

Leisure, Biculturalism, and Second-Generation Canadians

Susan Tirone
Ashley Goodberry
Dalhousie University

Abstract

This paper focuses on biculturalism, leisure, and it explores diversity within the leisure experiences of second-generation Canadians whose parents emigrated from South Asia. The participants' lives and leisure were shaped by their biculturalism—the way in which they identified as south Asian and Canadian, embracing and retaining aspects of their traditional South Asian culture, while adopting and adapting to the culture of the dominant Canadian society in which they were raised. The study found that leisure helped incorporate parts of both traditions and reconcile the differences between the two cultures by providing opportunities to draw the two sets of traditions together. This integration was accomplished by introducing family and ethnic friends to dominant group practices and likewise introducing dominant group friends into their traditional minority ethnic traditions. The longitudinal nature of the study provided a sense of the sequence of meaning making over a ten-year period.

KEYWORDS: *Biculturalism, leisure, longitudinal qualitative research, second generation*

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Correspondence may be addressed to: Susan Tirone, Associate Director, College of Sustainability, Dalhousie University, 1459 LaMarchant Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 4R2.

Introduction

Leisure in the lives of the immigrants who have settled in Canada in the past 40 years is the subject of a growing body of literature. In Canada, immigrants and immigration are important because many cities and towns have experienced labor shortages due to declining fertility rates, an increasingly aging population, and a diminishing youth population (Li, 2008). Immigration has become a key strategy for workforce renewal. Since the 1970s, multiculturalism is the philosophy that guides Canadian government policy on immigration. It supports ethnic and cultural diversity and is intended to create diverse and economically sustainable communities throughout the country (Sandercock, 2009). The children of immigrants are of particular interest in Canada because they are part of a growing cohort of young people who were born in Canada to foreign born parents of diverse ethnic backgrounds. The purpose of this paper is to present the findings of a longitudinal, qualitative study of the leisure experience of children of immigrants.

The children, grandchildren, and later generation ethnic minorities are known to express varying degrees of interest and commitment to the cultural tradition of their immigrant ancestors. In some cases, people overtly adapt dominant group traits and behaviors and appear to let go of traditional cultural practices. Some adjustments in behavior are indicative of the attempts made by immigrants to be included in dominant social and community groups. In this paper, the term dominant group refers to the people of British and French ancestry who, until the 1960s, were the numerical majority in Canada (Satzewich, 1993). In the early to mid-twentieth century, Canadianization strategies were initiated to assimilate immigrants into the dominant society. Canadianization, which really meant Anglo-conformity, required all immigrants to adopt the English language and Protestant values and whenever possible to rid themselves of accents that were non-British (Burnet & Palmer, 1988). Adopting group norms when in public provided the opportunity for many people to gain social acceptance, which was much more feasible for white ethnic minority groups than non-whites. The term minority group member is used in this paper even though the authors recognize the problematic nature of the term since the majority of the people in the world are not white. Here it refers to people who do not identify as Caucasian.

Today's immigrants to Canada are not required to assimilate, and many of them retain important aspects of their ethnic identity, such as their religious practices, traditional clothing, and food. Biculturalism, however, refers to situations in which immigrants understand and participate in two cultural traditions (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009)—their own, as well as the cultural practices of Canada. Biculturalism characterizes the experience of immigrants who arrive in Canada from countries where cultural practices are different from those of Canadians.

Leisure in their country of origin may also be different than leisure in Canada. In many cases, these differences were found to enhance leisure by providing people with options and rich experiences (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). However, differences in leisure practices are also known to lead to conflicts. For example, youth in North American immigrant families are often challenged as they attempt to access and enjoy leisure with their North American peers while balancing the

expectations of their parents, who often prefer that they sustain traditional, more family-oriented and home-centered leisure (Wolfe, 1997).

The study participants for this study were second-generation Canadian youth whose parents emigrated from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The findings presented are primarily from the third and final phase of a longitudinal, qualitative study that explored leisure in the lives of this group of young Canadians. Data reported here were collected in 2007, ten years after the participants were first contacted and interviewed for the first phase of the study. The focus of this paper is on biculturalism and leisure and specifically explores the different leisure experiences of this group of second-generation, racial minority youth. As well, the paper discusses the role of leisure in creating a context in which parts of each culture overlap or intersect in ways to mediate the differences between the two diverse cultures. Leisure also played a role in individual identity development as members of this group entered adulthood and created lives independent of their parents and extended families.

Theoretical Framework

For this discussion, multiculturalism and biculturalism theories are used to frame how people situate themselves with the cultures their parents knew before immigrating to Canada, as well as the cultures in which they are immersed in Canada. Multiculturalism is the philosophical framework for Canada's immigration strategy, which supports the maintenance of plurality and cultural diversity (Reitz & Banerjee, 2007). The philosophy and government legislation associated with multiculturalism are intended to ensure equality and a vibrant society where people of all races and ethnicities participate together (Elliott & Fleras, 1988). Multiculturalism, which supports the sustentation of the traditional cultural practices by minority ethnic people, is idealistic, but also problematic in that not all minority groups realize the benefits it intends to promote (Reitz & Banerjee, 2007). For example, immigrants and ethnic minorities do not have equal opportunities for recreation because of their relative poverty (Kazempur & Halli, 2001). As well, disproportionate numbers of ethnic minorities and in particular racial minorities, find themselves working in low-paying, labor-intensive jobs such as taxi drivers, waiters, and hotel staff. As such, they often have little money or time for their own leisure (Tirone, 2010).

Second-generation Canadians are known to wrestle with both parental expectations and the expectations of the host society, especially when the two sets of expectations are at odds with one another (Anderson, 1999; Lalonde & Giguere, 2009; Taylor, 2002). Acceptance of their parents' ideologies is often a priority for children of immigrants, and therefore some second-generation youth adhere exclusively to their parents' wishes (Hebert, 2001). Other immigrants, however, hold onto parts of their traditional cultural heritage while adopting and practicing some of the traditions of the dominant host community. Still others attempt to immerse totally within the cultural traditions of their dominant group peers. Parental and ethnic group obligations often conflict with the youths' desire to adopt cultural and leisure practices of the dominant society, while remaining respectful

of their parents' wishes (Wolf, 1997). As Bammer (1994) explained, the choices made by second-generation youth reflect issues of 'peril and survival'—those that restrict their ability to integrate and those that ground them within supportive social groups (p. 92). For example, the youth may want to participate in sports, dating, and other recreation activities with their peers. These leisure activities then become the source of conflict between the expectations of their families and the norms or the dominant society the young people wish to experience (Hebert). Wolf's study of second-generation Filipino youth found that families in which youth maintain strict adherence to traditional practice, offer a 'magnetic and positive basis' for identity development (p. 458). However, they may also be the source of tremendous stress, which for some youth becomes a source of despair and diminished mental health.

Biculturalism, Identity Development, and the Second Generation

In the context of North American society, adolescence is viewed as time for youth to develop a stable identity (Hebert, 2001). For immigrant and second-generation youth, gaining stability is a particularly challenging and fluid process of constructing, learning, and re-constructing identity as they attempt to incorporate both traditional cultural practices learned from their parents with traditions they learn from dominant groups (Anderson, 1999; Jedwab, 2008). Social constructivist theories support the problematic and changing nature of identities for immigrant and second-generation youth with identity fluctuating between the 'assignment and assertion of identity, (i.e., between what others say we are and what or who we say we are)' (p. Herbert, 157).

Interpersonal conflicts between immigrant parents and their children are known to be especially difficult when the younger generation seeks intimate relationships with partners who do not identify with the same ethnic groups. As a result, children of immigrants often encounter parental disapproval and expectations that are inconsistent with dominant Canadian social norms (Lalonde & Giguere, 2009). For instance, a valued Canadian norm is the freedom of choice, particularly when deciding on one's career, life partner, and place of residence. For second-generation Canadians, however, the transitions between living in the family home and living independently, and the ability to choose postsecondary education that meets personal goals rather than meeting imperatives associated with family economic well-being are often contentious (Lalonde & Giguere; Stroink & Lalonde, 2009; Wolf, 1997). Gaining parental approval and support in these decisions often requires complex negotiations with parents, who may or may not support their children in making decisions that the parents perceive to be rooted in Western or Canadian values.

Stroink and Lalonde's (2009) explored bicultural identity and identity conflict for second generation Asian Canadians. They determined that when individuals perceived their two cultures to be similar to one another, they tended to identify simultaneously with both cultures and reported high levels of well-being. They defined well-being as consisting of low uncertainty, high self-esteem, and high life satisfaction. In instances where participants perceived that there were differences in the characteristics of the two cultures in which they were immersed, they

were unlikely to identify simultaneously with both cultures. Conflict tended to occur when people attempted to reconcile the different expectations, values, and characteristics of two cultures and they tended to distance themselves from one culture to conform to the expectations of the other (Stroink & Lalonde). Leisure may facilitate the inclusion of people with bicultural identities in activities that support the development of positive self-concepts, but it may be problematic for those who are unable to access the range of leisure activities they prefer.

Leisure, Traditional Cultures, and Young People

Some ethnic groups such as people from Northern European countries celebrate their ethnicity in symbolic rather than substantive ways (Waters, 1990). That is, one's ability to identify as an ethnic is for many people a matter of choice, allowing them to feel connected to a community when they want to do so, while at the same time allowing them to maintain their individualism and avoiding obligations associated with group maintenance (Waters). This explains the leisure choices of some second- and third-generation Irish, Italians, and Poles who participate selectively in festivals that celebrate culture and food and choose to live in places where they have little contact with other Irish, Italians, or Poles on a regular basis. However, the situation is different for racial minority ethnics, who cannot shed skin color or for those who wear traditional clothing. For them, ethnic group membership involves immersion in traditional cultural practices and creates conditions that readily identify them as members of ethnic groups. This may result in situations that disadvantage or even discriminate against these individuals (Reitz & Banerjee, 2007; Waters). The social exclusion they face extends into leisure as well. As a result, some people seek out ethnic minority groups for social support, leisure activity, and protection from exclusion (Chiswick & Miller, 2002; Stodolska & Jackson, 1998; Tirone, 1999/2000; Watson & Scraton, 2001). The availability of ethnic minority social groups and ethnic associations that promote leisure are important for those who have few of the same leisure choices as dominant groups.

Ethnic communities or enclaves are often the place where traditional cultural practices are learned and fostered. However, many scholars (see, for example, Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Hebert, 2001; Walseth, 2006) have argued that ethnic youth benefit from participation in leisure within the dominant culture as well. Leisure provides an opportunity for young people in particular to interact with dominant group peers and with peers from other minority ethnic groups and it is often the place where roles are tested and identities created (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). The opportunity to share minority traditions, particularly with friends who also experience minority group membership, enhances feelings of belonging (Eid, 2003; Ramji, 2008).

This paper explores how young adult members of one particular ethnic minority group negotiated among and between the cultures they knew and how those negotiations contributed to their leisure and sense of inclusion in the communities where they lived. Of particular importance is how the participants balanced the two sets of traditions they knew and how they reconciled imperatives related to sustaining traditional practices in order to enjoy the rich social lives they preferred.

Methods

This qualitative study used a social constructivist approach to explore ways in which the participants found and created meaning in their social lives and in their leisure (Patton, 2002). Schwandt (2001) describes social constructivism as one of the methodologies that aims to understand the complex world of lived experience from the perspective of those who live it. By using constructivism, we were able to interpret the constructed meanings evident in the participants' responses to questions and discussions. The longitudinal nature of the study allowed us to engage in discussions with the same four participants on three separate occasions over a ten-year period. This paper is primarily a crosssectional analysis of the data from the third phase of a longitudinal study (Thomson & Holland, 2003). For our interpretation, we were assisted by the analysis of the previous phases of the study. Using trends and themes evident in earlier phases, we were able to reflect upon the way these youth constructed meanings in 2007, how those meanings had changed over time, and how they had remained fixed or consistent over the course of the study.

The data used for this paper are from a study that began in 1996-97 with 15 children of immigrants from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The participants at that time were interviewed individually, and several of them participated in focus group interviews. The participants were asked to reflect on their leisure activity and how it was affected by dominant cultural norms and by their traditional cultures. Nine of these same study participants from phase one participated in one-on-one interviews for the second phase of the study in 2001. They all agreed to be contacted for the third and final phase of the study in 2007; however, four people participated in this final phase. Those not included were either unable to participate or the research assistant was unable to contact them to request their involvement. Participants were initially recruited in 1996 using purposive sampling (Patton, 2002), through university student associations serving South Asian students at several Canadian universities and through an Indo-Canadian Association in Southern Ontario, Canada. Three women and one man participated in the third phase. One of these individuals lived in the United States, and three lived in Southern Ontario at the time of the third phase. One person was single, one lived with a same sex partner, one person lived in the family home and was in a relationship with an opposite sex partner, and one person was married with an infant child. All participants had completed at least one undergraduate university degree (teaching, engineering, math, and science), three were employed in professional occupations, and one was on maternity leave when contacted for the third phase of the study. One person had returned to university, studying part time for a master's degree. The small sample in this part of the study reflects the challenging nature of qualitative longitudinal research. For example, the project was funded by grants for several specific parts of the study and did not permit the researchers to maintain regular contact with the participants throughout the years of the study. As well, the participants' lives changed considerably through the years, making it difficult to locate them all and to sustain their interest in participating in the inter-

views for this last phase. The challenges we encountered are similar to the experiences of other researchers who have conducted longitudinal qualitative research (Thomas & Holland, 2003).

Data collection involved one-on-one telephone interviews. These were recorded using a telephone recording device after receiving written consent from the participants agreeing that their interviews would be recorded. The interview guide developed for this phase involved questions about the participants' accomplishments, challenges, and satisfaction with life at that particular time in their lives, their perceptions of how well they have achieved sense of belonging in the various communities in which they connect with family, friends and peers, their leisure experiences, and the nature of their participation in community activities.

Themes were developed using an inductive approach (Patton, 2002). First the transcripts were read by the researchers and thoughts and ideas in each transcript were identified and labeled. Using an open coding technique, similar ideas were grouped together to establish larger categories (Straus & Corbin, 1998). The larger categories were read and re-read to explore ways to group them into even larger categories, thereby combining similar ideas together within four large, over-arching explanations of the data. The researchers used the participants' voices to create themes that reflected the leisure of this group at the time of phase three, resulting in a cross-sectional analysis of the third phase of the study. By comparing the data to the previous phases of the study, we gained an understanding of how the participants' ideas, aspirations, and other life experiences evolved over time (Thomas & Holland, 2003).

Findings

The study participants explained the importance of family and ethnic group membership as they entered their adult lives, settled into their jobs and careers, and established their own households. As well, they actively sought ways to connect and embed in the dominant communities in educational choices, where they worked, and where some of their leisure occurred. The following themes explain how the participants described a) their relationships with parents and close family members, b) how leisure facilitated their ability to sustain their ethnic heritage, c) the conflicts or competing priorities they experienced in their leisure, and d) how leisure helped the participants merge and blend cultural traditions. The data also explains how the lives of this group of second generation Canadians are shaped by biculturalism.

Biculturalism and Parent/Child Relations

As was evident in the first two phases of the study, family and ethnic traditions remained central to the lives of the participants who were in their mid to late 20s at the time of the third phase. The participants were closely connected to their parents, siblings and other extended family members and they were appreciative of these connections:

So the time we do spend together when we do see each other is quality time and we catch up. My mom fills me in on the gossip that I don't always want to know, but I know it entertains her, so it's good. I don't know if I'd want to have more of that, but I definitely wouldn't want to have less of it.

I usually go with my family, cause our social circles are the same. Like me and my sister, her friends are my friends and my friends are her friends pretty much. And uh, if we don't go to one of their houses, we just socialize with one another. Like my brother and my sister live in Toronto and they come home almost every other weekend if not more often, and if they don't come we go there. So ... we meet a lot. And I live 15 minutes from my mom, and if I don't go every other day I get, well I miss them a lot, you know, so I am there almost every day if not every other day.

One person maintained close contact with her relatives in India. She is aware that maintaining contact with those relatives may eventually become difficult when her parents have passed away:

I think that that is going to be one of the most difficult things when my parents aren't living any more. I mean they are the biggest connection we have with India and with family that we have there, and I think I would always be welcome there, but I think that connection it's strongest when they are living, and it makes it easier I think.

Family time was an important part of leisure for the participants facilitating their involvement in traditional celebrations, such as weddings and religious events. Reflecting on their upbringing and the challenges their parents faced in raising them in Canada, they realized that their parents had adjusted their expectations of how the younger generation should be raised. Some of the parents of this group appeared to have made considerable efforts to ensure that their children were able to connect with peers and friends from school and other young people for leisure and social activities. The participants recognized that their parents supported their social leisure activities and that the support they received was not typically provided by other South Asian parents:

In high school, I went to school in a community different from where I live, so to hang out with friends outside of school before I could drive, we relied on our parents a lot to drive us out to our friends who lived 40 minutes away or to pick us up from said place. . . . And I don't feel that I had to negotiate too much around that in terms of how I wanted to spend my leisure time versus what I was allowed or not allowed to do. I think that if I wanted to make arrangements to meet with someone that my parents would actually go out of their way to try to make it happen as much as they could.

My parents were fairly liberal raising us. I mean I'm not forced into an arranged marriage or anything like that. A lot of freedom of choice.

In some cases, the plans and aspirations of the participants conflicted with those of their parents. One person spoke about her parents' views about her decision to take a job that took her out of the province in which her parents lived, a move that affected their ability to have family leisure time as often as they might have liked:

I finished university in Ontario and got a job locally and decided that I needed to branch out, so moved myself to (name of place) where I now reside. Away from my family, which I guess is kind of a big deal. My mom is not very happy about it.

All of the participants faced some challenges associated with moving out of the family home, finishing education and training, starting careers, and establishing their own families. However, dealing with parental disapproval was extremely difficult in one particular context. One participant spoke to this when discussing her life as a lesbian. She described herself as a closeted lesbian because her parents still do not know she lives with a same-sex partner. Her friends and several family members do know about her sexual orientation and remain close to her:

I'm actually living as a closeted lesbian Indian. My parents don't know so I guess there's no support there. I so don't fit that (traditional Indian) lifestyle, I don't fit that mold. Um, even my friends here (in town where she lives) in the Indian community know I'm gay, but they don't talk about it. It's not something that we talk about at all.

This situation is indicative of how in some aspects of their lives, the second generation experienced considerable challenges when attempting to influence attitudinal changes within their families and traditional communities. They did, however, remain closely connected to their parents as they entered adulthood.

Leisure and Maintaining Strong Connections to Ethnic Heritage

Some ethnic traditions remained important, some changed but continued to be part of their lives, and new traditions were adopted. All of the participants described how their ability to practice and engage in traditional cultural practices shaped their leisure as well as other aspects of their lives. For example, one woman explained how she attempts to make different things more Indian: "Umm, in terms of, I'm not a very good, I don't make Indian food good, but I try to Indianize things like with spices." Others explained that an important part of leisure was participating in cultural activities such as attending celebrations with other Indo-Canadians:

It's a way of connecting to people, I think a lot of people that I've grown up with. Like for example, I went to a wedding recently where I knew the bride growing up, she's a part of the Indo-Canadian community, and go-

ing to her wedding, her reception was fantastic, cause it was all the old school Indo-Canadian kids from this area.

I enjoy the colors, the food, I enjoy the clothing, and the dressing up in it and seeing other people. I enjoy having a better understanding of what my parents are talking about with their experiences of growing up in India.

One participant whose family was Catholic explained his interest in religious celebrations:

For me, religious traditions are very big. Christmas, Easter, and that's really significant family time. So in that sense, I enjoy them very much and they're really a time for family. And it's a time that we, a few times where we do, in our busy lives, that we make time for family. So religious traditions, Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving, and that type of thing, so like I just said, family would be most important to share these religious traditions cause we don't often have time to spend time together.

Participation in ethnic leisure activities facilitated the ability of the young adults in this study to maintain ties to their heritage. As well they enjoyed sharing with friends who were not South Asian, which in turn contributed a multicultural flair to the leisure of the friendship groups to which they belonged:

There are certain holidays that I take to heart, like Diwali, I make it a point to go to Temple that day, make it a point to share my culture with people at work, and everybody seems to enjoy it 'cause they get free food.

Umm, but my good friends here, who are not Indian, always enjoy when it's story time with me there, cause I generally tell them things they've never heard. And it makes them want to experience those things, like National Kite Flying Day or first day of Spring in India, things like that where you know they, don't get that exposure.

Several participants explained the importance of friendships with non-South Asian peers who liked to join in on these traditional celebrations because these events enriched their own lives:

If I ever get a chance to go back home, I definitely want to spend it with my best friend who is not Indian, who's completely Canadian and so down to earth and we've been friends for so many years that it's so natural and it's just easy. It's never been a culture thing. She has experienced a lot of things in my culture, which is great. She eats Indian foods, and like she'll come to the temple with me and nobody sees her as, as an outsider looking in. She's just sort of part of it. I really miss those times.

As second-generation young Canadians who were raised in Canada by parents who immigrated from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, the participants lived a bicultural existence, where part of their leisure prioritized South Asian traditions and part of it prioritized non-South Asian traditions. Their familiarity with, and fondness for traditions and beliefs inherent in their ethnic culture and in the context of Canadian culture contributed to their tendency to self-identify as bicultural or multicultural people. Identity as Canadian, Indo-Canadian, Indian, or something else developed through their formative years. One participant articulated this particularly well: "I mean, I'm never going to lose my identity as an Indian woman; I'm never going to lose my identity as a Canadian woman."

Skin color and traditional clothing meant that the participants were identifiable as Indian. Some people discussed how Indians reach out to one another, and these connections are the basis for enriching their social experiences. For example, the person who moved to the United States recalled a shopping excursion to an Indian grocery store where the salesclerk facilitated access to the ethnic goods that are important for this person's leisure enjoyment:

Even going to an Indian grocery store, umm people look at you and they say, you're new here aren't you and well yes. Ok, well you know we have specials this day, and if you want to get Indian movies go to this place and if you want this, go here. And it's great and you make note of it and off you go. You're never far away from an Indian connection that's for sure.

Identification with a South-Asian community enhanced some aspects of leisure for the participants. However, belonging to an ethnic group often meant that people were obliged to participate in some activities and those obligations at times created conflicts in their lives as is explained below.

Leisure and Conflicting Priorities

The participants explained the importance of friendships with people who identified with the same cultures as their own. Leisure that occurred with South Asian friends and with family members was often highly social, involving large groups of friends and family. Some people commented on their enjoyment of this social leisure:

I like the communal aspect of it (leisure with Indian friends), right. I like the fact that so many people are involved and that so many people take part and so forth. So I like that, it almost makes up for the shortcoming of the individual leisure.

They liked that they did not need to explain to their Indian friends the constraints they faced if their parents objected to certain leisure activities such as dating. However, they also recognized that if they only connected with South Asian friendship groups, they may have missed other social experiences:

A lot of my friends are Indian and umm and a lot of their primary friends are Indian and it's not until recently that I've started having a lot of friends you aren't Indian. The strength of the commonality, can sometimes close you off to other experiences.

Several people described that when they socialized with Indian peers, there were expectations they were required to fulfill such as speaking Indian languages, and refraining from consuming alcohol. They described a sense of freedom and ability to relax when leisure was associated with non-South Asian settings:

Umm well, I like the fact that it's very much defined by me, right. Uhh, there's this emphasis on this part of the world on personal freedom right.

With my American friends, you're just yourself. You do whatever you want to do, you talk the way you talk and you don't have to watch your language or what you're eating or drinking. And uhh, you know they don't really judge you, you don't have a fear of them reporting back to your mom somehow.

Leisure afforded people the opportunity to develop friendships with people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Rather than trade their ethnic leisure for dominant group leisure, they tended to engage in a wide range of leisure activities, some of it within and some of it outside their ethnic family and community. As well, they explained how important it was for them to embrace the traditions of other ethnic minority people:

Going to a university and guess what, there's all these different races and you need to make sense of them. Having these friends who are African American, friends who are white, friends who are Jewish, you know, going to a wedding where a Jewish person and a black are marrying despite all the parental uproar because they love each other and seeing that, I think that's the way it happens.

When leisure occurred outside of Indian friendship groups, it was described as being more freely chosen, although not necessarily more enjoyable. One person was conflicted as she tried to make time for leisure with her friends, while balancing time with her family:

I've definitely, especially through university and even now struggled with the feeling of obligation in terms of family events versus other ways of perhaps spending leisure time. And I don't know if I think I stated that or if I articulated that to my parents that they'd be quite upset because they don't necessarily perceive that, or perhaps that is not the case and I just turn it into a feeling of obligation on my part.

Leisure was valued in that it was the site or place for relaxation and freedom from obligation. However, leisure also provided the context in which people connected with traditional cultural practices. As reported in the earlier phases of the study balancing the traditions was something people worked at, in order to enjoy a diverse range of leisure activities.

Blending Traditions and Influencing Social Change

The participants shaped their lives in ways that allowed them to enjoy diverse leisure. For all of the participants, part of their leisure included volunteering, which allowed them to contribute in positive ways to the communities in which they lived:

Our family was part of establishing the mosque, the two mosques there and the community center and uh me and my brother and sister, we, well I'm not gonna say a big part but like we helped, helped a lot with creating youth programs there. Cause like growing up there and being among the oldest youth in [city] we felt, we realized that there was a great need for Muslim youth to have a place where they could uh like feel self confident and talk about issues that they could be dealing with or whatever. So yeah, I'm really connected to the community there.

The participants had developed an interest in influencing change. This was evident as they engaged in activities that informed friends and colleagues about their cultural traditions. One person explained that the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre and racist backlash against Muslims made her realize that she should be more outgoing in order to let dominant group people know about Muslims. This participant explained that she initially knew few people in the co-op apartment building where she lived. After 9/11, she made an effort to speak to people she had never met, an intentional effort she felt would help create friendships for her and to help her neighbors to understand that Muslim people are not to be feared:

Post 9/11, 'cause of things that happened to me and people that I know, I've just tried to make it a point to be a little more social, so that people know, well they know because like I'm visibly Muslim, like I wear the headscarf and everything. So I just to try let people know that I am normal just like everybody else and to break stereotypes so that just encourages me to be more social, I guess.

She hoped her efforts would help non-Muslim people be comfortable with her and with other Muslim people who wear traditional clothing and who may have skin color that differs from that of the dominant population. This participant and others in the study reported that they often discussed with friends, work colleagues and other people the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001. They believed it was important for them to engage in those discussions to dispel inaccuracies about people from the Middle East and from South Asia. They felt they

could use those discussions to contribute to making their communities more welcoming places for themselves and for other minority group members.

The female Muslim participant provided an interesting example of how she and her friends shaped a Canadian leisure experience in order to make that experience accessible for the young Muslim girls in their community. She described how the girls in her community were unable to go to the high school prom because it was a mixed-gender event. She and her friends created a prom experience by holding an alternative prom just for the Muslim girls. This event was organized by young adult women for their high school aged peers:

We have this gala; I think I mentioned it last time we were talking. We have this gala once a year, sort of for the girls so that they can dress up and come and party. It's sort of like a prom, without having to go the prom.... People were hesitant about letting their daughters dress that way or partying or the music; for some reason having cultural music was okay, but having you know pop or rock, haha, I mean I understand if it has swearing or sexual connotation to it, you know, from a religious point of view, we wouldn't encourage anyone to listen to it, but anything else is okay even if it's about love. But as long as it's not anything that's really raunchy.

In earlier phases of this study people had described personal experiences of discriminatory or racist practices. In this phase people were asked if anything had changed in the way they experienced racism or discrimination and it was evident that one change was that the participants tended to frame the incidents in a different way:

I think there is a danger in labeling things racism when they may just be childhood taunting and that's not to belittle the experiences of others, but it's just first of all, it's a very heavy word, so we need to be careful of when we use it. Because if we use it too much, it really discounts real incidents of racism.

Even though they admitted that some people did not welcome diversity and that discriminatory practices persisted, their discourse about racism was cautious. They preferred language that they perceived to be non-offensive and sought ways to engage people in resolving issues rather than resorting to accusations that they believe tend to shut down the conversation and do not contribute to problem resolution.

Discussion

This paper explored biculturalism and leisure in the lives of a group of second-generation South Asian Canadians. Leisure played an important part in their identity development as a mechanism for bridging two cultures that are quite different from one another in many ways. Rather than conceptualizing their lives

as though they were situated between cultures, the participants were very much a part of two cultures, and participation in both sets of cultural traditions shaped their leisure. They balanced two sets of cultural priorities and tended to avoid much of the conflict reported in other studies of second-generation youth (See for example Wolf, 1997).

Multiculturalism and plurality theories explain and support the notion that people often do not shed diverse cultural practices over time. In this study, we learned that leisure provided an opportunity for the participants to engage in activities and social networks in their minority ethnic communities and in places where leisure was characterised by dominant group cultures. To reconcile differences between leisure in the two settings, they worked to draw their two sets of traditions together by sometimes introducing family and ethnic friends to dominant group practices and at other times drawing dominant group friends into their traditional minority ethnic traditions. Parents were an important source of support as the participants welcomed non-South Asian friends into their homes and into their cultural activities.

Walseth (2006) uses the notion of identity work to explain how second-generation young people attempt to engage in social groups that do not result in major compromises to personal goals. In this study, the participants' identity work involved leisure with many sets of peers, which resulted in enhancing their own leisure and the leisure of those around them. The Muslim woman and her friends drew a Canadian leisure activity—the prom—into her Muslim community by shaping it in a way that was acceptable to the elders and to the young girls who wanted to enjoy that event. The participants who invited non-South Asian friends to Diwali celebrations and to traditional wedding celebrations provided friends a rich opportunity for leisure that all parties enjoyed, and one that dominant group members are not often exposed to. Sharing of leisure in these ways bridges cultural divides, and opens the way for people to experience and discuss cultural differences.

The parents of the young people in this study played an important role in the process of reducing stress for the young people by supporting their involvement in diverse leisure. Their support contributed to the ability of the young people to identify with two cultures, thereby developing bicultural identities. Their support involved finding ways for the young people to enjoy some of their leisure outside of the family. Evident in the third phase of the study were the enduring and strong connections the participants had with their family members. These connections played out in their leisure. However, some issue such as those affecting the lesbian woman in this study were not easily resolved. She had not been able to gain her parents' support for her relationship, even though several other family member openly supported her. Her situation may be indicative of the challenges some South Asians face as they enter into same-sex partnerships, love marriages, live-in partnerships outside of marriage, and other aspects of life that are typical in Canadian society. These may remain contentious within South Asian families.

This paper provides a glimpse of how one small group of young adults who are second-generation Canadians experience leisure. They appeared to have very rich leisure lives because of their biculturalism. Multiculturalism supports the way

in which they maintained parts of the two sets of different cultural practices they knew: their South Asian practices and the practices of Canadian culture. Their ability to share traditions of the two cultures they knew with friends and bring South Asian traditions into dominant peer groups and dominant traditions into family and ethnic community groups facilitated their bicultural identity development. This in turn appeared to reduce the conflicts reported in some studies of ethnic youth who are unable to enjoy diverse leisure without enduring parental disapproval as was the case in Wolf's study of immigrant youth from the Philippines living in the United States (1997).

Our study leaves us with several questions that future research should address. We wonder how second-generation ethnic young people cope with parental expectations when their parents do not support their leisure interests. This is of particular concern if their preferred leisure takes them outside of the family and into the lifestyle of dominant groups. We are also interested in knowing more about those leaders, teachers, employers, and community advocates who support and facilitate the friendships of diverse groups of young people. The way in which the participants attempted to address racism through a carefully chosen discourse intended not to offend anyone is a concern if the truly problematic impact of racism is masked by the discourse. How well this discourse will actually address the problem of racism is not known. We hope further research about biculturalism and leisure will explore these issues further.

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