aguilar, 1990; Floyd and Gramann, 1992, 1993; Floyd, Gramann, & Saenz, 1993).

Besides these issues, during the late 1980s and early 1990s other new trends began to emerge in the literature on the leisure of ethnic/racial minorities. As the emphasis has shifted towards a more holistic view of the phenomena, research on leisure constraints (Karlis, 1993; Philipp, 1995; Rublee and Shaw, 1991), motivations (Carr and Williams, 1993), and the meaning of the leisure experience (Allison, 1988; Allison and Geiger, 1993; Carr and Williams, 1993) has been gaining importance. Findings of these recent studies suggest that the leisure of ethnic/racial minorities is different, not only in terms of participation patterns, but also in terms of distinct sets of motivations, benefits, and constraints associated with leisure.

Leisure and Discrimination

It was also during this period that research on discrimination in leisure and recreation began to be published. A study by West (1989) that attributed under-utilization of regional parks among Detroit's black minority to their fears of discrimination was one of the first attempts to explore the effects of discrimination on leisure behavior. Floyd et al. (1993) analysed the effects of various measures of assimilation, derived from Gordon's (1964) typology, on the use of public recreation areas. Even though Floyd et al. did not find a significant relationship between intergroup distance and participation, perceived discrimination appeared to have a negative effect on the use of recreational sites. Gordon's classification also served as the basis for a study among Hispanic minority members conducted by Floyd and Gramann (1995), who found a relationship between acculturation and structural assimilation on the one hand, and the perception of discrimination in leisure settings on the other hand. In her study of visitors to a wildland recreation area, Chavez (1991, 1993) established that Hispanic-Americans appeared to perceive more discrimination than Anglo-Americans. Similarly, Blahna and Black (1992) found perceived discrimination to be an important inhibiting factor on the use of recreational areas by Chicago's Blacks and Hispanics.

A substantial body of research in leisure studies (e.g., Blahna & Black, 1992; Chavez, 1991, 1993; West, 1989) indicates that ethnic/racial minorities experience a significant degree of discrimination while participating in leisure activities in places such as parks, beaches, and campgrounds. Likewise, relevant research in the fields of sociology and ethnic studies appears to confirm that racial minorities are subject to discrimination in work and school environments as well as in public places (Chan, 1987; Creese, 1987; Feagin, 1991; Li, 1987; Pankiw & Bienvenue, 1990). On the other hand, a limited number of studies outside the field of leisure sciences that have dealt with white ethnic minorities tend to show that discrimination against such groups is likely to be markedly less pronounced in leisure settings as opposed to other environments, such as school or work (e.g., Driedger & Mezoff, 1981).

Criticisms of Past Research

Despite the growing volume and consistent results of research on leisure and discrimination, the literature is not free from limitations. Some earlier studies were based on secondary data that had not been originally intended to be used for analysing the leisure behavior of ethnic minorities. The nature of available data forced researchers to use racial characteristics alone as a measure of ethnicity, and participation in outdoor recreation as the sole indicator of leisure behavior (Hutchison, 1988). Moreover, the great majority of the existing research dealing with leisure and discrimination has focused solely on the problems of *visible* minorities, such as Blacks, Hispanics, or Asians. Even though it can be argued these are simultaneously ethnic *and*

racial groups, existing research has not made this distinction clear, nor has it isolated the implications of cultural factors from those of physical differences. Since groups such as Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians differ from the white mainstream with respect to both their racial and ethnic characteristics, separating the effects of those characteristics on discrimination is extremely difficult. Thus, one needs to turn to other ethnic minorities to investigate issues related to leisure and discrimination. Given their racial similarity to the mainstream, combined with their cultural distinctiveness, Poles in North America appear to be a suitable subject for this kind of investigation.¹

To make the distinction between ethnicity and race clear, and to expose the implications of this distinction, it is necessary to define these concepts explicitly. According to Berry (1958, quoted by Anderson and Frideres, 1981, p. 36), an *ethnic group* is a group of people

possessing ties of cultural homogeneity; a high degree of loyalty and adherence to certain basic institutions such as family patterns, religion, and language; distinctive folkways and mores; customs of dress, art, and ornamentation; moral codes and value systems; patterns of recreation; some sort of object to which the group manifests allegiance, such as a monarch, a religion, a language, or a territory; a consciousness of kind, a we-feeling; common descent (perhaps racial), real or imagined; and a political unit.

As opposed to ethnicity, the definition of *race*, although not necessarily excluding cultural and social attributes, largely focuses on the superficial physical characteristics of a particular group of people. According to the traditional strictly physical definition, race is a set of genetically determined physical characteristics, such as skin color, cranial index, or stature (Anderson and Frideres, 1981). Depending on a particular field of study, this definition may be extended to cover a variety of additional factors, yet the physical component of race is almost always included in its definition.

Since the so-called "mainstream" is often defined in racial terms (i.e., the white mainstream), racially similar ethnic groups tend to be automatically included in this category. The white population is often perceived as homogenous in cultural terms and consequently it is seen as a convenient benchmark for comparison purposes across racial groups. Such a broad definition of what is understood as the mainstream can potentially introduce significant distortions to studying the leisure of minorities. Some white ethnic groups can in fact be significantly more culturally different from the Anglo-

¹The leisure of the Polish immigrant population in North America has not attracted much attention in the field of leisure studies. Published research in other social sciences addressed some issues related to the leisure of this ethnic group in passing but its focus remains mainly on other problems such as the minority's general social and demographic characteristics (Avery and Fedorowicz, 1982; Heydenkorn, 1969; Kogler, 1969; Mostwin, 1991), history of migration and settlement patterns (e.g. Avery and Fedorowicz, 1982; Brzezinski, 1974; Kobos and Pekacz, 1995; Makowski, 1967, 1987), ethnic organizations (Heydenkorn, 1974; Makowski, 1967, 1987; Radecki, 1974), levels of assimilation and integration (Matejko and Matejko, 1974; Wojciechowski, 1969), and the Polish ethnic press (Adolf, 1974; Stachniak, 1991).

Saxon norm than certain well established racial minorities, yet such white groups continue to be regarded as members of the mainstream. Whereas the provision of leisure-oriented services to members of racial minorities is a subject of much concern in leisure science (Chavez 1991, 1992; Irwin et al., 1990), similar problems of ethnic whites have largely been neglected. Given the cultural characteristics of certain ethnic minorities, there exists a need to explore their leisure behavior and to draw some recommendations concerning the provision of leisure services for such groups. Research on the leisure of ethnic whites appears even more timely if we consider the increasing visibility of such minorities, not only in terms of their cultural contributions but also their economic significance.

As summarized by Hutchison (1988), the major deficiencies of the existing research on leisure of ethnic/racial minorities include:

- (a) references to inappropriate background research; (b) the lack of specificity given to definitions of 'race' and 'ethnicity'; (c) the neglect of published research in race and ethnic relations, and (d) the lack of attention given to the activities of other ethnic groups (pp. 16-17).

Objectives of the Study

Our study attempts to address some of these problems by examining issues related to leisure and discrimination among a white ethnic minority group, namely the Polish community in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Throughout this paper we shall understand ethnic or racial discrimination as "actions or practices carried out by members of dominant racial or ethnic groups that have differential and negative impact on members of subordinate racial or ethnic groups" (Feagin, 1991 pp. 101-102). Although in some circumstances the dominant group may receive differential treatment from a subordinate group, or differential treatment may take place among various subordinate groups, the social consequences of such phenomena are likely to be far less significant than the effects of what is commonly understood as ethnic or racial discrimination. It should be noted that unlike prejudice, which is an irrational and unwarranted opinion or attitude towards a minority, discrimination is not a state of mind but rather its external manifestation (Yu, 1987). In our analysis we shall focus on respondents' perceptions and recollections of discrimination rather than on observations of its actual instances.

This study is an attempt to establish patterns of discrimination characteristic to white ethnic minorities and to explore possible explanations for the apparent differences in such patterns between ethnic as opposed to racial groups. We focus on how Polish immigrants experience discrimination and how it affects their leisure behavior. We also attempt to determine locational patterns of discrimination by comparing the incidence of perceived discriminatory acts in leisure versus non-leisure settings and to explain these patterns in a systematic manner.

Methods

This paper emerges from the second and third stages of a multi-stage, multi-method research project. Following a small-scale quantitative questionnaire pilot survey (Stage 1), a qualitative component consisting of in-depth interviews was completed (Stage 2). This served as the foundation for the development of a more comprehensive, broader, and larger-scale questionnaire survey (Stage 3) than was conducted in Stage 1.

We opted to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches to minimize the adverse effects associated with the sensitive nature of the phenomenon under study. A series of semi-structured in-depth interviews (Stage 2) were conducted with the purpose of developing an understanding of the phenomena associated with discrimination. After the major themes and problems in the area of leisure discrimination had been isolated, we used a questionnaire survey (Stage 3) to verify whether the qualitative findings could be generalized to the wider population.

Qualitative Stage

The information in Stage 2 was collected during the late spring and early summer of 1996 in semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with thirteen members of the Polish community in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Questions dealing with leisure and discrimination were a component of a broader interview session concerned with problems of assimilation encountered by recent immigrants to Canada. The interviews were expected to provide insight into the lives of recent immigrants, and—among other issues—to assess the extent of their experiences with and perceived effects of discrimination.

All interviewees were members of the Solidarity wave of immigrants from Poland who settled in Canada after 1980 (as is the first author of this article). Respondents were initially approached through the first author's contacts among the Polish community in Edmonton and were intentionally selected to represent a variety of age, education, and occupational groups.

The sample consisted of five women and eight men, ranging from 16 to 50 years of age, with an average age of 32. The longest period of time spent in Canada was sixteen years (in the case of two of the respondents), whereas the youngest interviewee, a 16-year-old girl, had settled in the country only two years prior to the study. The average time of residence in Canada among the respondents was almost nine years. Six of the interviewees were married, one was living in a common-law relationship, two were divorced, and four were single. Respondents represented a spectrum of occupations, mostly of blue collar or service nature. They included a dentist, a car mechanic, a day-care worker, a store clerk, an electrician, a caretaker, a nurse, three students, two taxi drivers, and one unemployed person.

The interviews were conducted in the home of either the interviewee or the first author. Respondents were offered a choice of the questions being asked in Polish or in English. Since all of them felt more confident in their

native language, all the interviews were conducted in Polish. Before each interview started, the respondent was informed about the general purpose of the study, the format of the interview, and the topics that the questions would cover. The exact sequence and wording of the questions varied depending on a respondent's personal opinions and characteristics. Additional probes regarding particular subjects were introduced as new topics emerged from the interviews already completed. The interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and four hours and were tape-recorded and transcribed immediately following each session.

The interviews consisted of a series of fairly broad questions sequenced according to a predetermined but flexible interview schedule. Respondents were encouraged to elaborate on issues related to the questions as well as to express their opinions about other matters that they believed to be relevant. Each question was followed by probes designed to gain additional insight into the opinions and characteristics of a particular interviewee. By allowing respondents to express their personal views freely, the interviewer was able to learn about new phenomena, discuss their significance with interviewees, and address them in subsequent interviews with other respondents.

The section of the interview dealing with the issues of leisure and discrimination began with a general question about the existence of ethnic discrimination in Canada. Then, participants were asked to elaborate on the existence of discrimination against specific groups of people, such as Polish immigrants. Respondents who felt that Poles were subjected to discriminatory practices were asked to elaborate on the subject. The next set of questions was concerned with personal experiences with discrimination. Participants were asked to state whether they themselves had ever been subjected to any form of discrimination, in what circumstances the discriminatory acts had occurred, and who had perpetrated those acts. The respondents were queried about the locations in which discrimination had occurred most frequently, with particular emphasis on the distinction between work/school and leisure settings. They were also asked about any specific places or establishments that they did not frequent for the reason of being made to feel unwelcome. They were also asked whether they had ever experienced uneasy feelings among non-ethnic Canadians, and whether such feelings had contributed to their preference toward the companionship of other Polish immigrants. In addition respondents were asked whether they preferred to interact socially with non-ethnic Canadians or Canadians of other, non-Polish ethnic background and about possible reasons leading to those preferences.

Besides transcribing the exact content of each interview, the first author kept detailed notes on everything she believed to be potentially relevant to the specific issues addressed in this article, as well as contextual information. After all the interview sessions had been transcribed, major themes regarding different aspects of discrimination were noted. We paid particular attention to discussions of the subject that followed the respondents' answers to the initial questions: such an approach allowed us to gain an understanding of perceptions of discrimination in the broader context of the respondents' life

experiences and value systems. During the following stage of analysis, the transcripts were re-read and common themes and categories were isolated. We kept track of examples of statements that were consistent with the themes, as well as possible exceptions. Finally, after all the relevant points had been synthesized from the data, the transcripts were read once again to ensure that all relevant aspects of the phenomena had been accounted for.

Quantitative Stage

The findings obtained in the qualitative stage of the project (Stage 2) were used to design a quantitative survey (Stage 3) that was conducted between December, 1996 and March, 1997. Five hundred self-administered questionnaires were distributed by mail among first-generation Polish immigrants with the individual as the unit of analysis. A list of Polish sounding-names was selected from the city telephone directory. Even though many Poles do not have what one would consider a typical Polish name, we believed that such a selection process introduced only a slight bias by excluding intermarried immigrants and those who had changed their names, as it can be reasonably assumed that all the other individuals with or without Polish-sounding names would not differ with respect to any of the key characteristics relevant to the study. Subsequently all selected individuals were contacted by telephone to verify their ethnic descent. All potential respondents with disconnected telephone numbers as well as those who claimed not to be Polish immigrants were removed from the sample. As a result of this process, a list of five hundred suitable individuals was created. Despite its possible bias towards less assimilated respondents, such a selection procedure had to be adopted because all other available lists of Polish immigrants had been compiled by various Polish ethnic organizations and businesses and thus were believed to be even more biased toward "ethnically enclosed" individuals.

The 500 anonymous questionnaires were mailed out in late November of 1996. As a result of the first mail-out, 213 questionnaires were returned, including 179 properly completed questionnaires. In January of 1997 three hundred reminder notices along with another copy of the questionnaire were mailed to individuals randomly selected from the original list. The second mail-out yielded 105 properly completed questionnaires. We had to exclude twenty responses since they had been obtained from individuals who settled in Canada prior to 1979. Thus our effective sample size was further reduced to 264 responses from individuals who immigrated to Canada in 1979 or later and thus could be classified as belonging to the most recent Solidarity wave. The sample consisted of 168 males (63.6%) and 96 females (36.4%). Their ages ranged from 24 to 70, with a mean of 43. All respondents had settled in Canada between 1979 and 1996, the average length of residence being around nine years.

The questionnaire (in Polish) consisted of forty-seven questions concerning, among other issues, language preference and proficiency, diet

choices, leisure participation, leisure constraints and motivations, attitudes towards and participation in Polish ethnic organizations, attitudes towards ethnic holidays and customs, and questions regarding socioeconomic characteristics. A distinct section was devoted to issues of discrimination. In particular, information about the types of discriminatory acts, locations where such acts occurred, and personal characteristics of perpetrators was solicited. With several exceptions (i.e. age and length of stay in Canada), all the questions were of a close-ended nature. Scale questions were used whenever there was a need to measure level of agreement, frequency or relative importance.

The choice and format of questions reflected the need to accommodate three important factors. Firstly, the questionnaire had to capture the information necessary to verify relevant theoretical concepts (e.g., Gordon's theory of assimilation). Secondly, questions needed to be formulated in a way that some meaningful comparison with the findings of existing research could be attempted. Finally, the questionnaire had to be designed so that specific characteristics of the population under study could be detected.

Themes from the in-depth interviews helped us to design certain questions in which a list of items was presented. Besides commonly used items we were able to include ones particularly important for this immigrant population. Also, more appropriate scales for some questions had to be devised. Some questions, such as the ones concerning the types of discrimination, as well as all the questions containing statements about leisure behavior, were based entirely on the information obtained from the interviews.

Our use of the quantitative data for the purpose of discussing types and location of discrimination in this article is purely descriptive, in the form of frequency distributions and mean scores, where appropriate.

Findings

In this section we shall address the major themes derived from the interview stage of the project. These themes were concerned with the settings where such acts were likely to occur as well as with the nature and consequences of discriminatory acts. The qualitative findings will be discussed and supported by interview quotations whenever appropriate. Analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire survey will be used to support some of the conclusions derived from the interview material.

How Do Polish Immigrants to Canada Experience Discrimination?

The most apparent characteristic of perceived discrimination that was commonly reported throughout the interviews was its non-violent nature. None of the interviewees indicated having experienced a physical attack, vandalism, or any other extreme type of discrimination. The most commonly mentioned discriminatory behavior was not being taken seriously or being patronized by members of the mainstream. Many interviewees attributed this behavior to the allegedly common prejudice as to the intellectual inferiority

of immigrants. As humorously expressed by a female caretaker with a graduate degree from a Polish university:

Some people tend to hold negative opinions about immigrants, they think immigrants are illiterate dummies that don't know a thing. We came from next to nowhere, crawled from under a stone, and they [Canadians] have to keep us alive with their taxes. We are unfit to do anything that requires any responsibility Sometimes one would explain obvious things to you because as an immigrant you can't possibly know them. It doesn't really matter what you really know and who you really are. They will keep telling you how to use a phone or something similar. In their view you are inferior and they often assume that you are uneducated.

Another form of behavior on the part of the mainstream population that was perceived as discriminatory by many interviewees had to do with the "Where are you from?" types of questions. Although usually this sort of question does not carry any other meaning than that of simple curiosity, sometimes it can have a hostile overtone, particularly if asked in an impolite manner. Many immigrants encounter this sort of behavior in their work on an everyday basis. Similar incidences were most often reported by interviewees who worked in blue collar or service positions. Regardless of the intent on the part of a person asking such questions, many immigrants find them quite frustrating, particularly in the case of individuals who are well established in the host country and are no longer very loyal to their home country. In some instances immigrants may respond in a sarcastic way to such inquiries, which in turn may lead to an outpouring of hostility or to an outright verbal attack. As commented by a male car mechanic:

I came to Canada just before the martial law, I bought a house, I've been working like a dog for the last fifteen years. Even my own kids are barely able to speak Polish. I have a Canadian passport. I have a Polish passport too but it expired God knows how many years ago. Still I have to put up with this stuff almost every day. Every time I go to a store some fifteen year old would ask me "where are you from?" I don't suppose they take me for a tourist. I usually answer "I am from Edmonton, what about you?" How many more years am I supposed to live here so they stop looking at me as if I were some kind of a space alien. (. . .) One day I went to a bar with some Polish guys. Obviously we spoke Polish. The waitress comes by and asks us about the language we are speaking. Maybe it was just a simple question but still I said that we were speaking Cantonese. I said to the lady "can't you see we are Chinese?" I don't think she really got the point.

Questions about reasons for immigrating to Canada asked with obvious hostility were yet another commonly encountered form of verbal abuse. A female caretaker described a verbal attack on her by one of the tenants. He complained about the problem in a building, got very upset and finally asked her, "Where the hell did you come from after all?" A taxi driver stated during the interview that he encountered similar verbal confrontations almost on an everyday basis.

Discrimination through language ridicule was also quite frequently reported in the interviews. Some interviewees complained about their co-

workers and supervisors making fun of their English pronunciation or awkward use of some words. For some language ridicule was only a minor distraction. As stated by a former store clerk:

As far as I am concerned I encountered it several times at work in really silly situations. It had nothing to do with the quality of my work or with my relations with customers. Still the manager made unpleasant comments about my English. It didn't really matter very much since I continued to have good relations with her and we even went to a Christmas party together.

Other interviewees found language ridicule unbearable. A female day care worker recalled:

The girls kept making fun of me. Everything that I said was enough reason for a joke or some kind of a comment. If I pronounced something incorrectly they would always make fun of it, if I pronounced it correctly they would twist it and still make jokes. Several times they managed to make me cry. I simply couldn't stand it anymore. One day I joked that if they continued, I would file a complaint with the human rights commission. It was a joke but they must have taken it seriously because all of the sudden the jokes stopped.

Some interviewees indicated that there exists a certain degree of discrimination against immigrants at the workplace, both in the hiring process and in the assignment of work responsibilities. Interviewees complained that immigrants are sometimes denied employment solely because of their accent. As stated by a male student:

Poles are being discriminated in the matter of employment. It is quite understandable, if one speaks with an accent they probably suspect that he also thinks with an accent. On the other hand it is hard to blame them. It is easier for them to hire a person who is more like themselves, who can speak their language well.

The conclusions derived from the qualitative interviews appear to find support in the quantitative data. Results of the questionnaire survey suggest that only "soft" forms of discrimination are encountered by Polish immigrants relatively frequently. Whereas more than half of the respondents reported not being taken seriously or having obvious things explained, less than 10% admitted to being a victim of any severe form of discrimination such as physical assault or vandalism (Table 1).

On the other hand, some inconsistencies exist between the results obtained in the questionnaires and the opinions expressed during the interviews. Types of discrimination such as being spoken to in a patronizing manner or being asked the "Where are you from?" question in a hostile way surfaced in almost every interview. In the survey, however, only about one third of the respondents admitted to having experienced this type of behavior at least once, and less than 5% indicated that they were subjected to such discrimination on a regular basis. Interestingly, even though being exposed to anti-ethnic jokes and being openly insulted or ridiculed were mentioned quite rarely during the interviews, around a quarter of the survey respondents claimed to having been subjected to such treatment. Similarly denial of employment appears to be reported as more frequent than one would

TABLE 1
Frequency of Discrimination by Type

Type of Discrimination	Frequency of Discrimination					Mean
	Never Experienced %	Once %	Occasionally %	Often %	Very Often %	
Had things explained that were obvious to everyone	45.1	5.3	34.8	8.3	6.4	2.26
Not being taken seriously	49.2	10.6	34.1	3.8	2.3	1.99
Being spoken to clearly, slowly and distinctly in a patronizing manner	57.2	4.2	33.3	3.4	1.9	1.89
Being asked the question "Where are you from?" or similar in an impolite manner	68.2	6.4	19.3	4.2	1.9	1.65
Being exposed to anti-ethnic jokes	69.3	8.7	20.5	0.8	0.8	1.55
Being denied employment	75.3	7.2	12.5	1.5	3.4	1.51
Being openly insulted or ridiculed	72.3	10.6	14.4	1.9	0.8	1.48
Had property vandalized	92.0	4.9	1.5	1.5	0.0	1.13
Being physically assaulted	95.1	3.4	1.1	0.0	0.4	1.07
Being denied a service	95.1	2.7	2.3	0.0	0.0	1.07
Being exposed to anti-ethnic literature	97.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	1.06
Being denied accommodation or housing	97.0	2.3	0.8	0.0	0.0	1.04

expect on a basis of the qualitative data. Even though the absolute frequencies seem not to be particularly high, given that in normal circumstances individuals do not change their jobs very often, the problem with this discriminatory practice appears to be quite significant. Almost a quarter of the sample claimed to have been denied employment solely on the basis of their ethnic origin or immigrant status at least once, whereas more than 17% stated that they experienced such problem at least on an occasional basis. Although respondents might be biased towards over-reporting this type of discrimination as self assessment of professional skills may be difficult and in reality they might have not been hired for entirely different reasons, given the magnitude of the frequencies reported it is very likely that the problem does exist.

Places Where Discrimination is Most Likely to Occur: Leisure Versus Non-Leisure Settings

As previously noted, existing research in leisure studies that has dealt with discrimination against racial minorities has generally confirmed the

presence of discrimination in various leisure settings (Blahna & Black, 1992; Chavez, 1991, 1993; West, 1989). However, in apparent contradiction to this conclusion, some studies outside the field of leisure sciences appear to indicate that, in the case of white ethnic minorities, discrimination tends to be markedly less pronounced in leisure than in other settings (Driedger & Mezoff, 1981). Our findings are more consistent with this latter observation than they are with the majority of results reported in the leisure studies literature.

One of the most striking findings to emerge from the in-depth interviews was that all the interviewees had experienced discrimination in some form, but, when asked about their experiences with ethnic discrimination, all reported that most such incidents had occurred in work or school rather than while participating in leisure activities. This finding could be explained by problems related to the identification of white ethnic minorities: at work, the ethnic background of a person is known to his or her co-workers, but in leisure settings members of these minorities might not be easily distinguishable from the mainstream. In the words of one of the respondents, "in parks we all look the same." Thus, in order for a discriminatory act to occur, a potential victim has to be positively identified as being "different" (Goffman, 1963), leading to a greater incidence of discrimination against racial minorities in leisure settings because the identification process occurs instantaneously.

Language skills appear to be the main factor by which ethnic (as opposed to racial) minorities are identified. As one of the respondents said, "Poles are not a visible minority, they are just as good as Canadians as long as they refrain from speaking." This finding is supported by the work of several researchers (e.g., Chan, 1987; Floyd & Gramann, 1995), which supports the existence of an association between foreign language use and discrimination against ethnic minorities. Besides the issue of identification, language skills have a direct bearing on one's performance in work and school environments. As confirmed by research outside the field of leisure studies, discrimination against ethnic minorities is most frequently encountered in these two settings (Chan, 1987; Creese, 1987; Driedger & Mezoff, 1981; Li, 1987; Pankiw & Bienvenue, 1990). In the words of one of the interviewees:

They will always ask you about your communication skills. This is what counts, everybody will judge you on the basis of how you speak . . . They would speak to you slowly and distinctly assuming that if you speak with an accent you must have difficulties understanding English.

Unlike at work, the rules governing behavior and personal expression are quite relaxed in leisure settings. People are not required to complete specific tasks, follow guidelines, or compete for promotions. Consequently, in leisure settings good communication skills do not play as important a role as they do at work, if indeed they are important at all. Another factor possibly contributing to the greater incidence of discrimination at work is the fact that at work individuals are restricted in their choice of people with whom to interact. As indicated by a middle-aged car mechanic, "If someone doesn't

like me I won't seek contact with such a person, and the other way around. However, in work one doesn't have much choice."

Besides the work and school environment, some interviewees reported incidents of discrimination in certain public places and institutions. They recalled that they had received an unfriendly reception in various offices and that the office workers had been uncooperative and purposefully unwilling to resolve matters to their satisfaction. As one woman reported, the only serious instance of discrimination that she encountered in Canada occurred in a bank. She described an incident in which she was trying to open a checking account but was not allowed to do so. A bank clerk openly told her that as a recent immigrant she was a risk and that she would probably write lots of bad checks and then flee the country.

Opinions varied substantially as to the reception immigrants receive in various government institutions. Some interviewees claimed that they had been treated with respect in government offices, while others argued that the government offices were the worst offenders. A taxi driver expressed an opinion that people speaking with an accent receive differential treatment in their dealings with various government institutions than do mainstream Canadians. A female caretaker disagreed with this opinion and stated that:

I often call various government institutions. I call them about my income tax or other things. They are always extremely nice and if I need to ask about something and I say that I have a problem expressing myself because my English is not good enough they would always respond "no problem", they are always really nice, you know . . . I think they are like that because they have to but it doesn't really matter. On the other hand people working for the government may simply realize that quite a few Canadians are immigrants and so they need to be polite to them, that this is the way it should be.

Our qualitative findings were substantiated by the results obtained from the quantitative survey. Mean scores and frequency distributions for each of the locations where the discriminatory acts had occurred are shown in Table 2. It is evident that all the locations associated with leisure received the lowest scores, ranging from 1.09 for sports to 1.26 for parties, whereas other locations were characterized by higher scores, ranging from 1.28 for small stores to 2.22 for the workplace. The scores range from 1 to 5, where a score of 1 represents never having experienced discrimination and a score of 5 represents being subjected to discrimination very often. Given that the proportion of respondents who claimed to experience discrimination often or very often ranged from 10.3% for the workplace to less than one percent for all listed leisure settings, one may conclude that, unlike racial minority members, for whom discrimination is often an everyday experience (Feagin, 1991), most Polish immigrants perceive it to take the form of isolated incidents rather than a pattern of constant harassment regardless of location.

Turning to the higher level of detail displayed in the frequency data, discrimination appears to be most frequently experienced in the workplace: almost 40% of the respondents reported that they experienced discrimina-

TABLE 2
Frequency of Discrimination by Location

Location	Frequency of Discrimination					Mean
	Never Experienced %	Once %	Occasionally %	Often %	Very Often %	
At the workplace	42.2	7.6	39.9	6.1	4.2	2.22
In a government office	62.5	3.4	26.1	5.7	2.3	1.82
In banks	76.5	4.9	15.9	1.9	0.8	1.45
In schools or colleges	79.2	4.9	13.6	1.9	0.4	1.39
In non-government office	80.7	2.3	15.2	1.5	0.4	1.39
On the street or in public transportation	80.3	4.5	12.5	1.9	0.8	1.38
In supermarkets or department stores	82.6	1.9	14.4	1.1	0.0	1.34
In contact with police	84.1	6.4	7.6	1.5	0.4	1.29
In small stores	85.2	2.7	11.4	0.4	0.4	1.28
At parties	85.1	4.6	9.5	0.4	0.4	1.26
In restaurants	87.5	4.2	8.0	0.4	0.0	1.21
In hotels or motels	92.8	1.9	4.5	0.4	0.4	1.14
In parks and other publicly accessible recreation areas	93.2	1.9	4.5	0.0	0.4	1.13
In resorts	93.9	0.8	4.9	0.4	0.0	1.12
In privately owned recreation oriented clubs and associations	95.0	0.8	3.8	0.0	0.4	1.10
While participating in sports	94.3	2.3	3.4	0.0	0.0	1.09

tion at work occasionally, and an additional 10% claimed to be subjected to discrimination often or very often. The workplace was the only location where the majority of respondents claimed to have been subjected to at least one instance of ethnically motivated abuse. Still, when compared with the qualitative findings, where the great majority of interviewees reported discrimination at work, this frequency appears to be rather low.

Besides possible bias that could be introduced in the qualitative stage in the selection process of individuals to be interviewed, one may attribute this discrepancy to two distinct factors. First, the very issue of ethnic discrimination appears to be quite sensitive and somewhat difficult to tackle using survey techniques, because respondents may be reluctant to disclose information that they find embarrassing. Secondly, reasons for the discrepancy may lie in the common understanding of ethnic discrimination. One may draw a parallel to the problem of sexual harassment—it is often difficult for an individual to distinguish between acts that are unwelcome but lie within the bounds of socially acceptable behavior and those that constitute harass-

ment *per se*. A tendency may develop not to report "gray area" incidents in a belief that such incidents are largely insignificant, while reporting them may create an impression of one's being a "whistle blower". Furthermore, mass media that tend to focus on the most violent examples of discrimination, mainly directed against racial minorities, may contribute to perpetuating a belief that the incident must be of an extreme nature in order for it to constitute discrimination. Given that white ethnic minorities such as Poles are mostly subjected to rather moderate forms of hostility, such mild instances of discrimination may often go undetected in questionnaire surveys.

Discrimination in locations associated with a person's public life, such as government offices or banks, was reported by relatively large proportion of respondents (37.5% and 23.5% respectively). Still, despite the fact that these types of institutions are likely to be frequented by most people on a fairly regular basis, the majority claimed not to have experienced any discrimination there. This result appears to be consistent with the findings of the in-depth interviews, where a fair degree of disagreement concerning discrimination in such places was present among participants.

An interesting finding concerning discrimination in the school environment became apparent in the quantitative data. Despite the fact that the majority of the respondents (92%) settled in Canada at the age of 24 or older, and thus had an opportunity to complete their education in Poland, over 20% of surveyed immigrants reported at least one incident of discrimination in a school setting.

In the section of the questionnaire dealing with discrimination in leisure settings we included seven locations: parties; restaurants; hotels/motels; public parks and recreation areas; resorts; private clubs; and general sports participation. With the exception of parties and restaurants, where almost 10% of respondents reported occasional discrimination, discrimination in all other locations was found to be infrequent (Table 2). Although parties and restaurants still ranked lower in terms of mean scores than non-leisure locations, their scores appear to be higher than those of the remaining leisure settings. The higher reported incidence of discrimination at parties could be attributed to the very relaxed social norms of behavior associated with this type of leisure, mixed ethnic composition of participants, as well as often limited control over the selection of participants. In particular, one may speculate that younger immigrants who may feel compelled to participate in ethnically mixed parties through peer-pressure, and those whose employment requires participation in such events may be particularly likely to experience discrimination in this setting. Whereas the actual incidence of discrimination at parties may not be markedly higher than it is in other settings where social interaction between ethnic minority members and the "mainstream" takes place, one may suspect that immigrants may perceive to be discriminated simply because they feel alienated and uneasy due to factors such as limited English skills or cultural incompatibility with the group.

The finding of somewhat higher frequency of discriminatory acts in restaurants than in other leisure settings may be associated with the relatively

high degree of personal interaction between clients and employees, in which the verbal component usually allows for the identification of a person's ethnic background. As far as the provision of goods and services and the need for verbal communication are concerned, restaurants appear to be in many ways similar to retail outlets, where discrimination rates were found to be fairly substantial. Still, as became apparent in the qualitative stage, the forms of discrimination that Poles are subjected to in restaurants are of a rather mild nature. Whereas incidents of being patronized by the staff or being asked the "Where are you from?" question surfaced during the interviews, there were no reports of Polish immigrants not being admitted to such establishments on the basis of their ethnic descent, being denied service, or being openly insulted.

Only five percent of respondents reported at least one incident of discrimination in private recreation clubs and associations. This result appears to be somewhat low, considering the nature of many such establishments. Yet, it could be anticipated that participation in such clubs may be lower among immigrants than among the general population due to ethnic enclosure of these groups (see below) and anticipation of being unwelcome in these places. Participation in recreation clubs can be expected to particularly low among the Polish ethnic community given the fact that this group is known to limit its involvement in any "mainstream" clubs and organizations (Matejko and Matejko, 1974). Thus, if we controlled for the actual participation rate, the incidence of discrimination might turn out to be somewhat higher than that reported in Table 2.

Consequences of Discrimination for Leisure Behavior

Despite the preceding findings, we do not mean to imply that discrimination against ethnic groups does not play a part in their leisure. While discrimination may be far less prevalent during *actual* leisure engagements than at school, work, or in public places and may take less severe forms, *anticipation* of discrimination may substantially influence leisure decisions, including the selection of activities and the choice of where and with whom to participate. Anticipated discrimination in leisure settings can simultaneously inhibit minorities from participating in leisure activities in areas in which they feel unwelcome, and make them more likely to frequent locations that they perceive as familiar and friendly (Blahna & Black, 1992; West, 1989; Woodard, 1988). However, it appears that discrimination can have much broader implications for minority-group leisure than those of simply a locational nature, i.e., where leisure takes place. In particular, it can affect one's choice of leisure partners, and possibly contribute to a significant ethnic/racial confinement, or "ethnic enclosure," in leisure participation that is often found among minorities (Floyd & Gramann, 1993; Keefe & Padilla, 1987). We do not believe discrimination to be the sole cause behind such leisure preferences, but it is reasonable to expect that large intergroup distance (Floyd & Gramann, 1993) can reinforce such tendencies. Our study

lends support to the conclusion that perception of discrimination does influence the ethnic composition of one's leisure partners.

Ethnic enclosure can be attributed to several factors. Limiting social contacts to one's own group may help to avoid being subjected to discrimination (Goffman, 1963). In the case of white ethnic minority members, whose experiences with discrimination are largely limited to non-leisure settings, ethnically confined leisure often serves as a means of distancing themselves from what they believe to be the ethnically-motivated unfair treatment that they are subjected to at work, at school, or in public places. In our study, out of thirteen interviewees, eleven indicated that they preferred to spend their leisure time either with their immediate family or with Polish immigrant friends. Some study participants stated that their feeling uneasy or unwelcome among "mainstream" Canadians in certain circumstances contributed to their preferences to spend their leisure time among other Poles. As described by one of the interviewees:

I work as a clerk in a second-hand store. Sometimes, when people get disappointed they tend to make unpleasant remarks They get angry because they can't get a good bargain, and often they focus their anger on me. They think that it didn't work out for them because they had to deal with an immigrant After the whole day of that I don't want to think of myself as an immigrant. I just want to go home and spend time with my wife and kids, or to go play soccer with my friends.

However, some respondents expressed the opinion that ethnic confinement of Polish immigrants in their leisure should not be entirely attributed to discrimination or fear thereof. They explained this preference in terms of cultural, historical, and background-related similarities. In the words of a Polish taxi-driver: "We share the same culture, language, traditions, customs, common interests Somehow we are always able to communicate." When asked about the reason why she preferred to spend her free time with other Poles, a middle-aged day-care worker responded:

You know . . . if I make some remark about our Polish reality they [Canadians] wouldn't understand it. How can you explain to a non-Pole what we came through, how everything looked like back in Poland. For them [Canadians] it is a curiosity, for us [Poles] it was the reality. When I talk to my [Polish] friends I don't have to explain anything. Somehow we always have things to talk about, we can remember how it was back there in Poland, we can relate our lives here to what we had there I have some Canadian friends, I met them at work. We talk about the work that we do, about kids and stuff, sometimes they ask me about how it was back in Poland. I would tell them how we used to live, but you know . . . in the long run we don't have much to talk about. I guess, you need to have something real in common with your friends.

Limiting social contacts with members of the mainstream society, whether or not to avoid discrimination, can affect the leisure behavior of ethnic minorities in several ways. A clear theme that surfaced in several interviews was that immigrants could not participate in certain leisure activities that they found desirable because their narrow social networks within the

general population prevented them from finding suitable leisure partners. As described by a female respondent:

Back in Poland I used to ride a horse, but here none of my friends does it, so I don't have anybody to ride horses with . . . I don't know anybody who would do snowmobiling because very few Poles do this kind of sports. Maybe if I had more contacts with Canadians, I would find somebody to do it with.

These observations are consistent with the findings of Rublee and Shaw (1991), who concluded that immigrant women from Latin America were severely constrained in their leisure choices by a lack of social contacts outside their ethnic community. By confining themselves to their own communities, ethnic minority members (and recent immigrants in particular) limit their leisure opportunities in yet another important way: since people of one ethnic background often share the same leisure preferences and participation patterns, awareness of existing leisure opportunities is often greatly constrained among ethnically confined individuals. Moreover, it is common for such persons not to be able to start participating in their desired types of leisure activities simply because they lack information as to the availability of facilities or as to their specific requirements.

Discussion

Overall—and in apparent contradiction to previous work in leisure studies on racial minorities—it was found that white ethnic groups exemplified by Polish immigrants to Canada, experience markedly less discrimination in leisure settings than they do at work, at school, or in some public places. This phenomenon can be partly attributed to difficulties associated with identifying members of such groups in leisure environments, as well as to other factors, such as the lesser importance of language skills in informal settings. To the extent that leisure-related discrimination exists, it appears to surface mainly in circumstances where there is a substantial need for verbal communication and where individuals have limited control over the ethnic composition of their peer group.

In addition and more importantly, however, the results of our study suggest that two other factors may also help to explain the low incidence of discriminatory acts against white ethnics in recreation and leisure. First, choices about activities, places, social interaction, and partners for leisure made by members of ethnic minorities may be significantly affected by their experiences at work or in school and therefore their fear of encountering and desire to avoid similar discrimination in leisure. Second, members of such groups may make leisure decisions that offer opportunities for recuperation and escape from discrimination experienced at work or school. In turn, as a result of one or both of these reasons, their leisure may become "ethnically enclosed," which serves to attenuate the potential for contact with members of other groups and therefore the occasions in which discrimination might be experienced. In other words, confinement may further reduce the level of discrimination against such groups by restricting interactions

between their members and the mainstream. From this perspective, decisions to orient leisure to ethnically enclosed spatial and social settings may be interpreted as strategies to negotiate the constraints of experienced and anticipated discrimination (cf., Jackson, Crawford, & Godbey, 1993).

While in the case of white ethnic minorities ethnic enclosure can serve as a mechanism both for reducing contacts between the group and the mainstream and for lessening the opportunity for recognition, the motivations underlying such behavior can differ among racial minorities. Whereas the contact minimization rationale may still be present, racial minorities are unlikely to be able to avoid group recognition through enclosure. However, as indicated by Chavez (1991), enclosure in general, and specifically leisure participation in large homogeneous groups, can serve as a deterrent for some open acts of hostility.

However, one could predict that a significant feedback effect may be present and that the confinement resulting from the expectation of discrimination may in fact contribute to even greater anti-ethnic hostility in the long run. The mainstream is likely to perceive homogeneous ethnic groups participating in leisure as alien and thus undesirable, or can even believe that their activities are an open manifestation of hostility and contempt for widely accepted social norms. Although behavior characteristic to other cultures may in fact be appreciated in controlled settings, such as heritage festivals or ethnic clubs and organizations, its reception can often be markedly different in everyday situations, particularly if such behavior is perceived to interfere with the way of life of the mainstream population. For instance, many people may appreciate watching ethnic performances during a festival yet dislike such activities if they happen in their neighbor's backyard. Thus, paradoxically, a mechanism that was originally meant to protect one from acts of discrimination may in turn reinforce anti-ethnic feelings.

The findings of this study with respect to the types of discrimination experienced by Polish immigrants appear to be consistent with the conclusions of previous research on discrimination against other ethnic minorities. However, they differ quite profoundly from similar results concerning racial minorities. As found by Feagin (1991) racial minorities such as Blacks quite often experience poor service at establishments such as restaurants, shops, and hotels. Our results do not support this finding in regards to a white ethnic minority such as Poles. Less than 5% of survey respondents indicated that they had experienced this kind of treatment, and none of the interviewed individuals pointed out to the existence of such problem. Moreover, as previously mentioned, other serious discriminatory actions such as physical attacks and vandalism were very rarely reported in the questionnaire. On the other hand, as found by Feagin (1991) and Driedger and Mezoff (1991), other minorities such as Blacks and Jews tend to encounter it on an almost everyday basis. We can argue that it can be partially attributed to the issue of identification. Blacks can obviously be immediately recognized in majority of settings, while Jews who were found by Driedger and Mezoff to be discriminated were studied in a school environment where the ethnic origin of a person is usually commonly known.

Polish immigrants, being an example of a white ethnic minority group, share some characteristics with respect to the types of discrimination that they experience with members of racial minorities. Most minorities, irrespective of their racial characteristics, appear to be subjected to a spectrum of less severe and less violent discriminatory practices. As suggested by the results of both qualitative interviews and quantitative survey, similarly to other minorities, Poles encounter various types of verbal abuse and harassment. Such a hypothesis finds confirmation in a study on discrimination of white ethnic minorities conducted by Driedger and Mezzoff (1991). Among eight ethnic groups under study Poles were classified in the second position in terms of perceived discrimination. Only Jews tended to report more incidents of discrimination than did Poles. Ethnic jokes were the most often reported form of discrimination by Polish respondents, followed by language ridicule and name calling.

Even though it is difficult to compare the actual frequency of experiences with non-violent discrimination across ethnic and racial groups, it appears that racial minorities suffer a greater intensity of such abuse than do white ethnics such as Poles. As found by Blahna and Black (1992) and Feagin (1991), racial minorities often suffer unprovoked verbal abuse in public place such beaches, pools, and streets. On the other hand, Poles appear to be subjected to such abuse mostly during more personal interactions with members of the mainstream and particularly when some degree of conflict or disagreement is present.

It is difficult to speculate as to the reasons for markedly different types of discrimination experienced by racial as opposed to ethnic minorities. The pattern is quite apparent that racial minorities as opposed to white ethnics are often subjected to violent types of discrimination. In addition they seem to experience a higher incidence of non-violent acts of discrimination than their white counterparts. One may hypothesize that the issue of identification plays an important role in this phenomenon. However, it would not be realistic to assume that identification is the sole causal factor. Other possible contributing factors that immediately come to mind are historical patterns of discrimination that may influence people's attitudes toward some ethnic or racial groups. Moreover, physical appearance may serve as a signal of a degree of being different and thus lead to an illusion that racial minorities are more unlike the mainstream than white ethnic groups. Consequently racial groups may be perceived as less conforming to what is accepted as a social standard which may lead to creating prejudice and possibly discrimination. Other factors are also likely to be responsible for the existing differences in discrimination patterns so further exploration of the phenomenon is needed.

Conclusions

In this study we have attempted to tackle issues of discrimination as perceived by the members of a relatively small, white ethnic minority. Our analysis has confirmed that the pattern of discrimination experienced by this

group is markedly different from that of well-established racial minorities. Our findings and interpretations are important contributions to knowledge about leisure and discrimination because they distinguish between and help to account for differences in leisure-related discrimination between racial and white ethnic minorities. From this perspective, then, our findings do not contradict those previously reported in the field; instead, they complement existing literature by emphasizing differences between these two types of minority groups and thus further stress the need to distinguish between race and ethnicity as concepts and traits when conducting research of this kind.

Looking to the future, it has to be conceded that our examination of incidents and implications of discrimination has been performed at a fairly general level. Thus, in order to gain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, one needs to focus on its more specific characteristics, such as the nature of discriminatory acts, the circumstances in which they occur, and the types of individuals who are likely to engage in discriminatory behavior. Research of this kind could continue to be conducted among Polish immigrants to Canada, thus extending the scope of the present study, but would also be usefully extended to other minorities and in other countries, so as to verify the findings and interpretations which we have offered here. Another issue that requires further elaboration is the precise nature of the differences in patterns of discrimination between racial and ethnic minorities whose existence has been suggested by this study, as well as by findings from the broader field of ethnic studies. This could be accomplished by employing a comparative approach that would allow for isolating possible similarities and differences between racial and white ethnic groups.

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