

IDENTITY FORMATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN SIKH AND
NON-SIKH CANADIAN FEMALE ADOLESCENTS

By

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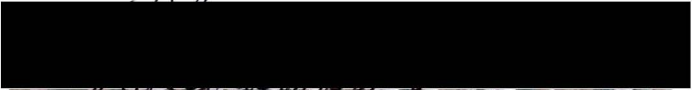
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ABSTRACT


This study examined the identity formation process of 10 Canadian Sikh female adolescents and 10 Canadian Non-Sikh female adolescents between the ages of 16 and 18 years of age. A modified version of Marcia's Identity Status Interview and Simmons' Identity Achievement Scale were administered to subjects to assess their identity status profiles and levels of identity achievement. Both groups of subjects were found to have similar identity achievement levels, however, there were differences between the Sikh and Non-Sikh subjects in their identity formation processes. Due to the unique themes which were found in three of the Sikh adolescents' identity interviews, a new status was developed to better describe the characteristics of their identity profiles. The status was labelled Stress Foreclosed. The Sikh adolescents expressed higher anxiety in resolving issues than the Non-Sikh adolescents largely due to the additional task they confronted of having to resolve issues concerning cultural differences.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
Chapter	
1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
2. RELATED RESEARCH	4
Identity Formation	4
The Sikh Culture	13
The Sikh Religion	13
The Sikh Female's Roles	15
Marriage and Motherhood	18
The Identity Formation Process in East Indian Culture	22
Influence of Immigration on Identity Formation	26
3. METHOD	33
Subjects	33
Instruments	34
Procedure	43
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	46
Identity Status Profiles	53
Diffused	53
Foreclosed	60
Moratorium	68
Stress Foreclosed	73
Themes of the Identity Process	85
Occupation	85
Religion	87
Politics	88

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
Friendship	89
Female Role	90
Dating	93
Marriage, Parenting and Career Priorities	95
Issues for Sikh and Non-Sikh Adolescents to Resolve	99
5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	109
REFERENCES	117
APPENDICES	124

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Agreement Between Judges' Scores and and Researcher's Assigned Scores and Identity Statuses	42
2. Identity Statuses Achieved in Each of the Eight Identity Areas and Overall Identity Status	47
3. Issues for all Adolescents to Resolve: Percentages of Responses Given by Sikh and Non-Sikh Girls	100
4. Perceptions of Sikh and Non-Sikh Girls to Adolescent Difficulties	102
5. Reasons for Sikhs Having a More Difficult Time Going Through Adolescence	103
6. How Contented and Resolved Sikh and Non- Sikh Girls Felt About Adolescent Issues	108

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. A Model of the Sequential Pattern of Identity Development	9
2. Rating Table For Scoring Degree of Exploration	40
3. Identity Formation Process Pathways for Canadian Sikh Female Adolescents	52

CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Erikson (1950) views the process of personality development as extending through the whole life span which he divides into eight stages. Each stage represents an encounter between the individual and the environment which must be resolved in order for the individual to achieve continued growth. The developmental task for adolescents, an age group which begins at the onset of puberty and ends at twenty-one years of age, is achieving identity versus identity diffusion. What the adolescents are primarily concerned with is who and what they are in the eyes of a wider circle of significant people as compared with what they themselves feel they are.

Identity formation is personal because of a sense of "I-ness," or individuality, but it is also social as it includes "we-ness" or one's collective identity as part of a social group. An individual's identity formation continues through a process of selection and assimilation of childhood identifications which in turn depend upon parental, peer and society's identification of them as important persons. The community both moulds and gives recognition to the newly emerging individual. The adolescent in the

identity formation process searches for social values which guide identity. (Rice, 1981)

Of particular interest, as the Canadian Sikh goes through the identity formation process, he or she is confronted with a dominant community that holds very different values and criteria for recognition than those advocated by his or her family. Many adolescents are exposed to somewhat different values outside the home when compared with the values of the family. Children of immigrant families are exposed to a wider range of differences between family values and those of the outside world when compared with non-immigrant families. Since Sikh and Canadian cultures are considerably different in many ways, Sikh children in Canada must experience the problem of growing up between cultures. Having to reconcile such value differences is a distinctive aspect of the problems of identity formation among the Canadian Sikh adolescents in British Columbia (Paranjpe, 1982).

The identity formation process has been found to have unique aspects for female Sikh adolescents as compared with male Sikh adolescents (Paranjpe, 1982). The present study focused on the female Sikh and Non-Sikh adolescent's experience of identity formation.

In the 1980's, the female role in both the Sikh and Non-Sikh cultures has been in a state of

transition. It was of interest to the researcher to study the influence that the changing female role ideals had on the female adolescent's identity formation and how the different female role expectations for Sikh and Non-Sikh girls influenced how the subjects of each cultural group experienced the identity formation process.

Society is a key referent in the process of identity formation. What was of interest to the researcher regarding societal referents and identity formation during adolescence was the impact of having two somewhat conflicting sets of societal values and beliefs as referents when going through the identity formation process. Sikh female adolescents living in Canada are a group who are confronted with such a situation.

The purpose of this study was to explore the identity formation process of Canadian Sikh and Canadian Non-Sikh female adolescents.

CHAPTER 2

RELATED RESEARCH

Identity Formation

As an individual progresses from infancy to old age and experiences complex and large scale changes, his or her personality shapes itself into an organized form. The central principle which is responsible for the organization of personality is known as the concept of identity (Paranjpe, 1975). Erik Erikson (1950, 1963, 1968) has been perhaps the most influential writer on identity in the past two decades. He places identity formation within the context of psychoanalytic theory, viewing it as the psychosocial task distinctive, but not exclusive, to adolescence. What is important about identity in adolescence, particularly late adolescence, is that this is the first time that physical development, cognitive skills and social expectations coincide to enable young persons to sort through and synthesize their childhood identifications in order to construct a viable pathway toward their adulthood (Marcia, 1980).

Marcia (1980) defines identity as a self structure - an internal self-constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs and individual history. The better developed this

structure is, the more aware individuals appear to be of their own uniqueness and similarity to others and of their own strengths and weaknesses in making their way in the world. The less developed this structure is, the more confused individuals seem about their own distinctiveness from others and the more they have to rely on external sources to evaluate themselves.

The identity structure is dynamic, not static. It is a process whereby elements are continually being added and discarded (Marcia, 1980; Waterman, 1982; Erikson, 1968). The identity process involves the development of a clear self-definition through consideration of alternatives pertaining to vocation, family and personal ideologies (Archer and Waterman, 1983).

Ideology is important for the personality system of adolescents whose task is to find a place in society. The function of ideology pertains mainly to the cognitive aspect of the personality system. This aspect interpenetrates with the order of things we call culture. Values, goals and ideals are usually shared by the individual with a group, whether the group be immediate family, a religious group, a political organization, etc. By way of such sharing the individual feels belongingness which counters the

painful feeling of alienation, gives meaning to the present, and some direction for the future.

The significance of ideology can be understood properly when considering the nature of adolescent developmental tasks. These are: coping with the increased sexual urge and bodily changes accompanying puberty, choice of and training in an occupation, finding a marriage partner and incorporating oneself into the economy, political structure and the community of adult society. The latter part implies one's place in the social system. Many adolescents aren't satisfied in finding "some" place in society; they search for the one most satisfying. A theory or philosophy of life in some form of ideology such as an organized set of beliefs, ideals, goals, values and related symbols can provide an individual with a basic frame of orientation around which to organize his or her social life. Acceptance of an ideology helps in ranking values, roles and loyalties which may otherwise conflict and threaten the internal order and unity of the personality system. Lack of ideology may lead to aimless drifting and an inability to concentrate (Paranjpe, 1975).

Social support is necessary in identity formation and its maintenance. Important social referents adolescents use in making identity choices and

commitments are parents, peers and the society they live in (Marcia, 1976).

Marcia (1966) developed an interview technique that measures the process of identity formation along two dimensions: exploration (crisis) and commitment. Exploration (crisis) refers to the examination of alternatives with an intention to establish a firm commitment. Commitment refers to a stable investment in one's goals, values, and beliefs evidenced in supportive activity. There are four modes of decision making which are derived from various placements on these two dimensions. These four modes are referred to as ego identity statuses (Archer & Waterman, 1983).

The four identity statuses are: 1. Identity Diffused is the least developmentally sophisticated status. Individuals in this status have made no commitment, nor are they attempting to arrive at a commitment in a given content area of the interview. They may or may not have experienced active questioning of alternatives in the past, but the end result is an absence of commitment. 2. Foreclosed status individuals have not actively questioned alternatives but they have made a commitment that they will strongly defend. This commitment is typically an extension of values and expectations of significant others, particularly the parents, and is accepted

without the consideration of other possibilities.

3. Moratorium status individuals are in the process of actively seeking information in order to select from among alternatives. They are looking to make a decision in the near future. They are in crisis.

4. Identity Achievers have experienced Moratorium and have made a commitment that they are currently implementing or anticipate implementing in the near future. Consideration of alternatives reflects efforts to clarify one's self-definition; hence, Moratorium and Identity Achieved decision-making modes are deemed sophisticated (Archer & Waterman, 1983).

Erikson (1968) theorized that individuals move from diffusion toward an increased sense of identity during the period from adolescence to adulthood. Based on this theory, Waterman (1982) developed a schematic presentation of Marcia's (1966) four identity statuses, and illustrated the potential patterns of identity status change as the early adolescent progresses through to adulthood (Figure 1).

The majority of identity research has focused on college age individuals (Marcia, 1980), although junior and senior high school students are clearly expected to make many commitments regarding educational and career directions, religious affiliations and memberships and appropriate sex-role

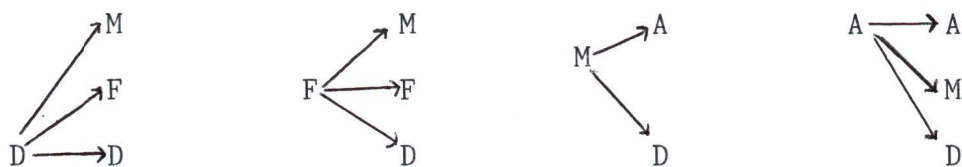


Figure 1. A model of the sequential pattern of identity development. (D = Diffused, F = Foreclosed, M = Moratorium, A = Identity Achieved). Foreclosure may be skipped from Diffusion to Moratorium and Moratorium to Identity Achieved (Waterman, 1982, pg. 343).

behaviors (Archer, 1982). The identity formation process has been found to be present in junior and senior high school students (Grotevant & Thorbecke, 1982; Raphael, 1978). There is controversy as to whether older adolescents (Grade 12) are able to attain Identity Achievement status. Archer and Waterman (1983) conducted Identity Interviews with students from Grade 6-12 and found that Grade 6-10's scored predominantly Diffused or Foreclosed with increasing frequency of Grade 12's scoring Moratorium and Identity Achieved. Raphael (1978), and Douvan and Adelson (1966) studied identity formation in high school students and concluded that the lack of ideological concerns and limited life and work experiences made it difficult for the older adolescent (Grade 12) to have achieved the task of identity in the optimal manner outlined by Erikson.

There is also controversy as to whether males and females in North America resolve issues of identity differently. Erikson (1968, 1975); Ginzberg and Yohalema (1966); Douvan and Adelson (1966); Marcia (1976, 1980); Rosenberg and Simmons (1975) have described females as being primarily interpersonal and males as being career oriented. Intimacy, for males, follows identity resolutions. Waterman (1982) found that males and females use the identity processes

comparably in most domains investigated. These findings have been obtained for junior and senior high school students (Grotevant & Thorbecke, 1982), college students (Orlogsky, 1978) and adults (Tesch & Whitbourne, 1982).

A very influential factor in the controversy of gender difference in the resolution of identity issues is the fact that the female role in North America is currently in transition. (The female role in Indian society is also changing but at a slower rate). This has impacted on the female identity formation process. The divergence of female from male developmental paths was theoretically defensible at a time when women could attain a successful identity only upon achievement of an intimate attachment. Until recently a woman's occupation, self definition and world view were largely determined by the man to whom she married. This was true for a society in which most women's identities were achieved in the stereotyped ideals of their family roles. Today, however, those component parts of identity may be achieved by women independently of a prior or coincident intimate attachment (Morgan & Farber, 1982).

Morgan and Farber (1982) found that there was discontinuity in female identity development based on four premises: that the values and experiences

internalized by women during the earlier parts of their lives have been, in most cases, traditional in their emphasis on motherhood and marriage; that sex-role norms are changing to provide a wider variety of socially acceptable lifestyles and career alternatives for women; that it is becoming difficult to avoid exposure to and contact with these changing norms, and that at some point in the life cycle a woman will react to the conflict between the traditional ideal which emphasized motherhood, and marriage as the core of female identity, and the nontraditional which emphasizes occupation and individual choice.

The majority of the theory presented above regarding identity formation applies to individuals of all cultures. There are aspects of the theory of identity formation which are more exclusive to North American adolescents as the theory is based on North American values and beliefs. These cultural differences will be noted in the following related research.

The Sikh Culture

The East Indians who live in Canada are a highly heterogeneous community. Among the so-called East Indians are: Hindus, Ismalis and other Moslems, Christians, Sikhs and Zoroastrians. Some speak many of the fifteen major languages and many of their dialects. They have immigrated from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Malaysia or Uganda (Paranjpe, 1982). The vast majority of East Indians have come to Canada since 1964 (Buchignani, 1977). In 1981, 56,210 East Indians resided in British Columbia. Approximately 90% were Sikhs. The majority have immigrated from the Punjab (Statistics Canada, 1982). Female adolescents from the Sikh community have been chosen for this study as they were most representative of the East Indian female adolescent population in Victoria. An outline of the Sikh culture and the Sikh female roles within the Sikh culture is given to clarify the background from which the Sikh adolescent enters Canadian society.

a) The Sikh Religion

The Sikh religion was originally intended to bring together the best of the Hindu and Islamic religions. The Khalsa or "pure" religion which is the Sikh religion today is approximately 280 years old. Its basic tenets are similar to that of Hinduism with

the important modification that the Sikh religion is opposed to caste distinctions. To aid in elimination of this, last names, which indicated caste, were dropped and "Singh" was the family name given to all Sikhs. Today many Sikhs have taken on a new family name but maintain Singh as their middle name. Sikhs worship at temples known as gurdwaras. The temple is the focal point of the Sikh community. There is a resident priest who lives in the temple. There is no clergy hierarchy and anyone is allowed to preach at the temple. Men and women are segregated in the temple. There is emphasis in the Sikh religion, however, that men and women should be treated as equal. The holy book of the Sikhs is the Granth Sahib. Sikhs believe in one God and are opposed to idol worship. Beef is not eaten as the cow is considered sacred for what it has given to the people. It is not to be considered an object to be worshiped (Grewal, 1969).

Karma or "human acts," is a central theme of the Sikh religion. On the basis of one's actions in previous life one receives what is "written for him or her." There is emphasis on carrying out "good acts" in one's present life for the chain of bad Karma can be broken by God's grace. Self centeredness is an obstacle to salvation and forms a barrier between man

and God. Five other adversaries to be avoided are: lust, anger, pride, attachment to material things and covetousness. The goal in life is not in this world nor in paradise, but nothing short of spiritual union with God (Grewal, 1969).

b) The Sikh Female's Roles

Sikh women bear a special responsibility for family honour in so far as if a woman conforms to certain standards of modest feminine conduct her family's status is maintained or even improved, whilst unwomanly conduct is a blot not just on her personal reputation but on the reputation of the whole family. The ultimate sanction for indiscreet behavior on the part of women is the possibility that no man will wish to marry her and she will bring further disgrace upon her family by being left an old maid. All aspects of a woman's behavior outside the home are a matter of concern to her kin and this concern affects all possible activities beyond the domestic sphere (Sharma, 1980).

Correct feminine conduct means being as inconspicuous in public as possible. Women, whether daughters or daughters-in-law enjoy the least freedom in those areas which are defined as most public. A woman must have recognizable business to justify her free movement in public and she must spend a minimal

amount of time there. Sikh adolescent girls in Canada are usually expected to return home immediately after school. Partaking in extra curricular activities at the school is discouraged.

Kinship roles specify the form and direction of co-operation exchange, mutual aid and ritual obligations. The most rigorous obligations and the most concentrated forms of co-operation are those within the household itself. A woman sees her social world as radically divided between those to whom she is related consanguineally and those to whom she is related through marriage. In India, the adult woman enters a village at the time of marriage and her daughters will leave it when they marry to live elsewhere, since to marry within one's village is regarded as improper. (Village is the name of a geographical self evident unit. Villages are the "blocks" from which Indian society is built). The distinction between one's peke or village, where one is born, brought up and where one's parents live and saure or village where one is married and where one's parents-in-law live is fundamental to women's social experience. A woman conceives her social world as divided between relations arising from her membership in her peke and those arising from membership in her saure. The main opposition is not between the inside

and outside of any particular village, but between the two villages in which a woman belongs and in which she has different membership (Sharma, 1980). Although in Victoria, the Sikh girl does not live in the same village structure as she would in India and she may live in close proximity to her parents home, she will move into her husband's family's household at the time of marriage where she will experience similar role opposition.

There are crucial distinctions and appropriate behaviors for the female in a wife, daughter-in-law role and the role of sister or daughter. Very specific services are expected from a daughter-in-law, but respectful and submissive behavior is always to be shown by the female. A daughter has the right to expect a decent sized dowry at the time of her marriage and has a right to maintenance until that time. After marriage she has no automatic right to maintenance from parents and brothers. If her marriage is unhappy or threatens to break up, she may need to return home. Not being entitled to maintenance as a right, she must rely on the "generosity and tenderness" of her brothers and parents (Sharma, 1980).

Hershman (1977 in Sharma, 1980) notes another role opposition a female must resolve. There is a

contradiction between a woman's role as a sexually active human being, whose sexuality has negative value and is seen as a threat; and as a mother, whose fertility has positive value, but can only be realized through sexual activity. Men's roles are not thus refracted. A brother is different from a husband, but he is not a different kind of man.

c) Marriage and Motherhood

Marriages are arranged in the Sikh culture both in Canada and India, rather than through the couple making the choice. There is a principle that, if possible, the bridegroom should be someone whom the bride has never had the opportunity to meet. The most honourable form of marriage is that where there is no element of prior sexual attraction between the partners. In Victoria it is not uncommon that the couple have met and spoken with one another prior to marriage. Dating and sexual involvement is still prohibited prior to marriage. A few "love" matches, in which there is no parental decision, occur but they are an exception (Sharma, 1980).

Traditional rules govern marriage and are still closely in effect today in Victoria. The bride must come from a different village from that of the bridegroom. In Canada a potential bridegroom's family must be from a village in India which is different

from that of the bride's family. The bride must be of a different clan, there must be no consanguineal link between the couple and the couple must be of the same caste (Sharma, 1980). Whilst Sikh society proclaims it is casteless, the centuries of life encapsulated within the wider Hindu society and the acceptance of converts into a Sikh society, who kept the memories of their former caste alive have resulted in such divisions between Sikhs. Caste distinctions are of minor importance in British Columbia, possibly because the majority of Sikhs in the province are of the same caste - Jat. One sphere of social action which remains almost entirely caste bound, however, is that of marriage. Generally marriage is arranged with a spouse from India if a person of suitable caste is not available in Canada (Mayer, 1959; Guzdar, 1985).

A certain number of men and women have married Non-East Indian Canadians. It appears to occur more often with East Indian males than East Indian females. This is probably partly because East Indian women have less chance to meet outsiders. Intermarriage is considered "wrong" and in some way constituted as betrayal of the East Indian community and a loss of the East Indian spouse to the indigent community. Intermarriage is in no way considered as an answer to the problem of assimilation. Such intercultural

matches are opposed due to the cultural differences between their spouses and allied kin-groups and the difficulties of bringing up children with a compromise over different views about the position of women, the authority of the father, the importance of the Punjab and Indian heritage generally (Mayer, 1959).

The formal negotiations for the marriage are largely conducted by the menfolk of the household, but a wide range of kin and friends will be consulted. Not all girls get married without their preferences being taken into account (Sharma, 1980).

On May 9, 1961 a law was passed in India to outlaw dowries. Dowries, however, are still honoured by many today. A dowry may be a suite of furniture, a television set, a car or some other household gift. The size depends on the family's financial position. There is no previous agreement between the spouses' parents over how much it should be and dowries are not a major cause of impoverishment in Canada as they may be in India (Mayer, 1959).

At marriage the Sikh girl joins the household of her husband. Its members are usually strangers to her. She has no automatic claims to love and respect and will receive these over time to the extent that she conforms to the norms governing the role of daughter-in-law. As she grows older and accedes to a

senior position in her husband's household she can claim indulgences and authority to which she cannot aspire as a young bride. Her behavior in her in-laws' household must always be constrained compared with her position of privileged affection in her parent's home (Sharma, 1980).

Divorce is not accepted in the Sikh religion; however, it does occur. The amount of support the Sikh girl receives from her family of origin, should divorce occur, is dependent on the extent to which her parents are sympathetic toward her. They may or may not accept her back into their home.

Bearing children gives the woman full adult status which marriage alone does not confer. Songs are sung at the birth of a boy to celebrate the mother's pride in her child, a sentiment which is not given expression at the birth of a girl. Having less responsibility for his training, a mother can enjoy her relationship with her young son in a relatively relaxed manner, less preoccupied with the need to discipline him and train him for marriage as in the case of a daughter. A girl's relationship with her mother is seen as one of intimacy and affection whose interruption at the time of marriage will be a source of grief to both (Sharma, 1980).

Superficially, women appear as more passive symbols of their family's wealth and honour. The men conduct all the formal transactions, but it is primarily the responsibility of women to visit the families of relatives or neighbours at ritual events and all important occasions, such as deaths and marriages (Sharma, 1980).

d) The Identity Formation Process in East Indian Culture.

Adolescence is a far less turbulent period in India than in Canada, largely due to differences in the developmental tasks the East Indian female is expected to achieve (Guzdar, 1985). The East Indian female's role is very clearly defined by her culture. She is not burdened with having to make decisions about her life, for from the time she was a small child she was socialized to let elders take this responsibility for her. Dependence on the family was encouraged. As an adolescent, she, therefore, does not make object choices. She does not choose who she will marry. As the East Indian female moves through adolescence she must accept that there are duties she must fulfill. She must achieve for the family and not herself. Self esteem is obtained through reciprocation for how well her family raised her. The East Indian female must also accept that she has a purpose in life: to be a wife and bear children. The

search for spiritual and personal meaning must be delayed until after the tasks of motherhood are fulfilled (Guzdar, 1985). The East Indian woman does not stand alone; her identity is wholly defined by her relationships to others. She defines herself in relation and in connection to other people. This ideal of personal identity is in sharp contrast with the corresponding independence ideal of the West (Kakar, 1978).

In India, in contrast to the Western world, it is early childhood rather than adulthood which is the "golden age" of individual life history. Children are considered pure and innocent. At puberty a psychological change occurs. Menarche is the beginning of an unpure state. Sexual thoughts and feelings are suppressed in order to remain "good" and "clean." The fear of sexuality in East Indian culture is much greater than in other cultures. The feminine principle is looked upon as seductive and dangerous. Women are often divided into the "good women" whom one does not dare approach sexually and the "bad woman," who is sexually active and threatening and to whom one does not "naturally" get married (Kakar & Chowdhry, 1970).

Puberty also marks the beginning of an Indian girl's deliberate training in how to be a good woman

and, hence, the conscious inculcation of culturally designated female roles. She learns that the virtues of womanhood which will take her through life are submission and docility as well as skill and grace in the various household tasks. At puberty her training in service and self denial begins in preparation for her imminent roles of daughter-in-law and wife. In order to maintain her family's love and approval, the girl tends to conform and even over-conform to the prescriptions and expectations of those around her (Kakar, 1978).

The role of the Sikh female in Canada is in transition. Increasing numbers are obtaining post secondary education and many develop careers. In spite of the many changes in individual circumstances in the course of Westernization and education, the traditional female ideal still governs the inner imagery of the woman. The apparently independent Canadian Sikh female will often live at home and follow the decisions her father makes for her and the family until she enters an arranged marriage where she will follow her husband's decision making (Kakar, 1978).

There is variation in the degree to which the Sikh families in British Columbia expect their daughters to follow traditional practices. Some

families have taken on more Western child rearing approaches. The extent to which the family upholds traditional practices largely determines the expectations they have for their daughter's role in life. This influences the way the Canadian Sikh female adolescent approaches identity issues (Sehmi, 1985).

Influence of Immigration on Identity Formation

Arrendondo (1984) studied the effects of immigration on the identity formation process of adolescents. It was reported that the adolescents found they had to contend with two equally powerful systems of socialization: their primary one and that of the country they moved to. As one young woman said, "It's like being born again. You have to find out who you are while getting messages from two sides saying this is how you were raised and this is how you should be." (p. 980)

Erikson (1962) claims identity formation is not a hazardous process to those who adopt ideological perspectives offered by their culture and can find a place in the prevalent technology of their time. But those who become involved in the conflict of generations are faced with conflicting patterns of life, as is the case with many Sikh adolescent females living in Canada, and may find identity formation a particularly formidable task. In cases where needs arising from within the personality system "fit" with the demands of the social systems, intrapersonal organization as well as the incorporation of personality into broader systems is not difficult. It is the lack of fit that leads to problems (Paranjpe, 1975).

Anthropological and sociological studies (Srivastava, 1975; Ames & Inglis, 1973; Buchignani, 1977) have found prominent differences between the values of East Indian families and their perception of Canadian values, particularly in matters concerning the primacy of old compared to young age and male dominance as against sexual equality. Many first generation immigrants of Indian origin take the increased assertiveness of the young and of females as a threat to their cherished ancestral values in general, and to the family institution in particular (Paranjpe, 1982). Reconciliation of differences between these parental values and the values of the larger Canadian society is a distinct aspect of the identity formation process Sikh adolescent females are confronted with.

Personality and society are independent yet interdependent. The concept of identity includes the degree of solidarity the individual feels with his or her community. Lack of solidarity may be said to indicate alienation. Alienation can lead to various psychological disorders such as loss of self, anxiety states, anomie, despair, depersonalization, meaninglessness, isolation, pessimism and/or loneliness (Josephson & Josephson cited in Paranjpe, 1982). A personal history of moving from place to

place and exposure to diverse life styles, as occurs with Sikh adolescent females who have immigrated to Canada, may pose difficulties in the maintenance of sameness, thereby becoming a possible threat to the process of identity formation (Paranjpe, 1975).

A sense of belonging is key to feeling positive about oneself and to feeling trust and a positive regard from others. Some immigrant adolescents experience an uncertainty of "belongingness." They are aware of how they differ from others in terms of language, dress and physical characteristics. The greater the differences between the physical appearance and customs of the minority group and the dominant culture, the longer it will take for them to merge. The immigrants from India in Canada may experience greater problems than immigrants from the United States or Great Britain because of their obvious racial and cultural differences (Chazottes & Abramson, 1977). The Sikh female immigrant's sense of self is very closely related to her country of origin. In the process of assimilation into the Canadian society, she retains contacts with her family and her primary relations remain with the same religious and ethnic groups. She gradually assumes the new ideas, values and customs from her adopted country, while discarding some of the old ideas from her culture.

The next generation is able to develop a Canadian identity, but even this will be tempered by relationships with parents who are retaining the identity of their country of origin (Chazottes & Abramson, 1977).

The most serious problems for all immigrants in Canada occur when children reach adolescence and wish to develop their own identities. Seeing the social freedom enjoyed by their peers, they are resentful at restrictions that their own parents may impose upon them. Among East Indian families in British Columbia, dating is clearly the most contentious issue separating youth from their parents. For a generation of girls growing up in the Canadian culture, such restrictions are seen as an unnecessary and oppressive imposition of a puritanical culture. They mean not only an authoritarian curb on their natural freedom, but also an invitation to be ridiculed and ostracized by their peers (Paranjpe, 1982). The adolescent children of these families are pulled by opposing forces: towards the values and customs of their parents and extended family members on the one hand and towards those of their peer group and the dominant society on the other. Their parents, too, face psychological conflict by wanting their children to become assimilated into their adopted society while at

the same time wishing to maintain the values and culture of the society they have left behind (Chazottes & Abramson, 1977).

Another problem that faces immigrant families is that roles become reversed and confused as children are called upon to explain the ways of the new culture to the older generation. As children become familiar with the language, they are often used by institutions, such as schools and government agencies, as interpreters in communication with the parents. This places the child in the dominant position and makes the parents dependent upon the child for their welfare. This situation may be very disturbing to parents from the Sikh culture, for example, which venerates age for its wisdom and experience (Chazottes & Abramson, 1977).

Marcia (1976) states that identity synthesis involves establishing a reciprocal relationship with his or her society and maintaining continuity within him or herself. This reformulation demands that the individual, above all, makes choices for him or herself. Sunberg, Sharma, Wodtli and Rohila (1969) studied decision making and autonomy in East Indian and American adolescents. They found that American adolescents clearly see themselves as being the most important agents in making decisions about their own

lives, whereas East Indian adolescents see their fathers as being equally or more important for such decisions. *

The traditional Sikh family does not afford the female adolescent the opportunity to make decisions independently. Her role in life is very clearly defined by the culture. It seems to follow that many of these adolescent females will refrain from going through an exploration or "crisis" period during their identity process and will take on predominantly parental ideologies. According to Marcia's identity statuses, it is likely that many Canadian Sikh female adolescents would have identity profiles in the Foreclosed identity status. Non-Sikh Canadian girls are encouraged to make choices and decisions about their lives. An exploration period is endorsed by the society as an indication of maturity. Considering the empirical evidence cited above regarding the identity formation process, it is likely Non-Sikh females of 16-18 years of age would have identity profiles in the Moratorium or possibly Identity Achieved status. *

The Sikh female adolescent growing up in Canada is confronted with resolving issues in her identity formation process that the Non-Sikh female adolescent does not have to contend with. Because of the additional issues which the Sikh adolescent must

resolve, it was assumed that Sikh female adolescents at 16-18 years of age would have a less integrated identity than Non-Sikh female adolescents of the same age.

In the present study Canadian Sikh and Non-Sikh female adolescents were interviewed to test the above assumptions. The study endeavored to answer the following research questions:

1. As indicated by Marcia's Identity Status Interview (Modified Version), do Canadian Sikh female adolescents score most frequently in the Foreclosed identity status and Canadian Non-Sikh female adolescents score most frequently in the Moratorium or Identity Achieved statuses?

2. As indicated from scores on Simmons' Identity Achievement Scale, do Canadian Sikh female adolescents score lower than Canadian Non-Sikh female adolescents?

3. As indicated by responses to interview questions, do Canadian Sikh female adolescents disclose developmental concerns in achieving identity formation that are different from concerns of Canadian Non-Sikh female adolescents? Further, do Canadian female Sikh adolescents experience higher anxiety about developmental issues, such as dating, career choice, their female role, etc., than Canadian Non-Sikh female adolescents?

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Subjects

Ten Canadian Sikh female adolescents and ten Non-Sikh female adolescents between the ages of 16-18 years of age were selected from a Victoria senior secondary school. The mean age of the Sikh adolescents was 17 years 5 months and the Non-Sikh adolescents 17 years 2 months. The school was chosen as it had a high proportion of East Indian adolescents attending. Selection of Sikh subjects was based on the following criteria: a) the adolescents had either immigrated to Canada in early childhood or were first generation Canadian born, and b) all Sikh girls' parents were born and had been raised in India. Non-Sikh subjects were selected on the basis of: a) they were born in Canada and of parents who were born in Canada, b) they were not of a minority culture. The ten Non-Sikh girls who were selected were caucasian and were from either Protestant or Roman Catholic homes. All the subjects lived with both of their natural parents and were of lower-middle or middle socio-economic status based on their parents' occupation. These criteria for subject selection were defined to ensure characteristics of the two groups were the same except for their cultural background.

The subjects chosen were to be as representative as possible of the two cultural groups: the Canadian Sikh culture and the larger dominant Canadian culture.

Instruments

1. Simmons' Identity Achievement Scale (IAS): (See Appendix 1): This is a twenty-four question, forced choice paper and pencil test. Maximum score was twenty-four. The greater the score the greater the degree of identity achievement. The IAS has been recommended for high school age individuals (Simmons, 1973).

The reliability of the IAS is indicated by an administration to Sophomore General Psychology students at one week intervals. The test-retest Pearson product moment correlation co-efficient was .764 (Simmons, 1973, pg. 6).

The IAS was developed as an objective time-efficient tool to measure identity development. The IAS is a modification of Marcia's (1964) 90 item Identity Incomplete Sentence Blank test (IISB). Marcia's IISB was administered to 212 College students. It was reduced from 90 items to 24. Elimination of items was done when one alternative was selected by more than 70% of the sample, if items pertained more to social deviancy than identity formation, and if items correlated with sex. 24 items

were retained to form the Identity Achievement Scale. Simmons used Marcia's Identity Status Interview with 19 freshmen students. The IAS was then administered. Using the Mann-Whitney U test it was found that the below median students on the Identity Status Interview received a stochastically smaller IAS score than did students rated above the median (at the .01 level of significance). This supports the belief that the IAS scores will indicate level of identity achievement similar to findings from more intensive interpersonal interviews (Simmons, 1973). In the present study the IAS was administered as well as a Modified Identity Status Interview. Data from the IAS were utilized to give a fuller picture of the individual's level of identity formation.

2. Marcia's Identity Status Interview

(Modified), hereafter referred to as the Modified Identity Status Interview: (see Appendix 2).

Marcia's Identity Status Interview is an individual interview comprised of open ended questions in five areas of identity development: occupation, religion, politics, sex roles and personal sexuality. ✕

Modifications made to the interview for the present study included changing the area of personal sexuality to questions pertaining to dating, and adding three areas: friendship, marriage and family and career

priorities. Questions in the areas of occupation, religion and politics remained unchanged from Marcia's Identity Status Interview.

For adolescents of 16-18 years of age, dating is the earliest institutionalized way of experiencing intimate relationships with the opposite sex (Grotevant & Cooper, 1981). Although sexual intercourse may be an aspect of their dating practice, the focus of this area of the interview was to gain an understanding of how young people view relationships in a broader sense than sexual behavior.

The three additional areas added to the present study's interview have been found by other researchers to be significant in studying adolescent identity formation. Douvan and Adelson (1966) and Josselson (1977) found the manner in which friendship relationships were formed and maintained was significant in the achievement of a sense of identity in adolescents. Archer (1985) found information obtained from questions pertaining to marriage gave insight into the adolescent's ability to enter a long term romantic commitment as well as ascertain how the individual viewed his or her own identity in relation to a marriage partnership. Identity issues in the family and career priority domain included consideration as to whether to have children, and if

so, consider the parenting style they would use. Archer (1985) found adolescents who discuss major changes in style with which they wish to parent (in relation to how they were parented) or how they perceive the role of parent would be demonstrating sophisticated identity activity. The adolescent must also consider the relationship between family and career. Archer (1985) found that to resolve this aspect of identity formation the adolescent must question whether family or career is of greater significance or if both or neither are crucial to the individual's self fulfillment. The ability of the adolescent to clarify the priority of self definition between family and career roles indicated greater identity achievement.

Reliability: Donovan (1975) and Rothman (1978, 1974) have gathered data which could be classified in the four identity statuses Marcia defined.

Validity: a) Construct validity: Validity of Marcia's Identity Status Interview has been assessed in two studies using the standard identity status interview in premedical students and obtained an average agreement between paragraphs (describing the four statuses) and the interview of 50%. Josselson (1972) found agreement of 41% (Marcia, 1976, p. 116).

b) Validity of the Statuses: Josselson (1972), Donovan (1970), Archer (1982) and Grotevant and Cooper (1981) administered different semi-structured interviews from Marcia's interview, with females and found data collected produced profiles which fit the four identity statuses identified by Marcia. These studies were considered significant as characteristics of the statuses which were determined initially under laboratory conditions appeared in relatively free behavior situations (Marcia, 1976, p. 116).

Scoring of the Modified Identity Status

Interview: The scoring procedure followed one outlined by Grotevant and Cooper (1981) from their studies of identity formation in Junior and Senior High School students. Grotevant and Cooper utilized a modified version of Marcia's Identity Status Interview with six identity areas and scored the interviews according to Marcia's four identity statuses. Grotevant and Cooper rated each of the areas of the interview with an identity status. In the present study, each of the eight areas was given an identity status; the modal status for the eight areas became the subject's overall status rating.

In accordance to Grotevant and Cooper's scoring, each of the identity areas was given a numerical rating according to the subject's degree of

exploration and commitment. Exploration of an identity domain may occur in two different ways: a) Depth of exploration which involves investigation of one option (e.g., becoming an airline pilot) by means of several different approaches, (e.g., reading articles on flying planes, talking to professional pilots, attending a career conference on being a pilot), and, b) Breadth of exploration which involves the investigation of a number of different options, (e.g., airline pilot, teacher, carpenter).

In coding the interviews a rating of 4 on exploration was given for the presence of both depth and breadth. A rating of 3 was given if the adolescent had explored only one option in depth or several options with little depth. A rating of 2 was given if she showed only superficial exploration - with little depth and little breadth. Finally, an adolescent was given a 1 on exploration if she showed complete absence of consideration of options in that domain (see Figure 2).

Commitment was similarly scored on a 4-point scale, ranging from 1 (complete absence), 2 (weak or vague), 3 (moderate) to 4 (strong - firmness of choice and intention to give the option a try).

The scale rating was then used to derive status ratings within each domain. Identity Achievers scored

		EXPLORATORY ACTIVITIES		
		Few	Many	
Focus of Choice	One area or Option	- Depth - Breadth (superficial rating: 2)	+ Many - Breadth (rating: 3)	+ presence of
	Many areas or Options	- Depth + Breadth (rating: 3)	+ Depth + Breadth (rating: 4)	- absence of

Figure 2. Rating Table for Scoring Degree of Exploration. (Grotevant & Cooper, 1981, pg. 23)

in the 3-4 range on both exploration and commitment; Moratoriums scored in the 3-4 range on exploration and the 1-2 range on commitment; Foreclosed received 1-2 on exploration and 3-4 on commitment and Diffused adolescents received 1-2 ratings on both exploration and commitment.

Interrater Reliability: Three trained judges, two males and one female utilized the above scoring procedure and assigned numerical scores and status ratings to randomly selected identity areas of ten of the present study's audio taped interviews. Percentage of agreement between the researcher's assignment of numerical scores and identity status scores and those of the three judges was 86.4% (see Table 1).

3. Semi-Structured Interview: (see Appendix 2). A series of questions were added to the end of the Modified Identity Status Interview to explore issues the Sikh and Non-Sikh females identified they had to resolve during adolescence. The purpose of the questions was to obtain information to evaluate if there were issues in identity formation which were unique to the Sikh or Non-Sikh girls as well as establish how each group perceived the other's adolescent experience. The responses were categorized

TABLE 1.
 Agreement Between Judges' Scores and Researcher's
 Assigned Scores and Identity Statuses.

Subject	1	Judge 2	3	Researcher's Assigned Score	% of Agreement
1	2/3*	2/3	3/3	2/3	66
2	2/3	2/2	2/3	2/3	66
3	2/1	2/2	2/1	2/2	100
4	3/2	3/2	3/2	3/2	100
5	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	100
6	2/3	2/3	2/3	2/3	100
7	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	100
8	2/3	2/4	2/2	2/2	66
9	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	100
10	2/1	2/3	2/3	2/3	66
Overall Agreement					86.4

Note: *Score = exploration/commitment

into themes and comparisons of the two groups' themes was done.

At the conclusion of the interview, the subjects were asked to assign themselves a numerical score from 1-5 on a Likert scale to indicate how at ease and free from anxiety they felt in adolescence, and how resolved they felt about the adolescent issues they identified as needing resolutions. (1 = I never feel at ease and am constantly anxious. I have not resolved any issues. 5 = I feel calm and at ease all the time. I've resolved all the issues I mentioned). (For complete number definitions see page 3 of the Modified Identity Status Interview, Appendix 2). Each subject also assigned scores between 1-5 to the same question but in regards to how she perceived female adolescents from her same culture, either Sikh or Non-Sikh and the opposite culture group, either Sikh or Non-Sikh. The responses served as a self descriptor of the amount of anxiety or crisis the subject was presently experiencing and how she perceived others were coping with adolescent issues.

Procedure

Subjects were randomly selected from class lists in accordance to age and cultural background (as indicated by surname). From the pool of 30 East Indian girls every third name was selected. They were

interviewed briefly to verify they met all the criteria. If the criteria were not met, the process was repeated until a sample of 10 was obtained. The Non-Sikh subjects were chosen by randomly choosing 6 pages of the class list where upon every third name was selected. Each girl was interviewed to ensure she met the criteria. The study was explained to each subject and upon their agreement to participate, written consent was obtained from the girls and their parents and an interview time was arranged (see Appendix 3). An information sheet written in Punjabi was given to the subjects whose parents did not understand English (see Appendix 4). Subjects were interviewed at the school in a private office. Each girl first completed the Simmons' Identity Achievement Scale paper and pencil test and was then interviewed one to one. All the testing and interviews were done by the researcher. Interviews were audiotaped. The paper and pencil test and audiotape were number coded for each subject to eliminate the use of the subject's name and ensure confidentiality. Total testing time for each subject was 60-80 minutes.

Pilot Tests: The Simmons' Identity Achievement Scale and the Modified Identity Status Interview were administered to 5 subjects: 3 Sikh and 2 Non-Sikh female adolescents. Simpler wording for one of the

statements on the IAS was done as 4 of the subjects did not understand the statement's meaning. The gender of the IAS was changed to the feminine. No changes were made in the questions on the Modified Identity Status Interview, but modifications were made in its administration. Paraphrasing of the subjects' responses was not done in the interviews for the study as was done with the pilot interviews. This was changed in order to increase the objectivity of the subjects' statements.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All subjects actively participated in both the IAS and Modified Identity Interview. Several were leery initially of disclosing personal information to a stranger, however, once into the interview the subjects talked at length and seemed to enjoy having their ideas heard.

There was no significant difference between the scores achieved by the Sikh and Non-Sikh groups of girls on the Simmons' Identity Achievement Scale. The Sikh subjects had a mean score of 12.8 and standard deviation of 2.15. The Non-Sikh group had a mean score of 13.4 and a standard deviation of 3.17. A comparison by t-test of the two groups showed no significant statistical difference ($t=0.50$ $p > .10$). The Non-Sikh girls did not show a higher level of identity achievement than the Sikh girls.

Data from the interviews produced a somewhat differentiated pattern. Scores on the Modified Identity Status Interview are reported, initially, in terms of the four identity statuses described by Marcia (1966) (Table 2). Two of the Non-Sikh subjects had overall identity statuses of Diffused, six were Foreclosed and two were Moratorium. Three of the Sikh subjects were Diffused and seven were Foreclosed.

TABLE 2
 Identity Statuses Achieved in Each of the Eight
 Identity Areas and Overall Identity Status.

Subj.	Overall	Area							
	Status	Occ.	Rel.	Pol.	Fr.	Fe.	Dat.	Mar.	Fam/Car
Non-Sikh Subjects (N=10)									
1	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	F
2	D	D	D	F	D	D	D	D	D
3	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
4	F	F	D	D	F	D	F	F	F
5	F	F	D	D	F	F	F	F	F
6	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
7	F	F	F	D	F	D	F	F	F
8	F	D	D	D	F	F	F	F	F
9	M	A	A	A	M	M	M	M	M
10	M	M	F	M	A	M	M	M	M
Sikh Subjects (N=10)									
1	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
2	D	D	D	F	F	D	D	F	F
3	D	D	D	D	D	F	F	F	D
4	F	F	F	D	F	F(SF)	F	F(SF)	F
5	F	F	F	D	F	F(SF)	F	F	F
6	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
7	F	D	D	F	F	F	F	F	F
8	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	D	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	F
9	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	D	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)
10	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	D	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)	F(SF)

Note: Identity Status Indicated as D=Diffused, F=Foreclosed, M=Moratorium, A=Identity Achieved, SF=Stress Foreclosed.

Areas are indicated as: Occ.=Occupation, Rel.=Religion, Fr.=Friendship, Fe.=Female Role, Dat.=Dating, Mar.=Marriage, Fam/Car.=Family/Career Priorities

Subj.: Subject

None of the subjects scored Identity Achieved. The majority (7 of the 10) Sikh subjects scored Foreclosed. In both groups Foreclosed was the most frequently scored identity status. The Non-Sikh subjects did not score most frequently in the Moratorium and Identity Achieved statuses as was assumed.

Each of the eight areas of the interview was scored for an identity status (Table 2). The most frequently scored status became the subject's overall identity status. Only four of the twenty subjects scored the same status for all eight areas of the Modified Identity Interview. The others had one to three areas scored in the status either immediately preceding their overall status rating and/or the status immediately following. The inconsistency within individual identity status ratings may imply that the individual is in a state of transition, supporting Waterman (1982) and Marcia's (1976) findings that identity formation is a sequential process in which an individual moves from Identity Diffused to Foreclosed, Moratorium and eventually reaches Identity Achievement.

Assuming identity formation is a process, it would follow that Foreclosed subjects would move into Moratorium statuses and Moratoriums into Identity

Achieved as they progressed toward achieving identity. Two of the Non-Sikh subjects had overall status assignments of Moratorium, but scored Identity Achievement in some of their eight identity areas (Table 2). These subjects may be an example of how adolescents move along the identity formation continuum.

The Sikh girls' identity status scores showed a continuous trend but there was a variation in the process. What seemed to occur was the emergence of a new status which had elements of both the Moratorium and Foreclosed statuses; this new status was labelled Stress Foreclosed. Three of the ten Sikh girls scored this status. (According to Marcia's scoring these girls were given Foreclosed identity statuses). The subjects were similar to the Moratorium subjects in that they were awakening to the recognition of possible options they had in their lives in Canadian society and were ready to explore. Exploration, however, did not occur for these subjects as it did with other Moratorium subjects, largely due to cultural restrictions. The Stress Foreclosed subjects expressed anxiety which was similar to the type of crisis anxiety the Moratorium subjects experienced. These girls made commitments, as did the Foreclosed

subjects, but commitments were made because they were to be committed to particular values and beliefs rather than having a choice to do so. The result was a stress surrounding decisions rather than the peaceful acceptance which was evident in Foreclosed subjects. (For a detailed description of the profile of the Stress Foreclosed girls, see Identity Status Profiles).

The source of stress may be cultural. The Sikh female is not encouraged to take responsibility for decision making. Her role in life is clearly defined and she is expected to live by it. The result of this cultural stipulation may be influential in the process of identity formation for Sikh girls. The Sikh Foreclosed girl who is ready to move on to the Moratorium stage of identity development awakens to the options that could be available to her but also to the recognition that she is unable to make decisions or explore alternatives for her life. For this girl, the exploration stage or Moratorium stage of the identity process is eliminated and the Stress Foreclosed stage occurs. Her crisis resolution isn't one of making decisions about her life's values, beliefs and goals, as is the case with a Moratorium girl, who after resolution of this moves on to Identity Achievement. The Stress Foreclosed girl's

crisis resolution involves finding a way to define herself within the limited parameters of her culture's role expectation of her. Her task is to learn to relinquish self control rather than master it.

The Sikh girls in the present study have an identity formation process which moves along a continuum of Diffused, Foreclosed, Stress Foreclosed to Identity Achieved (Figure 3).

Although it wasn't found in the present study, some Sikh girls may take the risk of ignoring cultural boundaries in order to actively explore and make decisions. These subjects would therefore fit into the Moratorium status. Considering this, the Sikh girls, living in Canadian Society, may take one of two paths in the Identity Formation Process (see Figure 3).

Further research is necessary to confirm this Identity Formation Process.

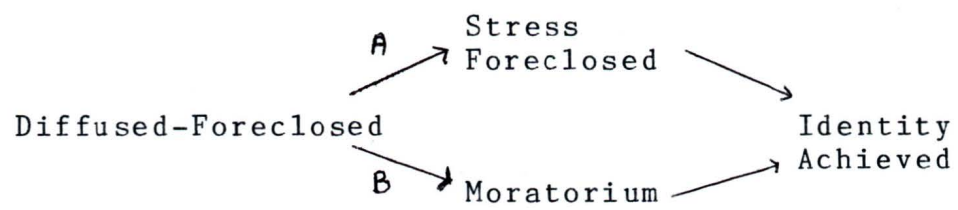


Figure 3. Identity Formation Process Pathways for Canadian Sikh Female Adolescents.

Identity Status Profiles

Four identity statuses emerged from the twenty subjects in their process of identity formation: Diffused, Foreclosed, Moratorium, and Stress Foreclosed. None of the girls in the study were Identity Achieved. Both the Sikh and Non-Sikh groups had Diffused and Foreclosed members. Only the Non-Sikh group had Moratorium members and only the Sikh group, Stress Foreclosed individuals. Each of the four identity statuses is discussed to illustrate the unique ways in which issues involving identity formation were resolved.

a) Diffused

The briefest interviews were held with the Diffused girls mainly because they had the most difficulty formulating self descriptors and many of the responses were simply, "I don't know." There was an overall tone in the interview of either apathy or hyperactivity where the girl responded with a flight of ideas that were unrelated. The girls were ambiguous about themselves and their direction in life. Their identity was largely defined by others. Whoever they were associating with facilitated the parameters for who they were at that point in time. They perceived themselves as having little impact on others in their life.

Decision making was difficult for the girls and was generally avoided. They let others make decisions for them, feeling they had little control over their life. They relinquished their life's direction to time, which would resolve issues for them simply by living it from day to day. Responsibility was considered a restraint and so was shunned. Their greatest desire seemed to be obtaining the freedom to have a good time; one lived for the moment.

All the girls in the study tended to have an unrealistic view of the world which may have been due to a lack of life experience. The Diffused girls' perceptions were exceptionally so. They lacked foresight and showed little ability to consider the implications of their actions.

One got the impression from talking with these girls that they had no open discussions with their parents. Their parents were described in one of two ways: apathetic and non-committal or extremely rigid. Non-committal parents gave no guidance to the girls and the girls had no idea what their parents' views on issues would be. Girls of rigid parenting resisted parental authority and advice, yet they were incapable of formulating alternative actions for themselves.

Occupationally, the girls showed little enthusiasm and ambition about what they planned to do

after Grade 12 or they had many different ideas that were superficially considered. They showed little commitment to any career choice and would willingly switch to a number of unrelated occupational suggestions.

I think I'll go to Camosun and get into secretarial. Not much appeals to me about it but I like typing. Typing's easy but kind of boring; it's o.k. There's not really anything else I can think of to do. I'll try to work it out (what I'll do) but it's kind of hard so I don't worry about it Mom doesn't say anything or suggest anything Dad just goes along with whatever, same as Mom.

I want to be a commercial airline pilot. I just like flying. I basically want to travel that's what I want to do. I don't want a job. I plan to travel for a year on my own after Grade 12 I also thought about being a policewoman, it'd be exciting I plan to open my own business one day too. (What about an architect?) Ya sure or maybe I'll be an engineer My parents haven't said anything. I can do what I want.

The Diffused girls did not have have a religious ideology. At most they expressed a belief in God, mainly because from the time they were children their parents informed them God existed. They were apathetic about religion or else very resistant to it because their parents forced it on them.

I hate my religion I don't have any ideas about God. My parents make me go to the temple. I don't understand any of it. I just sit there and talk; it's (religion) stupid.

I don't have any religious ideas. It's not important to me at all. I believe there's a God. I've believed that all my

life - I got that from my parents when I was a little girl. but I don't think about religion at all.

Politically the girls felt they had no influence over issues so they saw no reason to become involved or think about political issues. They were unsure what their parents' political views were. There was no interest in learning about political issues and for the most part politics and social issues were of no importance in their lives.

I don't have any political ideas or social ideas. I don't find it interesting. I can't do anything about it anyway.

I have no political ideas at all. I don't understand it at all. My parents tried to explain it but I don't understand I think my parents vote but I don't know how.

There was a superficiality about how the girls described what characteristics they like in a friend. "Nice," "fun to be with," "they just want to have a good time," were common descriptors of their friends. The relationship itself was also superficial. There was little pain expressed for lost friendships and friends seemed to be considered a commodity that was always replaceable. The number of friends one had was more important than the quality of the friendship.

If a friend changed I'd back out or find more friends. That's not a problem. I don't worry about having no friends. I'll have friends all the time.

I like friends who are fun-loving, don't let things get to them and will go out and have a good time and worry about it later. That's about all.

If they (friends) were acting really snobby, I'd say "forget it." I'd either be nice and say "hi," and if they ever wanted to talk, o.k., but I'm not going to say they're my friend if they're not nice to me. It's really up to them.


The Diffused girls had difficulty talking about themselves in their roles as women. They superficially cited advantages and disadvantages of their female role but usually in terms of how they felt others judged women rather than the advantages and disadvantages they had experienced themselves as females.

Girls get asked out. Girls can wear fancy clothes, even though I can't. Women don't have to do so much work. People think women are weaker.

They were not committed to their role of a woman and seemed flexible to choose either being a boy or a girl. They were unable to say why.

Umm, I guess I'd choose to be a guy. I've always wanted to be a guy. They get everything they want. I'm glad I'm a girl though. (Why?) Cuz I just wouldn't want to be a guy.

The girls claimed they learned their role from their friends. As their friends changed so did the girls' ideas about being a girl.

I guess I learned (about being a girl) from other kids. Depends on who you hang around with. Like I also changed friends. 

Some kids you used to be best friends with and then you drift apart and make new friends and they influence you. That's what happened to me My mom didn't influence me (about being a girl), mainly my friends.

Their uncertainty about the control they had over their lives extended into their perceptions of their future role as a woman. They assumed their ideas would change about who they were as females because everything changed.

I suppose my ideas will change. Everything's always changing so probably there will be changes. (How?) I don't know.

The Sikh girls in the Diffused status perceived limitations in their roles as females only if there was an unresolved issue in their lives at present, otherwise it was not an issue. This was different from other Sikh girls who either fully accepted their role or bitterly opposed the limitations the role placed on them.

My parents hated when I wanted to play soccer cuz I'd be gone till 5 (p.m.). My brother has been playing for two years and they don't say anything to him. I just said, "who cares." I play sports at school and I'll stick to that.

The Diffused girls started dating at 13-14 years of age, which was the youngest any of the girls in the study began dating. The Sikh girls dated without their parent's consent and were aware their parents would be upset if they knew. They were ambivalent to

the consequences of being caught and claimed they'd deal with it if and when it occurred.

Qualities looked for in a date were: nice, cute and easy going. If they had any standards at all when dating it was not to get too emotionally close.

All the Diffused girls thought they would get married and have children but were unsure when. The Sikh girls were aware they would have an arranged marriage and had resigned themselves to the fact or claimed they would resist it but had not clearly thought of the consequences of their actions.

Mom's got all these guys lined up. My father'll check out the guy and make sure he's o.k. and his family's o.k. I think it's stupid, but

I'll run away (when they arrange my marriage) I'll go anywhere. My boyfriend will go with me ... We'll go to Montreal. It's nice. We saw pictures of it in east Indian movies I won't be able to come home to visit. I'll have to see my mom in secret. I won't see my dad again. I can live with that, I don't talk to him much now.

The girls were unable to describe their role as wife or what their married life would be like.

I don't want to be stuck with all the dishes. It'll be good (role as wife). It'll be nice (married life).

The girls seemed unaware of their parents' relationship and so had difficulty considering if they would like a similar married relationship.

I don't know (if I'd like a relationship like my parents). I don't think they talk a lot. I'd want to talk to my husband.

They were adamant about parenting differently than their parents and claimed they would talk to their children much more.

The girls lacked the ability to project what their life would be like in the future when they considered being a wife, mother and possibly working.

Don't know. I'm stumped.

It'll be difficult, ummm. I'll spend time with my children and free time with myself. I'll work.

b) Foreclosed

There was enthusiastic thoroughness in the approach used by the Foreclosed girls in their self descriptions. They were confident, keen and very decided on their life's direction. One of the more remarkable themes was their unrelinquishing faithfulness to their parents. Their parents were seen as strong, wise mentors whom they looked to for absolute guidance in their own life's quest. They had a very clear idea of what their parents' opinions were on issues. All decisions were made with the consciousness that it would be in agreement with their parents' views on the matter. At the same time, they disagreed that their parents would influence them to do anything they did not want to implying the

importance that harmony existed at all times in the parent-child relationship. At worst these girls appeared enmeshed with their parents, as seen in one girl's statement, "What I think is what they (my parents) think."

Abiding by rules and fairness were the guidelines⁴ Foreclosed girls lived their lives by. Essentially they strove to behave as good girls should. One got the feeling when talking to these girls that if the rules were nullified they would be completely lost. Questioning seemed to be considered synonymous with disrespect and so was avoided.

Parental approval was one of the most significant referents for which the girls evaluated their identity and self worth, unlike the other statuses where peers were particularly important. The girls had a very strong bond with one parent, usually their mother. The overall tone of the Foreclosed girls' replies is summarized by one girl's statement about her relationship with her parents:

My parents mean a lot to me so I don't do anything that would make them ashamed of me. I try really hard in school for good marks and I always try to please them anyway I can.

There was little question in the Foreclosed girls' mind about occupational goals. Many made career choices several years ago. The occupational

choice was often something their parents had always wanted them to enter into or it carried a great deal of approval from the parents. It was not unusual that the parent was as actively involved in the girl's career search as the girl herself.

I've decided to be a secretary. I've talked to my mom about it. She's always been the secretary type. She says, "Oh it's what I did and I always wanted my daughter to take after me." They're (mother and father) both really supportive of me. We went to Camosun and B.C.I.T. to get pamphlets about it I'd probably be down on myself, ashamed of myself if I did something (occupationally) they didn't like ... They say it's up to me though, they'd never push me.

I plan to go to College next year to take Nursing. I decided two years ago. My parents think it's great - go for it! I was thinking of taking Law but it's too far away from home to go to school and it would cost my parents too much money. We talked about it They go along with my ideas (of nursing) We'll be going to Camosun to get calendars about it.

The Foreclosed girls, of all the statuses, were the most articulate about Politics, Social Issues and Religion and seemed to have committed ideas regarding these issues. There seemed to have been consideration given to the statements they made until they were asked to expand on the idea they presented. At that point they were lost. The origin of these ideas was usually with their parents and they were mainly parroting back what they had heard their parents say.

about the issue in question. The level of involvement they had in Religion and Politics was the same as their parents. If her parents were religious or politically active, so was she.

My parents are N.D.P. I follow the N.D.P. They have a lot of good ideas but it's unfortunate they can't be the opposition and try them out I'm not too impressed with the other two parties. (Why?) Well, they just don't appeal to me, ah ... we haven't heard much from Mulroney yet My parents think the same as me.

I'm N.D.P. I don't like the Social Democrats who are for the rich people. The N.D.P. is for everybody. Their beliefs are more like the middle, they're not for the rich and not for the poor. That's why our family decided to go N.D.P.

I respect my religion a lot. I go by the rules my parents have laid out for me and I never try to break them, I never have. It's really important for me to do what is expected of me in my religion as a Sikh I've never questioned my religion, I've always respected it I go to the temple with my parents. If they don't go I don't go. (Going to the temple) relaxes my mind. I don't think about anything but praying; nothing else enters my mind ... that's mostly what I get from it.

The highjackings that are going on bother me. People don't treat people like they should. Some people think they're better than others. It amazes me that no one can get along when it's so easy. They just have to talk directly to one another - they should say what they want and make compromises. If everyone sees both sides then it can be worked out I learned this from the atmosphere I grew up in. My mom always said why, not just "you can't." We tell each other the reason for something and then we come to an agreement.

A friendship was very important to Foreclosed girls. They usually had one close friend who was seen as very similar to themselves. They had firm ideas about important characteristics a friend should possess. It was important for their friends to maintain these characteristics and not change. Each was committed to her friend as long as the friend was committed to her and her family's way of thinking. There was a tone of intolerance to a friend being different from themselves and if differences arose in the friendship it was interpreted as betrayal or that the friend was being led astray. The girl would then take on the role of guider and protector and try to convert her friend back to the "correct" way to think and behave. The friendship would otherwise end or at best she'd be available to her friend if her friend wanted to talk.

< I don't know what I'd do (if my friend changed). We really trust one another. But if she did I'd try to talk to her, she might be having family problems. If nothing happened the friendship could
< break.

It was hard for the girls to imagine that their parents might not like a friend they had chosen, but if they didn't, the girls felt it could be settled by discussing it with their parents. If that failed the friendship would probably disintegrate. X

My parents like my friend I'd talk about it with them (if they didn't). But if they had a really good reason I'd talk to the friend and say, "Look, my parents feel this way," and if she couldn't apologize to them I'd just have to say, "Well we'll just have to put it (friendship) on hold for now," until she changed.

Although the girls saw a few disadvantages to being female, there was a commitment that they liked being a girl. They couldn't imagine themselves as a boy and would never consider it. They credited their mothers for teaching them about being a woman and seemed accepting and comfortable with their sex role. They had chosen a role like their mother's role of a woman, only with minor changes: fewer children, more time before marriage and, for the Sikh girls, a chance to talk with their husband prior to their arranged marriage. The Sikh Foreclosed girls were very accepting of the traditional female role they were expected to take on.

The characteristics the Foreclosed girls wanted in the person they dated were as well defined and adhered to as the characteristics they defined for their female friends. They had unwritten standards they followed when on a date that were in accordance with what their parents' standards would be.

I don't stay out late. My parents don't have a curfew, but I know they don't want me to be late. I just use my head and think, if I was a mother when would I want

my daughter home. If I said, "Can I be out till one o'clock," I know she'd say no. How'd you feel then as a parent if your daughter said I'm coming home at one?

Parental approval for the boy they dated was important.

If they disapproved of my boyfriend, I'd be really angry because I felt they didn't trust me. But I wouldn't ever go out with someone behind their backs.

The Sikh Foreclosed girls either felt dating was inappropriate and had no interest in participating or they felt it was alright but understood it was not approved of and chose not to go out against their parents' wishes.

I think dating is o.k., but then I understand (why I can't). I can wait till I'm married.

Even though the Sikh girls did not date they could identify easily the characteristics they and their parents would want in a boy that they would go out with, which may imply they'd like to have participated in dating but denied the desire for the desire to please their parents was greater.

There was no question in the Foreclosed girls' minds about getting married or having children. It seemed they had always assumed this was going to be their life's path. They could easily describe what their married life would be like. For the Sikh girls, it was accepted their arranged marriage was done in

their best interest and they were prepared to abide by it.

I've never thought about it (my arranged marriage). I think it's proper. I've never questioned it.

An attitude existed amongst all the Foreclosed girls that she had a duty to obey and live up to parental expectations now and later will have a duty to fulfill her children and husband's needs. Fulfillment of those needs was her chosen purpose in life and largely defined her identity. She had difficulty defining her needs possibly because she was externally oriented.

It's important for me to be a good wife first, then a good mother and then good at my job. I'd try to be perfect at all of them.

The foreclosed girls aspired to have a marriage and parent just like their parents', largely because they saw their parents as being fair with one another and their children.

My parents talk out everything and they'll talk to us too if there's a major decision. My parent's marriage is the ideal marriage. I've always considered them the ideal couple and the ideal mom and dad.

I watch my parents. They have a very mutual relationship. They share housework and both bring home money and do what they want with it. It's a nice relationship and I want that.

c) Moratorium

There was an anxious and agitated overtone to the Moratorium girl's self descriptions. They were undecided about their life's direction, not because they were avoiding the issue but because they were totally involved with it and perceived so many possible alternatives. These decisions were important for them to make as soon as possible for until they did, they were aware they would feel uneasy. The pressure to make these decisions was largely self induced, which implied that these girls had developed a sense of responsibility for the way they wanted to be in the world and were taking actions to attain it. Many different people were looked to as referents; anyone who could give them insight into the issue they were resolving was seen as an asset. They appeared to be at the point where they were attempting to assimilate and make sense of a great deal of information. As a result, the girls appeared preoccupied and somewhat stressed. Although they were confused, they could articulate their thoughts and one felt confident that through the girls' ability to question and reason they would resolve the identity crisis they were in.

The girls perceived themselves in a state of personal change in which they were differentiating

themselves from others. They were able to explain the process and stated that they were actively exploring their values and beliefs or were just emerging from a phase where they had been involved in this.

My relationship with my mother and father is changing I'm feeling like it's really important to form a relationship with my mother. Last summer I realized if I relied on my dad he'd never let me develop into anything. He'd keep me in a shell away from people My mom and I are still leary of one another but I thought: my mother doesn't know me and sometime I'm going to want her opinion, a female opinion ... I think I made the move (to change the relationship).

I was very insecure (about who I am), and still am. I've had friends help me with this. I believed I was dumb, or weird. Something you have to think about is who you are and what you look like. If you haven't accepted it then do something about it. People won't accept you if you won't accept you. In some areas I've worked this out but not all.

My ideas are so different from my parents or my friends. Sometimes I just feel like I want to pack up and take off, just to find ME. But I don't. I think about how that would affect my parents (if I left).

Each girl had considered several different occupations which were in keeping with her interests and capabilities. She had looked into the responsibilities of each career possibility. Some had done volunteer or part-time work in the field of interest. Adults and friends presently in the aspired to career, parents, friends at school, or the Choices Program were all sources utilized to aid in their

career choice. There remained anxiety that their decision was still not made.

That's hard (to decide on a career) because there's so many. I thought of being a stewardess, or a counsellor or a police person. It's hard cuz you really don't know. I did Choices and that's what it came out to (the choices she mentioned), plus some others but I wasn't interested in them much I work at the Saanich police with Operation Knock Out ... It (police work) seemed like a good job I want to decide now so I can get the education for it and not have to come back after Grade 12 and take courses I haven't taken but need to get in Before you fill out your course form in Grade 12 it would be good to go into a place for even a few days to see how the job is. It gives the teenagers an idea of what they need to have, what courses they need.

Political and Social Issues were considered in terms of how they were affected by these issues personally. There was depth to the thought they held on these issues. They lacked a commitment to any one ideology but were aware of the many views people held.

Nuclear war concerns me a lot. I look at the girl who went to Russia. She did a good thing but I don't know if it got anywhere. It worries me a lot and my friends. I talk with my friends. Some rush their lives - marriage, pregnancy, cuz they don't think they have a life in front of them. Sometimes I think they're right, other times I think they've messed up their lives.

Moratorium girls were in the process of re-evaluating what characteristics were important to them in a friend. They had a variety of friends and

were looking to make new friends who could relate to the changed way they saw themselves viewing the world.

This summer I spent time alone and met new people on my own and got more of an idea of what I wanted in people. I came home with more of a cleared head. I got rid of all the people that were nothing but a dark shadow over me and I started working on some new friendships.

The girls were not totally accepting of their role as a female. They identified advantages and were actively involved with trying to overcome the disadvantages they saw with the role.

Sometimes I'd like to be a guy. There's no discrimination with a guy. There's sexual discrimination against women from the coach on the boy's basketball team. I fought a lot with him. He thought women were good for just sex and babies He didn't respect what I knew about coaching. Guys at school think that way too.

Women can bear children and men can't, but then again it's your problem to prevent it. No one else can take that responsibility (for Birth Control). The history of women's role is that they're soft. I'd like to see that role change. I think I have more endurance than some guys.

Moratorium girls were cognizant that they learned their role of female from a number of different female role models and that they paid more attention to some females who had traits they wanted to acquire.

My sister's friend influenced me a lot. She cared what she looked like and I liked how she acted. My older sister influenced me too, but not as much.

Moratorium girls were active in dating. They had gone out with a variety of different males and could see advantages to the dating process in terms of their personal growth. The girls were able to make a commitment, for the time being, to a relationship they felt was important to them but they did not want to get "tied down" at this point, usually because they felt there were so many "interesting" people in the world yet to meet. The girls' values and beliefs were in a state of transition and so were their ideas of what were important characteristics in a relationship. This may have attributed to the difficulty they had in making long term relationship commitments.

I don't want to meet someone now and get married cuz that would cancel out anyone I could meet in the future. Dating is more socially important ... it gives you experience that you'll probably need later. When I don't have a boyfriend I think about having one and when I have one I feel like I'm strangled. I don't want to have to see him all the time; I need time on my own too.

Moratorium girls believed marriage was a very important and permanent commitment that they would eventually make. They could see many advantages and disadvantages to marriage and parenting which made these decisions almost frightening to them. They saw themselves maintaining a career after marriage and stressed the importance that they wanted a 50/50 sharing of household tasks and finances. Ironically

they saw themselves as the primary caregiver to the children and it was they who would interrupt their career to be with the children until the children were 2 to 3 years of age and then maintain a career as well as roles of wife and mother. There was no question of the husband staying at home with the children. This seemed to fit the omnipotent, high achiever attitude these girls had about their abilities to do whatever they put their minds to.

I believe marriage is permanent - "till death do us part." I've done a lot of thinking about it and as I've gotten older the desire to marry has lessened. I really don't want to rush into it. I plan to be a career woman and work when I'm married. I don't want to have kids till I'm firmly established in a career, I've done everything I want, and I feel I can support them. I don't want my kids to have just a mother or a father ... something I've watched a lot of my friends go through. They have divorced parents or are illegitimate and it really affects them. I don't think kids should go through that I won't give up my career with kids. I'll take some time off and go back to work when they're a bit older. Kids aren't something I think about now, I have enough to worry about.

d) Stress Foreclosed

It was painful listening to these girls talk of their lives. The overriding theme was a recognition on the girls' part of what could be possible in their lives but an awareness that, no matter what, they'd never be able to even test it out, for someone else controlled their decision making and hence their

lives' paths. The resulting stress made the girls appear undecided and anxious. It was a different tension than the Moratorium girls displayed, for the Moratoriums recognized if they explored enough options they'd arrive at a place that was comfortable and defined by themselves. The Stress Foreclosed girls also were aware of the opportunities the world around them offered but lacked the opportunity to explore and make decisions about it. When given a hypothetical situation they showed the ability to form opinions and independently make decisions after considering parental, peer and society's views on the subject. Their tension was focused on relinquishing the self control involved in the process of deciding who they were and how they'd live. ✎

The girl's mother was a key referent in the girl's identity process. She was seen as someone who had adapted to the cultural female roles the girl was in the midst of struggling with. Her mother was supportive and empathic toward the girl's recognition that her life was formerly decided by the girl's father and she would now have to accept the decisions her husband would make for her. A fear emerged from this as well, for the girl was aware that the supportive link with her mother would be

discontinued once the girl married and moved in with her in-laws.

The girls' perception of the future was nebulous for it largely depended on who she'd marry as the husband would make decisions for both of their lives. For many Sikh girls this may be an acceptable way of being in the world. They may find it reassuring that they will be taken care of and that another knows what's best for them. The Stress Foreclosed girls did not perceive this way of life as acceptable and greatly resisted participating. The resistance was largely internal for she was also aware that the social system she was living within was much too strong to fight against. She therefore complied with parental ideals and her overt behavior presented very similar to Foreclosed girls. The difference was lack of acceptance of her way of life and the peace of mind the Foreclosed girls had.

The Stress Foreclosed girls had less communication with their fathers than their mothers, yet they had very clear ideas of what both their parents' values, beliefs, ideologies and expectations for them were.

The first priority the girls had in choosing an occupation was ensuring it met with parental approval; second it must be something they enjoyed and would be


good at. Anxiety ensued when the two priorities did not coincide. The girls appeared indecisive for they were struggling with giving up some things they'd like to do as well as try to make a decision with a perceived limited number of options remaining.

I'll have to find the category (of job) that I can do that is the best thing for me; that I'm good at. A person knows what they're good at as they grow up. I'm an athletic person I have to do something decent—not model, stewardess or be a singer. I have to keep my parents happy ... I don't see what's wrong with being a model, but they (parents) wouldn't like the idea and wouldn't let me do it.

My parents want me to be a secretary. They bought me a typewriter so I could improve my speed, so ... I think I can do it if I put my mind to it.

Great anxiety was expressed when they perceived they had little choice in their life after grade 12.

After Grade 12 I have to make a choice—either go to school and take some courses or sit back and see how my parents are playing this. I don't have to get married if I go to school. It's an excuse we (Sikh girls) have to put it (marriage) off. You don't know what's going through your parent's minds for you. This year seems like this is it. School's over and it just feels like you're walking into nothing. It feels so strange cuz every year you just know you're going to go to school next year, but for us (Sikhs) it's just: either marriage or school. You don't have a choice. I've always loved kids. I'd like to work in a daycare or something. But I always say to my friends: "Guys this is it. You can play around in a circle of avoiding marriage by going to school but you know that's going to end ... it always ends in marriage."



The girls had knowledge of their Sikh religion and agreed with much of the religion's ideology. They'd questioned aspects of it and there were parts of it they did not agree with, mainly in regards to the inequality between males and females. Although they realized there were aspects they disagreed with, they felt they had little control in modifying their religious beliefs and behaviors to coincide with their religious ideology.

I belong to the Sikh religion. I do believe in it, but I don't really. I think it's too much. I believe in the superstitions that the religion believes in. I believe in the East Indian God. To East Indians it's very important to have a boy. It's more important than to have a girl. I think it's stupid. A girl can turn out to be just as good as a boy. It wouldn't matter to me if I had a boy or a girl. Boys also have more freedom, which isn't fair There are times you just want to forget everything (about religion), but it always comes back to you. If your parents are religious it's always going to be there, you can't change your views.

The Stress Foreclosed girls claimed politics and political issues were unimportant to them, however, they voiced very strong views on the political situation in the Punjab between the Sikhs and Hindus. Their opinions were arrived at independent of their parents' views and were not always in agreement with their parents' opinions.

I don't agree at all with the fighting in India. They could have settled it differently than killing everybody. The leaders of each religion could talk it out with the government instead of fighting it out. When they killed Indira Ghandi, the Prime Minister, my parents said kinda good cuz she didn't treat the people fairly, but I think that was kinda stupid cuz that's what started it all But since we are Sikhs, of course they (my parents) were on the side of the Sikhs. I don't think the fighting should be going on. The government should do something.

When the Prime Minister died it was stupid how they (the Sikhs in B.C.) reacted. They looked like a bunch of fools. They should go back to their own country if they care that much. Living in these countries has made me change a lot of my ideas. I think if they (Sikhs) want to live in these countries they should go by them (customs, etc.) This is my statement, I'm not sure what my parents' think. They do keep the Sikh customs though and so I have to.

Friends were very important to the Stress Foreclosed girls. Her close friends were not necessarily East Indian, however, it was essential that her friends understood the limitations placed on her ability to participate with them in social events, and still accept her as their friend. They seemed to be the supportive link between the two cultures the girl was trying to live between.

It's very important to me to have friends. I wouldn't be able to live without them. I'm not allowed to do all the stuff they are, but that doesn't affect our friendship. I get support form my friends. They listen to my problems. I've told them what it's like to be an East Indian. They tell me, "It's o.k. We

know what it's like to you." ... when I want to do something and I'm not allowed to do it, it really bugs me. How come they're (Non-Sikh girls) allowed to do it and I'm not? You want to make new friends cuz you want to do things with them, and you're not allowed - it's a real drag. For some reason my parents just don't understand. They don't see it the same way I do. You're a girl and that's all there is to it. It's important my friends understand. It kind of pushes you and keeps you going.

The highest anxiety was expressed by the girls in relation to issues around their role as a woman. They perceived the role as a complex and difficult one to fulfill because of the large numbers of responsibilities and the restrictions placed on them preventing them from becoming who they wanted to be. They were aware of the overt rules defining the female role in their culture. They had either been actively taught them or they learned them through observing their mother. The anxiety was particularly acute, for the girls felt there was little they could do about it. All the girls wanted to be boys rather than girls for they believed they would then have the freedom to explore various options in life.

I think it "sucks" being a woman in East Indian society. It's a total drag. You have to listen to your parents. I don't mind listening to my parents as long as they let me do things. I just don't think it's fair that I get treated different than say if I had an older brother. I think everyone should be treated fairly, not different just cuz you're a girl. As a girl you have to do what your parents

want yet you want to do what your friends do and what you want for yourself - but you still have to listen to your parents and that gets in the way a lot. Always having to do what your parents want you to do really affects the way you are. They want you to be really good. They want something that will affect their reputation and make their reputation better. They think they want what's good for you but you know what they want isn't always good for you cuz you want to do things on your own and you want to do what you want and you can't. It makes me feel just AWFUL! You want to do things this way but your parents tell you you have to do it that way so you just decide to do it their way. You don't really want to deep down inside. I would rather be a boy, at least they have the freedom to decide As you get older there are more restrictions placed on you. I learned a lot of the role from my mother. She listens to my dad. She HAS to listen to my dad cuz it's her husband. So I learned you have to be obedient to your dad and husband. You have to listen to your parents. I usually listen to my parents. I don't know what they worry about. I keep my grades up and would do nothing to hurt them. I'm a normal kid but they don't think like that. I just want to do the things I want and be my own self ... but it all depends on what kind of family you have or get married into.

I spend a lot of time thinking about my role as a woman. It's such a big role you have to play. So many ups and downs. It all depends on your parents and the way they brought you up. You're told what's expected of you. It's as clear as daylight. You have to know how to cook and sew. It's expected of you. What if you don't like to cook and sew? They (in-laws) say, "Ah, your mother didn't teach you anything." I don't like it. They're putting down your mother., It's not my mother it's me, but I have to learn for the family's reputation. There are so many restrictions to being a girl. You know your mind's made up for you. You're

afraid to ask sometime: "Can I do this?" cuz you know they'll say no. Sometimes you try anyway and sometimes they say yes and surprise you. Sometimes I just go into a depression. Life just brings me down. I really want to be a boy in my next life. They have more freedom.

The girls are aware they are not allowed to date, although they all think it is a legitimate thing to do. They cope with the restriction by either fantasizing what it would be like if they had the chance to participate in it or they actually take the risk and date without their parents' knowledge. The latter assumed the full responsibility for any hurt or punishment they would incur for they accepted they had broken the cultural rules.

I think dating is fine. I'm not allowed, that's all. I think a lot about what it would be like if I was allowed to go out. I dream about it. I like this guy but I'd never be able to go out with him. I wouldn't go behind my parents' back just to get my whole life down the drain. If you date you get a bad reputation and it makes it very hard for your parents to find you a husband. I think I'll always wish dating was allowed.

I don't like the woman's role in our society. You know the woman's role as you're growing up. If you want to go and choose those painful things (a boyfriend) that's up to you. You're warned ahead of time you can't choose who you want to marry. It's your own fault if you get hurt ... but sometimes you just can't help it. My boyfriend was the most important thing in my life. My parents took him away. No matter what they gave me now it's not good enough. They couldn't give me what I wanted. There's nothing I can do. I wish there was, I really do.

The Stress Foreclosed subjects had the most realistic expectations of marriage of all of the girls in the study. The "happily ever after" theme so apparent in other girls' descriptions of their married life was non-existent with these girls. They could perceive themselves in a married role but the details were unclear because so much of their future life style was dependent on their husbands, who they may not see or speak to prior to their wedding. Marriage, to these girls, was an obligation not a choice and on the whole a very anxiety provoking event in their life.

Marriage is on my mind a lot. I always think about it. I don't have any say or control in it. I'll be married in the next two years for sure. I wouldn't be surprised if it was 1986. My marriage will be arranged that's for sure. It's scary. You have to get along with that person and their family and you don't even know what they're like. It's a brand new life for an East Indian girl when she gets married. She has to watch her language and can't act like a little kid. You have no choice if you like it or not, you have to do it. What scares me too is the society (Sikh). People will be spitting on your face if anything goes wrong. A person has a hard enough time as it is and people make it harder. If I did marry a guy I wanted and we got a divorce, no one would be there to help me out. I'd be all on my own ... I just hope it (my marriage) turns out the best for me and my family.

Single life is better than being married. There's nothing much I can do. My single life is coming to an end. I have to accept it as planned. I can accept it but it'll take time. It'll be hard. After

you're married your husband is over you. Before it was your parents. You KNOW that. If there's a big family and you're the youngest, you're expected to get up first and do all the cooking and washing - it's all day long. You're the last one to go to sleep. Life is hard. I just can't picture myself in that position. I don't know how long I can handle it.

You don't get introduced to your husband. You see him and you might talk to him and you might not. It depends if you're lucky or not. You just get married and you're supposed to be happy. I think it's stupid cuz you may not even like the person. You might not get along. I'll do it the way my parents want me to though. It'd ruin my parents' reputation if I just went off and eloped. I wouldn't want to hurt my parents in any way. If I had my way I'd choose someone I wanted not just someone out of the blue.

The Stress Foreclosed girls wanted children, but were unclear about their roles as parents, again because it depended on the family situation they would marry into and the number of children their husbands would want to have. They were definite about wanting to have children and would raise their children with more freedom of choice than they had as children. Although they were still aware they were responsible to their husbands, there was a sense amongst the girls that motherhood would be a time when at last they had some decision making powers.

I'd like a family cuz I love kids. If you're East Indian you live with your mother-in-law. I don't want to live with my in-laws, but I don't have much choice in that. I will raise my children

differently than I was raised. I'm going to let my kids do things I couldn't. I'll let them be who they want, not what I want them to be.

Themes of the Identity Process

Several themes about the identity formation process were evident from the Identity Status Interview; some expressed were similar for the Sikh and Non-Sikh groups of girls, whilst others were unique to each cultural group.

The eight areas of the interview are discussed in relation to how identity issues were resolved by the two groups of subjects. The final part of the interview involved a discussion of what the girls perceived as significant issues Sikh and Non-Sikh girls had to resolve in adolescence. A discussion of these findings concludes this section.

a) Occupation

All subjects were cognizant that a major decision had to be made regarding what they would do after Grade 12. There was a tone of urgency in making this decision. Girls who were undecided felt they would decide by the end of Grade 12 or at least during the first year after graduation.

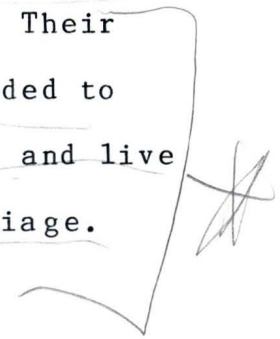
Both Sikh and Non-Sikh girls claimed parents were the most frequently consulted to help them with their decision making. Each girl reported her parents encouraged her to choose an occupation she would be happy in. With the Sikh girls, however, there was an understanding that the final career choice must obtain

the approval of the parents. Two of the Sikh girls saw their parents making the final occupational decision for them and a third Sikh girl's parents chose her occupation for her entirely. If the Sikh girl felt her parents were too restrictive in the career choice, the girl saw her marriage as a way to obtain the freedom to choose what she wanted to do as it was now her husband who she must consult with and it was felt he would be more flexible.

Occupation was seen by both groups as what they would "do" rather than what they wanted to "be." Activities they perceived they would do in their occupational choice were often vague or unrealistic likely due to the lack of life experience they had had outside the school system.

Important characteristics of a job according to both groups were that it involved working with people, it included doing something they were good at, it was fun or exciting, it involved travel and it would be a viable occupation in the current job market.

Amongst the Non-Sikh girls there was an anticipation that the completion of Grade 12 indicated they could now "start to live and have fun." Their occupation would give them the money they needed to afford them the opportunity to be independent and live on their own for a period of time before marriage.



Their occupation was viewed by most as something to fall back on if they chose to return to the work force after the children they intended to have were older. (Most refers to 6 or more of the 10 subjects in each group expressed a particular theme).

In contrast, the Sikh girls viewed their occupation as the next expected step prior to their marriage. The end of school marked the end of a freedom period in their life for they now moved into the adult world which was viewed to include many responsibilities they must fulfill. Most of the Sikh girls expected they would work at their occupation throughout their married life.

b) Religion

There was apathy amongst the Non-Sikh girls regarding religion. They believed in God but had few other religious beliefs. They claimed religion was a personal decision and if people wanted to follow a particular religion it was up to them. Their involvement with religion and the church reflected their parents' involvement. In the present study, church was seldom attended by the Non-Sikh girls and if attended at all it was visited only on special occasions such as Christmas or Easter Services.

Religion to the Sikh girls was seen more as a way of life than spiritual. Their responses to their

religious beliefs was in terms of how many of the Sikh traditions they agreed with or participated in. Most felt their parents were much more religious than themselves. They stated they respected their parents' religious choices but resented being forced to accept it. Most of the Sikh girls believed in God and some of the religious practices, particularly respect for parents. They disagreed with the constraints put on them in not being able to make decisions about their life and claimed the Sikh religious practices did not fit the Canadian culture they now lived in. All attended the temple as frequently as their parents. Most did not understand the religious protocol of the service and felt its greatest value was visiting with other women.

c) Politics

Both Sikh and Non-Sikh girls stated they had little or no interest or knowledge in politics. Most, however, suggested social issues that were of concern to them. Nuclear war, educational cutbacks and unemployment were cited by most. The Sikh girls talked of the political situation in India and stated they thought the conflict between the Hindus and Sikhs was "stupid."

Solutions to social issues was approached with a democratic attitude. All the girls felt that issues

should be talked out and settled fairly so everyone got what they wanted.

Most of the girls in both groups perceived their fathers to be politically active and their mothers apolitical, similar to themselves. Both groups of girls assumed their interest in politics would increase once they started working and were more affected by the decisions made by politicians.

d) Friendship

Both the Sikh and Non-Sikh girls felt their friends were extremely important to them. They described them as being very similar to themselves. Most of the Sikh girls had mainly Sikh friends. Only one of the Non-Sikh girls had a Sikh girlfriend. Of those who had a friend of the opposite cultural group (Sikh or Non-Sikh), the cultural difference was overlooked as a difference between them. One Sikh girl's description of her Non-Sikh girlfriend was that she was exactly the same as her and the only difference was their tempers.

Characteristics Non-Sikh girls looked for in a friend were a good sense of humor, happy, fun to be with and that they didn't use drugs. Sikh girls looked for someone who understood the restrictions that were placed on them regarding not being able to

go out and that their friends were easy to talk to and trustworthy.

Most of the girls were very firm that their parents did not interfere with who they chose as friends. They could describe what their parents would consider good qualities in a friend of theirs and many of their parents ideas were similar to their own.

Characteristics the Non-Sikh girls felt their parents would particularly want in a friend they had were that the friend did not use drugs or alcohol and they were polite. The Sikh girls claimed their parents wanted them to have friends who were quiet and reserved and did not use drugs or alcohol. They also claimed that their parents would want their friend to be Sikh, which was not stated by the girl to be an important characteristic in her friends.

Most of the Non-Sikh girls stated if their parents refused to let them see a friend they chose, they would defy the restriction and see the friend anyway. Three of the Sikh girls stated they would go along with their parents' wishes and no longer see the friend but it would be extremely difficult for them.

e) Female Role

The Non-Sikh girls felt they just naturally learned their female role. If there was any referent person they supposed it was their mother. The Sikh

girls felt they learned their female role actively from the time they were young through their mother and other females in the extended family who taught them the responsibilities that would be expected of them as women.

Most of the Non-Sikh girls could see no advantage in being a woman as opposed to being a male. They cited several disadvantages which had to do mostly with sexual discrimination: women can't get into some industrial jobs, they thought sexist remarks were made about women being the "weaker" sex or "dumber." If they were given the opportunity to choose between being a male or female, the majority of the Non-Sikh girls, however, chose to be a girl. This contradiction may be because the girls possibly have taken for granted advantages they think there are to being a woman and were unable or chose not to express them. The Sikh girls cited several advantages to being a woman mostly along the theme that the woman's role has progressed from a role of being subservient to women now having some say. Some statements the Sikh girls made were: "Women can now choose when to have children and are no longer blamed for not having a son." "Men understand that women will say what they think now." "Women now can have a career and are even active in politics." Disadvantages the Sikh girls

perceived were the restrictions placed on them: "You can't choose what you want for your life, it's planned for you." "You're over-protected and can't go out." "Men in our society (Sikh Society) are the authority who you must listen to."

Some of the Sikh girls stated they felt overwhelmed at the enormity of what was to be learned in a woman's role. This was not a concern for the Non-Sikh girls.

Half the Sikh girls stated they would choose to be a boy if they were given the opportunity, mostly due to the perceived freedom they felt boys had.

All the Sikh girls wanted a female role different from their mother's. Changes they wanted for themselves were that they had equal rights with their husbands, that they had some freedom to do some of the things they liked on their own. One Sikh girl stated: "I'd like to be trusted by my husband to go out without him sometimes; to join a club or something."

Half the Non-Sikh girls said a role like their mothers' would be fine for them provided they worked for a longer time before they started their family. If they wanted an entirely different role it was because they wished to work rather than be a full time homemaker.

Regardless of the anxiety over the restrictions the Sikh girls felt in their female role, most claimed they would try to adjust for if they "failed" to be an "acceptable female" their parents' reputation as a good parent would be in question. The girls felt such a judgement was very unfair of their parents but accepted it existed and stated they would avoid damaging their family's reputation at all costs. Amongst the Non-Sikh girls there was no consideration that their behavior affected their parents' reputation in any way.

f) Dating

All the girls in the study but one Sikh girl felt dating was an important and valuable experience in their growing up. All the Non-Sikh girls participated in dating. Most of the Sikh girls did not date as they understood their parents didn't allow it and they did not want to date without their parents' knowledge. Sikh girls who dated did so secretly. They were aware of the risk they were taking and were willing to take the responsibility for the consequences of severe punishment if they were caught. They considered this fair for they had been told since they were young girls dating was not acceptable. They accepted if they got hurt it was their own fault.

Of the Sikh girls who dated, two of their mothers were aware and tended to play an ally role with their daughter by keeping it secret from the girl's father.

It was quickly pointed out by the Non-Sikh girls that one does not "date" anymore. A girl just goes out and does things together with a boy. Whether to go out with a boy or not was not an issue for Non-Sikh girls, there was merely a question as to when it was appropriate to start. They felt 14-16 years was an acceptable age to begin. Most, however, had begun dating younger than they claimed they thought all girls should begin.

Both groups of girls could identify characteristics they would like in a male they went out with. For the Non-Sikhs important characteristics were the ability to talk easily with him, that he had a nice personality, he "respects me," and is good looking. For the Sikh girls it was important that a boyfriend was kind, caring and understood her, he was good looking and could keep their dating a secret. (The last characteristic was stated by both girls who were dating and not dating). That the boy was of the same culture was not mentioned, but when asked all but one Sikh girl assumed they would date only East Indians. The Non-Sikh girls said they'd date a boy of

any culture provided he had the characteristics mentioned earlier.

The unwritten rules the girls had regarding dating were the same for both groups: "Don't get pushed into doing anything you don't want," and "if there's any sexual involvement at all, know the guy first."

g) Marriage, Parenting and Career Priorities

All the girls assumed they would marry. No one questioned the option of remaining single. The Non-Sikh girls did consider living together prior to marrying. All Non-Sikh girls expected they'd be married between 23 and 28 years of age.

All the Sikh girls understood they would have an arranged marriage and would be married by the time they were 22 years old. The majority resisted an arranged marriage but stated they would go along with it. Their choice would have been to choose their own husband. Many fears were expressed amongst the Sikh girls in regards to their arranged marriage. The predominant ones were: their husband will be a total stranger whom they may not even like, they must listen to their husband and change their ways to please him, they felt trapped as their husband's family would be the family they must live with for the rest of their life, and they feared the perceived power of their

future mother-in-law; could the girl live up to the expectations she had of her and would she be acceptable to her mother-in-law. There was anxiety about leaving their family of origin and they stated they hoped their husband would want to live in close enough proximity to maintain contact with particularly their mother.

The Non-Sikh girls regarded their marriage with nothing but optimism; they will fall in love, marry a man who will take care of them and make them happy for the rest of their life. Marriage had the overtone of being the beginning of something wonderful, albeit quite unrealistic. It was of interest that when the Sikh girls were asked to define what they would chose as an alternative to an arranged marriage, the descriptions were almost identical to those of the Non-Sikh girls' marriage ideals. One cannot help looking to the North American media as a significant influence in defining a marriage ideal that seems desirable cross culturally.

The significance of maintaining family ties throughout life appeared much greater for the Sikh girls than their Non-Sikh counterparts. Although some of the Sikh girls resisted the idea of an arranged marriage, they would participate not only out of respect for their parents, but also because if divorce

should occur, they could return to their family of origin for it was they who were responsible for the marriage arrangement and therefore supportive should it break down. This support would not be possible should the girl choose her own marriage and it failed for she would solely be responsible for her "poor choice" and the consequences of having made it.

Half the girls in both groups expressed a desire to have a marriage different than their parents' for the same reasons: they wanted to share decision making and wished to talk more to their husbands than they perceived their parents communicated.

The Non-Sikh girls described their role of wife as sharing an equal relationship with their husbands. Sikh girls also wanted to be equal with their husbands but emphasized they wished to be "there for him" if their husbands ever needed them. Both wanted their husbands to help with housework, be hard working and be caring towards them.

All the girls intended to have two or three children. Most of the Non-Sikh girls intended to work until the children were born, whereupon they'd quit or work part-time, be the primary caregiver to the child and assume most of the homemaking tasks. They'd return to work full time when the children began school. The majority of the Sikh girls saw themselves

working full time when they had children and their mother-in-law would assist in childcare. They would also be primarily responsible for housework.

From the girls' descriptors of wife and mother roles, "equal" seemed to be defined only in terms of equally sharing the housework with their husbands prior to them having children. Many inequitable aspects of their perceived equal relationship were overlooked. Most of the girls considered their husband would contribute the most money to the family and would not be obligated to share equally in childcare. No consideration was given to the option of the husband taking time off work to care for the children and she continue with her career. The girls in the study assumed they'd taken a liberal stance with marriage, parenting and career, however, their described lifestyle is very similar to what Archer (1985) coins as a "transitional" orientation some female adolescents of the '80's take to family and career. The transitional female fluctuates between being traditional and liberated. She is not comfortable with being traditional yet does not want to demonstrate the liberated orientation either. She may want primary responsibility for the children but insists that she is capable of keeping a career. The

result is a somewhat superhuman role ideal which is almost impossible to fulfill.

The Non-Sikh girls intended to use a parenting style much like their parents' with one change; they intended to try to understand and talk to their children more than they perceived their parents did with them. The Sikh girls said they'd parent like they were parented except they would give their children more freedom to make choices in their lives.

h) Issues for Sikh and Non-Sikh Adolescents to Resolve.

Both Sikh and Non-Sikh girls felt there were important issues all teenagers had to resolve as they went through adolescence. There was greater diversification in the items the Non-Sikh girls identified (see Table 3). Both groups identified gaining the trust of their parents as important and identified peer pressure as very significant, especially in the decisions they had to make as to whether to use alcohol and/or drugs. The Non-Sikh girls stated adolescents had to decide what to do after Grade 12, cope with unemployment, achieve good grades in school and resolve questions about "Who am I?" Although these may have been important issues for the Sikh girls, they did not mention them. This may be because the Sikh girl's role is culturally well

TABLE 3
 Issues For All Adolescents to Resolve:
 Percentages of Responses Given by Sikh
 and Non-Sikh Girls

Issue	Non-Sikh	Sikh
Peer pressure, especially in decision making re: use of drugs and alcohol	26% (6)	61% (8)
Gaining parental trust	9 (2)	16 (2)
Who should I choose as friends	- -	23 (3)
What do I do after Grade 12	9 (2)	- -
Achievement of good marks in school	13 (3)	- -
Unemployment after Grade 12	9 (2)	- -
Style of clothes to wear	9 (2)	- -
Boys	13 (3)	- -
Resolving "Who I am"	13 (3)	- -
TOTAL RESPONSES	22	13

Note: Bracketted numbers are number of responses.

N=20

defined and fewer issues are perceived to be a woman's responsibility to decide on.

Both groups thought that the Sikh girls had a more difficult time going through adolescence, in part because they don't have the opportunity to make decisions concerning their life's direction. Other unique issues both groups felt only the Sikh girls had to deal with were: adjusting to an arranged marriage, abiding by a culture that doesn't seem relevant to Canadian society, deciding whether to date without their parents' knowledge, and living up to their parents' expectations. Non-Sikh girls perceived the Sikh girls as having to cope with prejudice. This was not mentioned by any of the Sikh girls as a problem they felt they had to confront (see Table 4 & 5).

Both groups were asked to rate themselves on a Likert Scale (1-5) in terms of how contented they were in adolescence. (Contented refers to how "at peace" or resolved the girls perceived they were or others were with adolescence). They also rated how they perceived other teens of their same culture and teens in their counterpart culture, either Sikh or Non-Sikh.

The Non-Sikh girls rated themselves the highest ($X = 3.6$), the same culture teens second ($X = 3.5$) and the Sikh female adolescents third ($X = 3.0$). The Sikh girls rated the Non-Sikh girls highest ($X = 3.7$),

TABLE 4
 Perceptions of Sikh and Non-Sikh Girls
 To Adolescent Difficulties

Question	Response	Number Giving Response	
		Non-Sikh	Sikh
Does one group have a more difficult time going through adolescence?	Yes	8	8
	No	2	2
	TOTAL	10	10
If yes, which group has more difficulty?	Non-Sikh	1	1
	Sikh	7	7
	TOTAL	8	8

N=20

TABLE 5
Reasons for Sikhs Having a More Difficult
Time Going Through Adolescence

Responses	Non-Sikh		Sikh		Statements Made
	%	#	%	#	
Less freedom to make choices	25	(6)	32	(8)	"We have a choice, they don't; their life is laid out for them." (Non-Sikh) "Parents constantly watch girls. We can't wear fancy dresses or go out after school." (Sikh) "We know from the time we're young our life is planned for us." (Sikh) "Canadian girls can be single the rest of their life if they want - we can't." (Sikh)
Decide whether they will date behind their parents' back.	13	(3)	16	(4)	"They have to date secretly if they want to see guys ... they know how much trouble they're in if they get caught." (Non-Sikh)

TABLE 5 (Cont'd)

Responses	Non-Sikh		Sikh		Statements Made
	%	#	%	#	
					"I have to decide if I'll go against my parents & date or if I'll wait till I get married." (Sikh)
					"My parents don't know I date I just really hope I won't get caught - they'll "kill" me." (Sikh)
Adjust to an arranged marriage.	8	(2)	12	(3)	"It must be scary to think of marrying someone you don't know. I feel sorry for them." (Non-Sikh)
					"We don't have a choice. I have to get married to who they (my parents) choose." (Sikh)
					"I know the clock's ticking - after Grade 12 I HAVE to get married." (Sikh)
					"It's scary to think of having to live with someone the rest of your life who you might not even like." (Sikh)

TABLE 5 (Cont'd)

Responses	Non-Sikh		Sikh		Statements Made
	%	#	%	#	
Abiding by cultural practices that don't fit into Canadian society.	17	(4)	16	(4)	<p>"If they (Sikhs) want to wear turbans & Saris, why don't they go back to India - dress like a Canadian if you want to live here." (Sikh)</p> <p>"We watch Canadian kids doing things we can't just because of our religion." (Sikh)</p> <p>"They have to go along with customs that don't make sense in this country." (Non-Sikh)</p>
Sikhs have to live up to their parents' expectations.	17	(4)	24	(6)	<p>"If they go against their parents' wishes they have to face serious problems." (Non-Sikh)</p> <p>"In Canada parents treat kids good. We have to treat our parents good." (Sikh)</p>

TABLE 5 (Cont'd)

Responses	Non-Sikh		Sikh		Statements Made
	%	#	%	#	
Prejudice	21	(5)	-	-	"They have to put up with people calling them names like: "Paki"." (Non-Sikh) "They're treated different just because the colour of their skin is different." (Non-Sikh)
TOTAL RESPONSES:		24		25	
N=14		N=7		N=7	

themselves second ($X = 3.5$) and their same culture group third ($X = 3.0$) (see Table 6).

Some of the Sikh girls volunteered solutions which might lessen the anxiety of adjusting to their adolescence in Canadian Society. Their statements were as follows:

I don't want a total Canadian lifestyle, just have some choice like dating someone I like.

Parents should let their kid get their view of what she wants in life and then come to a compromise, not just the parents having the final say.

Kids should be able to talk to their parents about Canadian life. They should be their (their children's) friends not their enemies.

TABLE 6
 How Contented and Resolved Sikh and Non-Sikh
 Girls Felt About Adolescent Issues.

Respondent	Target Group	Number of Responses									Mean
		Rating									
		1	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	
Sikh n=9	Self			1		3	2	1	1	1	3.5
	Other Sikh Girls			1	2	3	1	2			3.0
	Non-Sikh Girls					4	1	2	1	1	3.7
Non-Sikh n=10	Self				3		2	3	2		3.6
	Other Non- Sikh Girls				3	1	2	2	1	1	3.5
	Sikh Girls	1	1	2	1	2	3				3.0

Note: One Sikh subject did not respond to the question.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Cultural values and beliefs were found to be significant in the identity formation process of the female adolescents in the present study. Expectations held by the Sikh culture for their female adolescents were different from the expectations held for the Non-Sikh females. These expectations influenced the way in which identity issues were resolved by the two groups of girls.

The Sikh adolescents had a clearly defined role they were expected to move into as they entered adulthood. Exploration, decision making, and independence were not encouraged. Identity was linked with the individual's family identity. Maintaining the family's honour was foremost in importance when any actions were taken by the individual. Self denial was learned as part of the identity process rather than self exploration.

In Canadian society, independence, taking responsibility, decision making and self exploration are valued and encouraged as part of an adolescent's development. The Non-Sikh subjects showed varying degrees of utilization of these skills as they approached identity issues. When they considered

alternatives in their identity process they were primarily "me" focused.

From a North American viewpoint, the Sikh female role may seem very oppressed. It must be noted that within the Indian society the male and female role distinctions have facilitated a society to function harmoniously for centuries. For the Sikh females in the present study who accepted their culture's role expectations for how they would live their life, there was not a conflict with their ideology of individual achievement and self fulfillment. They did not go through an exploration period and adopted predominantly their parents' ideologies. They were found to have a Foreclosed Identity Status. Although the majority (7 of the 10) of the Sikh girls scored Foreclosed, a variation in the Foreclosed Status was found. Three of the Sikh girls in the Foreclosed status experienced stress in adopting the role and lifestyle that was expected of them, which was a unique characteristic of the Foreclosed Status. These girls were struggling with reconciling differences between their Sikh culture and the dominant Canadian culture they now lived in. They were aware of the discrepancies in the two cultures' expectations of women and perceived their own culture as oppressive in their quest for identity. The anxiety these girls

experienced may have been due to the lack of solidarity they felt with either their own Sikh culture or the Canadian society. This finding is similar to Paranjpe's (1975) findings that if an individual lacks a feeling of solidarity with a group it can lead to feelings of alienation and subsequent anxiety. These girls attempted to resolve their anxiety by succumbing to their culture's expectations of them, for they perceived exploring and pursuing their choice of lifestyle meant possible alienation from their Sikh culture. This was too big a risk for them to take. Because they did adopt their parents' ideologies without actively exploring alternatives they were considered Foreclosed, according to Marcia's (1966) identity status definitions. However, due to the accompanying anxiety they experienced, a separate status was created to better describe their identity profile. It was labelled Stress Foreclosed.

This status may not be unique to Sikh female adolescents living in Canada. Any culture that holds clearly defined role expectations which are significantly different from the society they live in may well experience a similar [identity process phenomenon]. Further research into the effects of dual cultural ideals on identity formation is needed to verify the Stress Foreclosed Identity Status.

It was assumed that because exploration of alternatives is encouraged in adolescents growing up in Canada, the majority of the Non-Sikh subjects would be actively exploring alternatives and be in a Moratorium Identity Status, or they would have gone through an exploration stage, made decisions and be Identity Achieved. This was not found. Six of the ten subjects were Foreclosed and only two were Moratorium. There were indications that the subjects were in transition from Foreclosed to Moratorium statuses, and from Moratorium to Identity Achieved, but they were not as progressed in their identity achievement as was assumed. These findings differed from Archer and Waterman's (1983) research which indicated that adolescents of 16-18 years of age tended to achieve Moratorium or Identity Achievement Statuses. The difference may be that the present study's small sample size was not representative of the majority of adolescents of 16-18 years, or that these adolescents lack life experiences outside the school system, which Raphael (1978) and Douvan and Adelson (1966) found were essential for adolescents to obtain in order to resolve identity issues.

No significant difference was found in the scores the Sikh and Non-Sikh groups obtained on the Simmon's Identity Scale. According to the scores, both groups

were found to be equally progressed in their identity process which is in agreement with the Identity Status assignments of both groups which were predominantly Foreclosed Status Ratings. The IAS indicated that both groups were resolving Identity Issues similarly. The IAS scores alone, however, have limitations, for they reflect only the level of identity achievement and not the variation in the identity process that the girls experienced as was shown by the Modified Identity Interview.

It was apparent from the interviews that the Non-Sikh girls were not without difficulties in resolving their identity issues. The Sikh girls, however, had an additional burden the Non-Sikh girls did not have to confront. The Sikh girls had to resolve discrepancies in two of their referent groups: their Sikh culture and the dominant Canadian society they lived in.

The Sikh and Non-Sikh subjects both identified areas in the Sikh girl's adolescence that were unique for the Sikh girl to have to resolve. These were: adjusting to an arranged marriage, deciding whether to date without her parent's knowledge, living up to her parent's expectations, considering her family's honour in any actions she took, and abiding by cultural traditions which have irrelevant aspects in Canadian

Society. Both the Sikh and Non-Sikh subjects stated the Sikh girls experienced more anxiety while going through adolescence because Sikh girls had to resolve these issues and Non-Sikh girls did not.

The basis of the anxiety the Sikh girls experienced may be due to the lack of choice they had in the decisions made for their life. Marcia (1976) found that the ability to make decisions about one's life was essential to resolving identity issues. The Sikh girls had a limited opportunity to make decisions regarding their life's direction. If the Sikh female, living in Canada, was given the opportunity to make choices, it would afford her the opportunity to develop a personal ideology. Aspects from both cultures could be integrated to meet her personality needs. In this way her personality needs would not be in conflict and have limitations in being met because of having to comply with only one social system. There would be a "fit" between the needs arising from the personality system and the social systems the Sikh adolescent lived in. Erikson (1962) stated this "fit" is essential in intrapersonal organization and identity achievement.

The study's findings may be helpful for professionals involved in working with adolescents. The interview results indicated the uniqueness of each

adolescent's identity formation experience. There is, therefore, no single approach which can be used in assisting adolescents in working through their identity issues. An awareness of the Identity Status profiles may be useful in choosing an approach in helping adolescents. For example, a Foreclosed adolescent may benefit by being encouraged to look at alternatives to prevent possible anxieties should their committed plans not materialize, whereas a Diffused or Moratorium individual would likely need assistance in focusing. The Identity Interview is a helpful assessment tool as it clearly defines areas in which an adolescent is experiencing difficulties.

Adolescents from a variety of minority cultural backgrounds may experience similar anxieties to those experienced by the Stress Foreclosed Sikh adolescents in the present study. In helping adolescents with similar anxieties, a knowledge of the values and beliefs of the adolescent's cultural background is essential. The helper is then better prepared to assist the individual in bridging the gap between the two cultures the adolescent lives in by helping him or her to integrate aspects of both social systems to meet his or her personality needs. It must be noted that not all individuals from different cultural backgrounds encounter difficulties in assimilating

into a new society. For many the transition is smooth. There are those, however, who do encounter difficulties and may benefit from assistance.

Little research has been done regarding the cultural differences and effects of immigration on the Identity Formation Process. A limitation of the present study was the small number of subjects from which generalizations regarding these variables were made. The study also focused on only one immigrant group, the female Sikh adolescent. What the study found, however, was that the Identity Formation Process is affected by cultural values and beliefs, and the event of immigration. More rigorous research exploring the effects of these two variables on Identity Formation in adolescents from various cultural backgrounds is needed to establish more clearly their significance. With the growing number of immigrants in British Columbia, it would seem to be of value to better understand the immigrant adolescent's expected Identity Formation Process so assistance can be given with their adjustment to the cultural discrepancies which, from the present study's findings, impact on this process.

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APPENDIX 1

RESEARCH MANUAL
FOR THE
IDENTITY ACHIEVEMENT SCALE (I.A.S.)

by

Dale D. Simmons

Oregon State University
Corvallis, Oregon 97331

1973

Note: This test was developed as a modification of Marcia's Ego Identity Incomplete Sentence Blank with the express purpose of creating a briefly administered, objectively scoreable research instrument. It is not recommended that the IAS be used as a substitute for Marcia's Identity Status Interview (a superior assessment procedure) unless a short, quick inventory is judged appropriate.

Note: Professional psychologists (and graduate students conducting supervised research) are free to duplicate the response form for research purposes only. Clinical use is not yet appropriate as further research with the IAS is judged necessary.

NAME _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

1. When I let myself go I
 - A. sometime say things I later regret.
 - B. have a good time and do not worry about others' thoughts and standards.
2. If one commits oneself
 - A. she should follow through.
 - B. she should have made certain beforehand she was correct.
3. For me, success would be
 - A. the achievement of a large amount of competence in my main career.
 - B. a good job with a family and enough money to live comfortably.
4. Sticking to one occupational choice
 - A. does not enchant me, but will probably be necessary.
 - B. is sometimes difficult.
5. It makes me feel good when
 - A. I look back on the progress I have made in life.
 - B. I can be with my friends and know they approve of me.
6. To change my mind about my feelings toward religion
 - A. I would have to know something about religious beliefs
 - B. would require a terrific amount of convincing by some authority.
7. I'm at my best when
 - A. I'm on my own and have sole responsibility to get a given job done.
 - B. my mind is clear of all worries, even trivial ones.
8. When I let myself go I
 - A. don't change much from my regular self.
 - B. think I talk too much about myself.
9. I am
 - A. not as grateful as I should be.
 - B. not hard to get along with.
10. Getting involved in political activity
 - A. is as pointless as it is necessary.
 - B. doesn't appeal to me.
11. When I consider my goals and then think of my parent's goals
 - A. they are basically the same.
 - B. I feel that they are missing a lot.
12. I one commits oneself
 - A. one must know oneself.
 - B. then she's liable to miss a lot of opportunities.
13. For me, success would be
 - A. in what I do, not in how much money I earn.
 - B. to be accepted by others.
14. If I had my choice
 - A. I would live in a warm climate such as Southern California or Hawaii.
 - B. I would do things as I have.
15. It seems I've always
 - A. known what I'd do after high school.
 - B. held back from reacting to certain things.
16. Sticking to one occupational choice
 - A. does not enchant me, but it will probably be necessary.
 - B. suits me fine.
17. It makes me feel good when
 - A. I can be with my friends and know they approve of me.
 - B. I think of all the good things that can happen in a lifespan.
18. When I let myself go I
 - A. have a good time and do not worry about others' thoughts and standards.
 - B. never know exactly what I will say or do.
19. To change my mind about my feelings toward religion
 - A. I never would because I've never questioned my religion.
 - B. would require a terrific amount of convincing by some authority.
20. The difference between me as I am and as I'd like to be
 - A. is very likely to be dissolved in time.
 - B. is that I have potential, but lack a certain amount of drive.
21. I know that I can always depend on
 - A. the good will of others, if I treat them right.
 - B. my mind and "stick to it" attitude to help me through.
22. If one commits oneself
 - A. one must know oneself.
 - B. she should finish the task.
23. For me, success would be
 - A. being a recognized authority in my chosen field.
 - B. to be accepted by others.
24. When I let myself go I
 - A. never know exactly what I will say or do.
 - B. am most apt to do well.

APPENDIX 2

MODIFIED IDENTITY STATUS INTERVIEW

Introduction:

What year are you in in school? What program are you in?

At what age did you come to Canada? (Sikh girls only)
Where are you from?

Who lives in your home? Where are you in the family?
(birth order)

Can you tell me about your father's educational background? What does he do now?

Can you tell me about your mother's educational background? What does she do now?

Occupation:

What do you plan to do when you've finished school?

When did you come to decide on _____? How did you decide? What seems attractive about _____?

Did you ever consider anything else? (If yes check attractiveness of the choice and why it was dropped as a career choice.)

Most parents have plans for their children, things they'd like them to go into or do - did yours have any plans like that for you?

What does your mother think of your present plans? your father?

How willing do you think you'd be to change this if something better came along? (if confused: Well, better in your estimation.)

*If no decision has been made re: career, ask:

Do you feel a career is something that you're trying to work out now or do you feel that you can let time take its course?

Any idea when you'd like a decision made by?

How would you go about getting the information you needed to make this decision?

Religion:

If you were to describe your religious beliefs, what would you tell me?

How did you decide on them?

Do you follow any particular religion? Do you attend Church/Temple?

What are your mother's religious beliefs? your father's?

How do they feel about your religious beliefs? Do you ever discuss your ideas with anyone?

Was there a time when you questioned your religious ideas? If so, how were these questions resolved?
Do you think your ideas will be the same in five years?

Politics:

Do you have any particular political preference? What about your parents?

Are there any social issues you feel strongly about? (Important in your terms. If still having difficulty....like the economy, unemployment, etc.)

How did you come to decide on these ideas?

What would you like to see done about ____? (above ideas she stated)

Friendship:

Would you say your close friends are similar to you or different from you?

In what ways? How about the rest of your friends and acquaintances?

What characteristics do you look for in a friend?

If your closest friend changed in some way that you didn't, what would happen? (a change in your estimation of a big change)

What kinds of friends does your mother think you should have? your father?

Have you ever had a friendship with someone of whom your parents disapproved? Was it resolved? How?

Female Role:

What advantages and disadvantages do you think there are to being a woman/girl in our society?

What is personally satisfying about being a girl?

What do you see as least satisfying?

If you could have chosen to be a girl or a boy, which would you be? Why?

How did you come to learn what it is to be a girl in today's society?

How was your behavior influenced by your mother? your father? your sisters/brothers?

How do you think your mother feels about your ideas of a female role? your father?

Would you like the same life as your mother?

Are there any areas of your behavior which you are still questioning as a female? If so, how are you trying to work this out?

Do you see your ideas about the roles of women and men in today's society changing in the future?

Dating:

What are your opinions re: dating? When is it o.k. to date? How does this apply to you?
 What do your parents think? Do you discuss your views with them?
 How did you know it was o.k./not o.k. to date?
 How likely are you to change your views in the future?
 What qualities do you or would you look for in a person that you'd date?
 What standards or unwritten rules do you/would you follow when on a date?
 How do your rules compare with your friends?
 Have you changed since you've started dating?
 What qualities would you want the person you date to know about you?

Marriage:

Do you plan to marry? Any ideas when?
 What are your mother/father's views re: marriage? Do you agree or disagree?
 What are the advantages and disadvantages of being single? married?
 How do you picture what your marriage will be like for you? What do you see as the role of your husband? your role as wife?
 Are these ideas the same or different than your parents'?
 How should major decisions, such as buying a car or house be made? What about day to day decisions? What if only one is making the money?
 How do your parents make these kinds of decisions?
 Do you think your ideas will change in the future?

Family and Career Priorities:

Do you plan to have a family? When?
 How many children do you plan to have? Why that many?
 Describe what you see as your role as a mother.
 What roles should a husband and wife have in parenting?
 Are these ideas the same or different than your parents'?
 How do you see your role in the family when you think of your career/ occupation, being a parent and a wife?
 What do you think your life will be like in five years from now?

Issues for Sikh and Non-Sikh female adolescents to resolve

What do you think are important issues to resolve in

growing up?

What do you think are important issues for other: 1. Sikh girls? 2. Non-Sikh girls?

Are there ways they experience growing up that's different from you?

Does one group (Sikh or Non-Sikh) have a more difficult time resolving their issues? Why?

On a scale of 1-5 how contented or at ease do you feel in your life and how completely have you resolved, for yourself, the issues you mentioned?

1= I never feel at ease and am constantly anxious. I have not resolved any issues.

2= I feel anxious frequently. I've a few issues resolved, but many left to work through.

3= I feel anxious and agitated sometimes. I've resolved some issues.

4= I seldom feel agitated or anxious. I have a few issues I haven't resolved.

5= I feel calm and at ease all the time. I've resolved all the issues I mentioned

How would you rate other Sikh and Non-Sikh girls on the 1-5 scale?

How do you usually make a decision?

APPENDIX 3

Dear

I am a graduate student at University of Victoria in the Counselling Program. My interest in counselling is working with adolescents. I am doing a study which will help me further understand adolescent development and the issues that are important to adolescents as they grow up. I am interested, as well, in how teenagers from different cultures experience adolescence.

I plan to talk to Sikh and Non-East Indian female students (16-18 years of age.) The study has two parts. The first is a multiple choice questionnaire which will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Examples of the questions:

Choose A or B

For me, success would be:

A. in what I do, not how much money I earn.

B. to be accepted by others.

The second part includes each girl talking to the researcher about her opinions of what her occupational goals are, what religion and politics mean to her, and her ideas about femininity. Examples of the type of questions asked:

Occupation: What do you plan to do when you finish school?

Religion: Do you have any particular religious affiliation or preference? What part does it play in your life?

Politics: Are there any political issues you feel strongly about? When did you decide on your political beliefs?

Feminine Role: What characteristics do you associate with being feminine?

The study will take place during a spare or after school so as not to interfere with the student's studies. All information will be kept confidential.

Please sign this consent form and return it to the Main Office of the school if you wish to participate in the study. If you wish any further information, please contact me at 385-9598.

Thankyou kindly for your assistance.

Yours truly,



Catherine Ellis.

PLEASE RETURN THIS TO THE MAIN OFFICE OF THE SCHOOL

I agree to take part in the above mentioned study.

Student's Name

I give my consent for my daughter to take part in the above study.

Father's Name

Mother's Name

Date: _____

APPENDIX 4

ਪਿਆਰੀ , ਮੈਂਡਰੀ ਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਵਿਕਟੋਰੀਆ ਦੀ ਸੀ. ਏ. ਦੀ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟ ਹਾਂ। ਮੇਰਾ ਜੁਝਾਨ 16-18 ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਉਮਰ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਟੂਡੈਂਟਸ ਦੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੇਸ਼ ਆਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਉਲਝਣਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ। ਜੁਝਾ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥਣਾਂ ਦੇ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਸਭਿਅਤਾਵਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਵੱਖ ਵੱਖ ਧਰਮਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਤਾਰਬਾ ਅਤੇ ਖੋਜ ਮੇਰਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ। ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ 10 ਸਿੱਖ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥਣਾਂ ਅਤੇ 10 ਹੋਰ ਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥਣਾਂ ਨਾਲ 15 ਮਿੰਟ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਕੁਝ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਵਟਾਂਦਰਾ ਅਤੇ ਗੱਲ ਬਾਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ।

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਇੱਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ:-

- (ੳ) ਕੀਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਫ਼ਲਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਤਸੱਲੀ (ਇਹ ਸੋਚੋ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਮੁੱਕੀ ਕਮਾ ਰਹੀ ਹਾਂ)
- (ਅ) ਲੋਕਾਂ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਕੀਮ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ੰਸਾ ਆਦਿ।

ਦੂਸਰਾ ਭਾਗ:- ਹਰ ਇੱਕ ਲੜਕੀ ਖੋਜ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਿੱਤਿਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ, ਧਰਮ, ਸਿਆਸਤ ਅਤੇ ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀਤਵ ਬਾਰੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸੁਝਾ ਦੇਵੇਗੀ। ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਹੋਣਗੇ:-

- (ੳ) ਸਕੂਲ ਦੀ ਪੜ੍ਹਾਈ ਮੁਕੰਮਲ ਕਰਨ ਉਪ੍ਰੰਤ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਕਿਹੜਾ ਕਿੱਤਾ ਜੁਣਨ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਹੈ?
- (ਅ) ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਕਿਸੇ ਖ਼ਾਸ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਤੁਜੀਹ ਦੇਂਦੀ ਹੋ?
- (ੲ) ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਨਾਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਕੀ ਸੋਚਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਕੀ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਇਸਤ੍ਰੀ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਹੋ ਜਿਹਾ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਹੈ?

ਮੇਰੀ ਇਹ ਸਟਡੀ ਸਕੂਲ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਅੱਗੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਟਡੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਘਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਵੇਗੀ ਸਟਡੀ ਮੁਕੰਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਮਗਰੋਂ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਸਕੂਲ ਬੋਰਡ ਪਾਸੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਫ਼ਾਰਮ ਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਦਸਤਖ਼ਤ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਏ, ਸਕੂਲ ਦੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਭੇਜ ਦਿਉ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਹੋਰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਧੰਨਵਾਦ ਸਹਿਤ,

ਕੈਥਰੀਨ ਐਲਿਸ

ਫ਼ੋਨ ਨੰਬਰ 385-9598.

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IDENTITY FORMATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN SIKH
AND NON-SIKH CANADIAN FEMALE ADOLESCENTS.

Author: 

CATHERINE ANNA ELLIS

Date: Oct. 28 / 86