

Ethnic Cultural Dance, Ethnic Cultural Maintenance, Place, and Belongingness in a Multicultural
Society

Ioannis Karmas

University of Ottawa

Master's Thesis submitted to the University of Ottawa
in partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Art in Human Kinetics

© Ioannis Karmas, Ottawa, Canada, 2023

Acknowledgments

The guidance and endless support I have received from my professors, family and friends, are among the most significant reasons for me being able to complete my master's thesis. I would first like to acknowledge my supervisor Dr. George Karlis. I am most thankful and truly blessed for the opportunity to work under your guidance, especially during these last two years. Thank you for all your support, compassion, patience, encouragement, and advice throughout this process, both inside and outside the classroom. I could have never dreamed of making it this far without you. I certainly look forward to further working with you during my Ph.D. program starting this September.

I would also like to thank Dr. Heintzman and Dr. Gravelle for all their contributions in preparing me for completing my thesis paper. Your critiques, recommendations, advice, and questions have encouraged me to analyze and think deeper in my research and writing. With all your guidance and support, you have also helped me truly grow as a researcher. I also thank Dr. Giles for chairing my final thesis defence.

To my dearest parents, Christos and Maria Karmas, thank you for all your endless love and support in helping me achieve my goals. My siblings, Efthimios and Vassiliki, thank you both for always standing by my side in everything throughout my life. You are not just my family but my very best friends. I love you all.

I would also like to thank my grandparents, Ioannis and Vassiliki Karmas, and my late grandparents, Georgios and Panagiota Papadimitriou. I have been truly blessed in having such loving and supportive grandparents who helped pave the way for my siblings and I to accomplish our dreams.

I also wish to express my gratitude once again, to Efthimios Karmas and Conrad Yiridoe for all their guidance and encouragement especially during my undergraduate degree program. You have both helped steer me on the right path towards achieving my goals during my years at Dalhousie University and for this I will be forever thankful.

Finally, a big thank you, goes out to Pinelopi Makrodimitris, Maria-Nicoletta, Nick C. Lavranos and the Lavranos family, Eirini Triantafillou and the Triantafillou family, the Karadimas family, and all my extended family in Greece for all your continued love, guidance and support.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	iv
Abstract	vii
Chapter 1	
Introduction.....	1
Purpose of Study	9
Objectives of Study.....	9
Importance of Study.....	10
Definition of Key Terms	11
Chapter 2	
Literature Review and Theoretical Framework	14
Multiculturalism in Canadian society	14
Assimilation and ethnocultural maintenance	17
Place, belonging, and ethnic based cultural leisure activities	19
Greeks in Canada	23
Ethnic Dance in Greek life.....	26
Theoretical Framework.....	29
Chapter 3	
Methodology.....	31
Research Design.....	31
Population Group	32
Sample.....	33
Parameters of study.....	33
Data collection and construction of interview guide	34

Distribution of interview guide.....	35
Analysis of data.....	36
Ethical consideration.....	37
Chapter 4	
Results.....	39
Demographics of participants	39
Ethnic dance and ethnocultural identity	39
Ethnic dance and ethnocultural maintenance.....	44
Ethnic dance, place, and belongingness in multicultural Canada.....	54
Relationship between ethnic cultural dance and other ethnocultural leisure activities for ethnic cultural maintenance and multiculturalism.....	59
Chapter 5	
Discussion.....	62
Summary	62
Ethnic Dance and Ethnocultural Identity	63
Ethnic Dance and Ethnocultural Maintenance.....	63
Ethnic Dance, Place, and Belongingness in Multicultural Canada.....	65
The Relationship Between Ethnic Cultural Dance and Other Ethnocultural Leisure Activities for Ethnic Cultural Maintenance and Multiculturalism.	65
Discussion.....	65
Limitations	73
Recommendations.....	76
Conclusion	78

References.....	80
Appendix A.....	87
Appendix B.....	89
Appendix C.....	90
Appendix D.....	91
Appendix E.....	92

Abstract

Within leisure studies, research has focused on the role of ethnocultural specific leisure activities and ethnocultural maintenance among minority groups. According to Stodolska (2000), traditional leisure activities can help facilitate the retention of desired cultural elements. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine dance teachers' perception of the relationship between participation in ethnic cultural dance, ethnic cultural maintenance, sense of place and belongingness in a multicultural society. A phenomenological approach was used to analyze open ended interviews with participants. Purposive sampling was used to select participants based on the following parameters: participants were required to be a current or former teacher or teaching assistant of the Romiosyni Dance Group [RDG], in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada and, were required to have had their role for at least one year during the past 10 years. In total 16 interviews were conducted. The findings from this study suggest that ethnic dance taught in the RDG in Halifax, Nova Scotia, positively impacts ethnocultural identity and ethnocultural maintenance for members of the group. Furthermore, it seems that the ethnocultural leisure activity of ethnic dance plays a vital role in creating a sense of place and belongingness in a multicultural society and promoting multiculturalism in the city of Halifax. Finally, participants identified that the RDG played a more significant role in providing opportunities for ethnocultural maintenance when compared to other ethnocultural leisure services in the Greek Community of Halifax.

Keywords: Ethnic based cultural leisure activities, Greek ethnic dance, multiculturalism, ethnocultural maintenance, assimilatio

Chapter 1

Introduction

Research refers to the concept of multiculturalism as the active role of a governing body to preserve and promote diverse cultures, religions, and minority languages (May, 2022). The notion of multiculturalism has led to public policies being established, such as affirmative action programs, school curriculum in minority languages, or an exemption from dress codes in public administrations in an effort to become more inclusive of the cultural and religious practices of minority groups (May, 2022). When it comes to identifying the effectiveness of such policies, specifically in western countries, a great example can be found in Canada, where The Multiculturalism Act was passed in 1988 (Karlis, 2016).

The early stages of multiculturalism policies in Canada stem from early debates between the predominantly French-speaking portion of the country in Quebec and the remaining, primarily English-speaking provinces making up the rest of the nation (Bahkov, 2013). Following a "quiet revolution" in Quebec, Canada in the 1960s was labeled as a bilingual and bicultural nation (Bahkov, 2013). Minority languages and non-British or French cultures were viewed as secondary (Bahkov, 2013). However, protests across Canada throughout the mid-1960s resisted the idea of a bicultural country, and politicians at the highest levels of government called for a new model to recognize cultural pluralism in Canada. In 1971 under former prime minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, Canada became the first country in North America to formally adopt a policy of multiculturalism (Bahkov, 2013; Berry, 2013).

At that time, multiculturalism policy stated that such a policy is the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of all Canadians (Berry, 2013; Government of Canada, 1971). Additionally, the policy stated that the Government of Canada will seek to support and

encourage ethnic groups and encourage the sharing of cultural expressions and values with other Canadians (Berry, 2013; Government of Canada, 1971). Following this initial policy put forth in 1971, Canada formally adopted the Canadian Multicultural Act in 1988, where the focus continued to prioritize the protection and preservation of the linguistic and cultural rights of all Canadians and the fight against discrimination (May, 2010). The importance of having policies enforcing and promoting the importance of multiculturalism is vital in Canada, as can be easily deduced when looking at the makeup of the population.

Immigration helps sustain the diverse and pluralistic nature of societies (Berry, 2013). Recent statistics rank Canada highly both within North America and the rest of the world in the number of immigrants that annually enter Canada (United Nations UN], 2020). Currently, Canada ranks in the top ten countries of destinations for international migrants (UN, 2020). As of 2018, Canada also surpassed two of the largest traditional resettlement countries, the United States and Australia, as the top resettlement country for refugees, with just over 28,000 refugees relocating to Canada in that year (UN, 2020). Even with other countries such as France, Spain, and Turkey gaining a higher number of immigrants and refugees over the past ten years, Canada is still viewed globally as one of the top three traditional relocation countries for individuals in this regard (UN, 2020).

Although the United States ranks number one in terms of immigrant destinations, surpassing Canada by over 30 million people relocating in 2019, Canada still compares and even tops their North American neighbours regarding immigrant population proportion (UN, 2020). The United States has a greater total number of immigrants making up their population however, Canada's immigrant percentage of their population easily surpasses the United States (UN, 2020). The foreign-born population percentage in the United States makes up approximately

15%, while Canada's foreign-born population makes up about 21% (UN, 2020). Canada's immigrant population percentage has been increasing since the early 2000s and is projected to continue rising for the foreseeable future (UN, 2020).

When looking directly at who makes up Canada's population, it is easy to infer that Canada is a multifaceted, multiethnic, and multicultural nation (May, 2022). The original roots of Canada's cultural diversity dates back prior to the arrival of European settlers, with approximately 50 distinct Aboriginal cultures and over a dozen specific language groups making up the population at that time (Berry, 2013). As of 2016, 2.1 million people, or 6.2% of the population, reported having Aboriginal ancestry (Statistics Canada, 2017). Along with Aboriginal groups, immigration waves throughout Canada's history have led to the ethnocultural diverse population seen today (Berry, 2013). When looking specifically at the Canadian immigrant populations, individuals with European origins are made up mainly of third-generation or higher individuals (4th, 5th generation etc.) (Statistics Canada, 2016), reflecting the time period from which most of these individuals immigrated to Canada.

In contrast, immigrant populations of African, South American, and Asian origins are made up primarily of first-generation individuals, reflecting a more recent trend of where people are emigrating from (Statistics Canada, 2016). Canada's current population is home to many people of various origins. Whether looking at it historically or statistically, it is clear that the idea of ethnocultural diversity is very much present in Canadian society today. The policy put in place in Canada dating back to the 1970s have helped establish the importance of protecting and assisting Canadians to maintain their ethnocultural diversity (Berry, 2013; May 2022).

An ethnocultural group or community is defined by the shared characteristics unique to and recognized by the group (Government of Canada, 2015). The characteristics shared by this

group are generally the basis by which one group distinguishes itself from another (Government of Canada, 2015). Elements of an ethnocultural group can include cultural traditions, ancestry, language, national identity, ethnic identity, country of origin, as well as others (Government of Canada, 2015). Therefore, ethnocultural maintenance is the ability of an individual or group to strengthen or preserve these characteristics. Additionally, culture and ethnicity are two key components woven within the idea of an ethnocultural group and its preservation. Within culture and ethnicity, the previously mentioned characteristics used to define an ethnocultural group are found.

Culture and ethnicity are two intertwined topics, specifically when discussing ethnocultural maintenance. Culture encapsulates one's beliefs, values, practices, and traditions, and how they shape an individual (Issari, 2011). Ethnicity is a multilevel, multifactorial social construct tied together with race to distinguish diverse groups of people (Ford & Hawara, 2010; Karlis & Dawson, 1995). Ethnicity can influence one's personal identity and social relations as some people seek to form relations with others of the same ethnic background, establishing ethnic groups (Ford & Hawara, 2010). Within an ethnic group, people may seek to become more involved by learning and participating in the cultural activities of the group, thus strengthening their ethnic and cultural identity (Issari, 2011). Thus, to become closer to one's ethnic group, people participate in various cultural practices to strengthen their ethnic identity (Issari, 2011). Tying these definitions of culture and ethnicity together leads back to the idea of ethnocultural maintenance.

Canada is home to countless immigrant ethnic groups, all of which have various cultural practices rooted back to their countries of origin. Although Canada has put forth measures to promote the ease of ethnocultural maintenance for the immigrant populations, challenges such as

assimilation are very much present (Gavaki, 1979). Although assimilation theory will be discussed in a later chapter, for now, assimilation can be defined as a process in which immigrant groups become integrated into the mainstream cultural life of a host society (Zubrzycki, 1956). In essence, the ethnocultural maintenance of an immigrant group or individual has given way to the culture of a new host country. Yet, this assimilation process may be slowed, and in some cases even halted through ethnocultural leisure activities (Karlis, 1997; Karlis & Dawson, 1995; Karlis et al., 2020).

Canadians of Greek descent are a dynamic and excellent representation of multiculturalism in Canadian society (Tsimpouris et al., 2019). Greek communities consisting of distinct religious, linguistic, and ethnocultural leisure practices exist throughout the largest cities in Canada, such as Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria, Regina, and Halifax (Tsimpouris et al., 2019). The earliest recorded instance of immigration of Greek citizens to Canada can be dated back to the early 1840s (Chimbos, 1986; Vlassis, 1942). Before the turn of the century, the few Greeks living in Canada were linked primarily through kinship, friendship, and a common regional background (Chimbos, 1986). By 1900, an estimated 300 Greeks were living in Canada (Chimbos, 1986; Gavaki, 1979). These early Greek-Canadians were spread out throughout some of the major Canadian cities previously stated, and with such a small population, organized community groups were nearly impossible to establish (Chimbos, 1980, 1986; Gavaki, 1979; Vlassis, 1942).

However, in the early 1900s, Greek immigration into Canada began to increase due to factors in Greece such as poverty, government corruption, and heavy taxation (Chimbos, 1980, 1986; Vlassis, 1942). Over time men, women, and children continued immigrating from Greece to Canada in hopes of better opportunities (Chimbos, 1980; Chimbos, 1986; Vlassis, 1942). By

1921 the Greek Canadian population had risen to 5740 people (Gavaki, 1979; Vlassis, 1942). During this time, the formation of Greek parish communities began to be established throughout major Canadian cities (Chimbos, 1980, 1986). The first Greek Orthodox church in Canada was established in Montreal in 1906, with churches in Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver, Halifax, and other cities following suit (Chimbos, 1980, 1986).

The importance of establishing religious parish communities was crucial for Greek immigrants adjusting to their new home in Canada. At that time, Greek-Canadian immigrants were not kindly received as they were viewed as "non-preferred immigrants" due to most having low academic attainment, impoverished origin, as well as having evident cultural characteristics (Chimbos, 1980, 1986). Church-based communities were very important for the Greeks in Canada as they provided an escape from the racist and hostile environments they encountered (Chimbos, 1986; Vlassis, 1942). Over time these communities continued to develop with language schools, religious groups, dance groups, and social and cultural functions being ways in which the Greeks in Canada held on to their ethnic identity (Chimbos, 1980, 1986; Karlis, 1997; Thomas, 2000). As these communities continued to grow along with the associations within them, so did the time spent by the Greek-Canadians participating in the ethnocultural leisure activities of their communities (Thomas, 2000).

The Greek Community of Halifax [GCH] had its roots in the early 1940s. Although Greek immigrants had lived in Halifax well before that time, it was not until January 25, 1941, that Halifax had its own Greek Orthodox Church (Thomas, 2000). In 1985, due to a continued influx of Greek immigrants migrating to Halifax, the Greek-Canadians of Halifax completed the construction of a new and larger church, St. George's Greek Orthodox church, which was and is still directly connected to their pre-existing community center on Purcell's Cove Road (Thomas,

2000). Today Halifax is home to over 2400 individuals of Greek ethnic descent (Statistics Canada, 2016). Throughout the years, the Greek-Canadians of Halifax have sought to keep a connection to their roots through various traditional and cultural practices found within their Greek community (Thomas, 2000).

Within Greek communities across Canada, there are a variety of organizations and groups working together either alongside or independent of their church, as governing bodies, or to promote the preservation of Greek ethnic identity and culture (Thomas, 2000). This practice is no different when looking into the GCH. To begin, Halifax's Greek community has nine elected members who work alongside the parish priest to organize various events such as community galas and the Halifax Greek Festival (Thomas, 2000). These members form the Greek Community Council of Halifax [GCCOH] (Thomas, 2000). The ladies of the Philoptochous Women's society assist the GCH and the city as a whole through various fundraising initiatives (Thomas, 2000). The Greek Orthodox Youth Association [now known as Met Youth Halifax] is a religious youth group that provides children and young adults of the community a chance to learn about their Greek Orthodox faith as well as participate in various recreational activities (Thomas, 2000). The Halifax Greek School is an established second language school in Halifax for children from pre-primary to sixth grade. It is here where children are taught to read and write the language as well as Greek ethnic dance (Thomas, 2000). For many children, the Greek ethnic dance taught in Greek school acts as a means of introducing them to the RDG [RDG], the Greek ethnic dance group of Halifax.

Greek dance is one of the best-known and most entertaining aspects of Greek life (Thomas, 2000). The Romiosyni Dance Group [RDG] was established in 1985 when Dr. Metalinos and his wife traveled from Montreal to Halifax for a weekend dance seminar

(Romiosyni Dance Group [RDG], N.D.). Following this seminar, many members, including the parish priest at that time, Fr. Charalambos Ellis, encouraged the community to form a Greek dance group in Halifax (RDG, N.D.). The group performed for the first time at the Halifax Greek Festival in 1986 and has been a staple organization of the GCH ever since (RDG, N.D.).

For the ancient Greeks, dance as a leisure activity was a form of entertainment, and a cultural tradition that has been linked to Greek ethnicity even to modern times (Hunt, 2004). Along with being a form of entertainment and leisure activity, Greek dance has also traditionally become a form of expression (Hunt, 2004). Sorrow, sadness, happiness, and excitement are just some of the emotions that can be expressed through Greek dance (Hunt, 2004). Although the dances may not all be performed precisely the same as they were in ancient times (Hunt, 2004), the spirit in which they were intended to be performed is still very much present in modern Greek Dance (Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015; Leonidou, 2000). Historically, Greek dances also shed light on various aspects of Greek life. Various dances and accompanying songs represent different regions of Greece. For example, dances originating from the Cyclades, an island formation in the Aegean Sea, are danced with springy and wavy steps, while dances from the region of Pontus use many shoulder tremors and knee bends alongside nervous-sounding music (Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015; Leonidou, 2000).

The RDG today provides the Greeks of Halifax a leisure-activity-based approach through the art of dance to connect to the historical, traditional, and cultural roots of their ethnic background. The group prides itself on the vast repertoire of dances taught in terms of Greek regions—ethnic dances from parts of modern-day Greece and former Greek-occupied areas of the world. Today, the group is separated into two divisions: the Junior group, and the Senior group. Each division is divided based on factors such as the dancer's age, experience, and overall

dance ability (RGD, N.D.). Teachers in the group today attempt to pass on their knowledge of Greek dance just as the ancient Greeks would pass on their knowledge to younger generations (Hunt, 2004).

Traditional Greek dance is an essential aspect of Greek life; its very nature reflects Greek culture (Hunt, 2004). Thus, the teaching and engagement in Greek dance is a way in which Greek immigrants in Canada may attempt to strengthen their ethnocultural connection to their Greek heritage while also recognizing their place and belongingness within a multicultural society. The perceptions of ethnic dance instructors such as within the Romisyni Dance Group may help shed light on how ethnic cultural dance may contribute to ethnocultural maintenance and the multicultural ideals of Canadian society. Thus, the question that needs to be addressed is: how important and significant is, the leisure activity of Greek dancing for the maintenance of ethnicity in a multicultural society? Furthermore, how important and significant is ethnic dance for enhancing cultural awareness and contributing to a multicultural society?

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine dance teachers' perception of the relationship between participation in ethnic cultural dance, ethnic cultural maintenance, sense of place and belongingness in a multicultural society.

Objectives of Study

The objectives of this study are to examine ethnic cultural dance teachers' and dance teaching assistants' perception of:

1. ethnic dance and ethnocultural identity,
2. ethnic dance and ethnocultural maintenance,
3. ethnic dance, sense of place and belongingness in multicultural Canada, and

4. The relationships between (1) ethnic cultural dance and other ethnocultural leisure activities and (2) ethnic cultural maintenance and multiculturalism.

Importance of Study

This study will hopefully contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between leisure and ethnicity in Canada. Being home to hundreds of minority ethnic groups, it is important to see in what ways members of ethnic groups within Canada seek to maintain their cultural and ethnic identity through leisure activities such as dance. Thus, this study focuses how ethnic dance can contribute to this process of ethnocultural maintenance.

Additionally, although various aspects of maintaining one's ethnic and cultural identity has been studied in Canada (Karlis, 1997, 2011; Karlis & Dawson, 1995; Karlis et al., 2020; Stodolska, 2000; Tirone & Goodberry, 2011; Tirone & Pedlar, 2005), the perceptions of how Greek ethnic dance assists explicitly in this process has not been examined. With several Greek dance groups being present in Canada today, no study has been done on the perceptions of how dance as a leisure activity contributes to Greek ethnic maintenance in multicultural society.

The significance of Greek dance in the GCH in terms of ethnocultural maintenance is a question that has yet to be studied. When looking at the RDG in Halifax, no study has been done on the relationship between teaching methods employed and cultural maintenance. This study seeks to uncover the perceptions of Greek dance teachers within the group while also aiding in program development and implementation. Additionally, findings from this study may lead to a better understanding of how to improve the teaching of Greek dance to the RDG to increase the likelihood of ethnocultural maintenance.

Through leisure and recreational activities, ethnic community groups have attempted to promote the preservation of cultural and ethnic traditions and identity (Karlis, 1997; Karlis &

Dawson, 1995; Karlis et al., 2020). Community groups use these activities to increase attendance at events, share their culture with host countries, and pass on cultural traditions to descendants (Karlis, 1997). Researching ethnic dance as a leisure activity can further add to understanding the role of leisure in the process of ethnocultural maintenance. Additionally, ethnic dance can be compared to other ethnocultural leisure and recreational activities and their effect on ethnocultural preservation.

Finally, from an applied perspective, the findings of this study may assist the administration of the RDG to better promote and sustain Greek culture in Halifax. Recommendations will be made to administrators of the RDG as well as to the GCCOH as to what improvements may be made in services provided to help further address the importance of dance as an ethnocultural activity and an important avenue for ethnocultural maintenance in multicultural societies.

Definition of Key Terms

The following section provides definitions of key terms for this study, that is, how key terms have been defined for the specific purpose of this Masters research project:

Romiosyni Dance Group [RDG]. Refers to the Greek ethnic dance group in Halifax. The RDG is home to two divisions, the junior, and senior divisions. The purpose of the group is to teach Greek dance to its members.

Traditional Greek dance. Refers to the style of ethnic dance taught by the RGD teachers to members of the group.

Multiculturalism. The presence of cultural diversity within a country's population and the general desirability of maintaining and sharing cultural diversity within a country (Berry et al., 1977).

Leisure as an activity. Refers to activities people voluntarily choose to engage in during their free time, experienced outside of work and obligations (Karlis, 2011).

Ethnocultural leisure activities. A summation of social, cultural, traditional, recreational, art, sport, and media activities of a specific ethnocultural group.

Ethnocultural maintenance. Refers to the ability of an individual or group to strengthen or preserve elements of an ethnocultural group. These elements can include traditions, ancestry, language, national identity, ethnic identity, country of origin, as well as others (Government of Canada, 2015).

Ethnocultural identity. Refers to the ethnocultural elements of an individual. These can include traditions, ancestry, language, national identity, ethnic identity, country of origin, as well as others (Government of Canada, 2015).

Assimilation. A process in which immigrant groups cease to be thought of as an out-group and instead become incorporated into the common cultural life of the dominant society (Zubrzycki, 1956).

Sense of place and belongingness. A genuine feeling of being able to express ones' identity freely (Atonsich, 2010). In this case, ones' ethnocultural identity.

Dance teachers. These members of the RDG responsible for teaching Greek dance to members of the group. Dance teachers in this study consist of current and former teachers as well as current and former teaching assistants. Current teachers along also make up the current board of directors of the RDG, known as the dance committee. The dance committee currently consists of seven members. They decide which types of Greek dance based on regional variation are taught to each division as well as make decisions on group performances, group trips, and fundraising.

Teaching assistants. These members of the RDG are responsible for teaching Greek dance to members of the group as well as helping the head teacher of each group. Teaching assistants can also run practices on their own. They are typically not members of the dance committee.

Perceptions. For this study, perceptions refer to each individual dance teachers' and dance teaching assistants views and interpretation of Greek dance with regards to ethnocultural maintenance. The perception of each dance teacher is based on their own unique individual lived experiences.

Greek Community of Halifax [GCH]. Refers to the Greek ethnic community in Halifax.

Greek Community Council of Halifax [GCCOH]. Refers to the members of the GCCOH. The GCCOH consists of nine members.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The following chapter examines existing literature regarding multiculturalism in Canada, assimilation, and ethnocultural maintenance. Definitions of place and belonging, leisure and recreational activities, and their relation to ethnicity and culture are presented. Greek life in Canada is examined through a historical breakdown of the formation of Greek communities, followed by the importance of ethnic dance in Greek culture. Finally, the theoretical framework of this study is also presented.

Multiculturalism in Canadian society

Diversity has been an essential factor in shaping the population of Canada throughout the country's history (Berry, 2013; Burnet, 1981). Even before the arrival of European settlers, the land presently known as Canada was culturally diverse, home to 50 distinct Aboriginal cultures and over a dozen specific language groups within that population (Burnet, 1981). Following immigration from Europe, diversity within the country continued to increase, with more cultures and languages being brought over from the European settlers (Berry, 2013). Today, Canada ranks in the top ten countries of destinations for international migrants (UN, 2020). However, although diversity has helped establish the makeup of Canada's population for most of its history, it was not always recognized by national policy within the country.

Recognizing the diversity of ethnicities and cultures within a country's population through policy is essential when it comes to multiculturalism. Prior to the 1970s, Canada was initially recognized as a bilingual country and as a bicultural nation, representing only the British and French population (Bahkov, 2013). Although this was considered successful for the Franco-Canadian population, the same could not be said within the other various minority ethnic groups

living in the country (Bakhov, 2013). Canadians of non-British and non-French origin mostly accepted the idea of bilingualism in Canada (Mann, 2012). However, biculturalism was met with categorical rejection by these groups as many Canadians believed Canada was fundamentally multicultural due to the vast diversity of ethnic groups throughout the country (Mann, 2012). Following backlash from minority groups and other Canadians primarily living outside of Quebec, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt an official multiculturalism policy (Bakhov, 2013; May, 2022).

Berry et al. (1977) referred to the importance of policy when defining multiculturalism within Canada. Within their definition, they specified three key perspectives when viewing multiculturalism. First, multiculturalism can be viewed as a demographic fact, meaning the presence of cultural diversity within a country's population (Berry et al.). Second, multiculturalism can be viewed as an ideology, that being the general desirability of maintaining and sharing diversity (Berry et al.). The third and final distinction is as a public policy, where the government uses action to achieve the previous viewpoints (Berry et al.).

The initial policy of multiculturalism mandated under Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau in 1971 advocated for the maintenance and development of heritage cultures, intercultural sharing, reduction of barriers to the full and equitable participation of all Canada in society, and the learning of official languages as a basis for such participation (Berry, 2013). At the time of announcing the policy, Prime Minister Trudeau emphasized that Canada has no official culture, and no ethnic group shall take priority over another (Mann, 2012). Individual identity and cultural freedom were considered key to establishing national unity (Mann, 2012). Following this policy, the government of Canada continued to push toward a society built on the ideas of individual worth and cultural differences (Mann, 2012). In 1988 the Multiculturalism

Act was instituted by the Canadian government. This act declared that the Government of Canada is to recognize and promote the multicultural nature and diversity of its population (Berry, 2013). Furthermore, this act formally recognized how fundamental multiculturalism is to Canada and to the preservation of future Canadian society (Berry, 2013).

Today, Canada's population is comprised of over 250 various ethnic origins or ancestries (Statistics Canada, 2016). Over two million Canadians reported Aboriginal ancestry as of 2016, totaling over six percent of the population (Statistics Canada, 2017). Members of European ethnic descent are made up primarily of second, third, and fourth-generation immigrants, representing the time period during which their families immigrated, and their decision to stay and establish a new life in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016). More recently, Canada has seen an influx of first and second-generation individuals from Asia and Africa, making up a more significant portion of the population than in years past showing a new trend of immigration to the country (Statistics Canada, 2016). Overall, each wave of immigration to Canada and their descendants has added to the country's ethnocultural diversity and multicultural nature (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Many Canadians today view Canada's stance on multiculturalism as one of their most prominent sources of national pride (Golic et al., 2016). Based on its history of being a destination for immigrants and the establishment of policies relating to multiculturalism, Canada has become the country with the longest tradition of institutionalized multiculturalism in the world today (Golic et al., 2016). Unlike other models of multiculturalism in Europe, Canada has successfully created an overall peaceful society that manages to respect ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity (Golic et al., 2016). Today multiculturalism can be identified

throughout all aspects of Canadian daily life. Legislation, media, and the education system all promote the importance of multiculturalism in Canadian society (Golic et al., 2016).

Compared to other Western democracies, Canadians who were born in Canada are more likely to express the benefits of immigration (Bloemraad, 2012; Kymlicka, 2021). Additionally, Canada does not have a lack of public support for multiculturalism which is seen in other Western countries with similar policies. In 2007, 82% of Canadians agreed that multiculturalism within Canadian society is one of the more prideful aspects of the country (Soroka & Robertson, 2010). This finding, in turn, reflects not only Canada's exceptionalism but also its national pride regarding multiculturalism.

Assimilation and ethnocultural maintenance

One of the challenges an ethnic group faces when immigrating is assimilation. Being one of the most prominent destinations for immigrants in the world, Canada and ethnic minority groups within the country face the challenge of assimilation constantly. The theory of assimilation has been studied and defined in various yet related ways. One of the earliest definitions in sociological literature suggests assimilation is a process by which groups of people acquire the memories and attitudes of other groups and incorporate them into their own cultural life (Gordon, 1964). The process itself was described by Reuter and Hart (1933) as beginning with the acceptance of superficial cultural facts and later progressing to immaterial cultural values. An immigrant group's first steps into assimilation begin with the acceptance of the native lands' food, clothing styles, work techniques, and language, typically with little resistance (Gavaki, 1977). Later on, the immigrant group will form an attachment with the political, emotional, and other common interests of the native group while slowly detaching themselves from previous attachments to their own culture (Gavaki, 1977). Zubrzycki (1956) presented

assimilation as the process by which an out-group, specifically an immigrant group, becomes fully fused into the everyday cultural life of the native society. Gavaki (1977) summarized these definitions of assimilation as the complete absorption of an ethnic group by the receiving society. The complete absorption of an ethnic group differentiates assimilation from other processes such as accommodation, acculturation, cultural pluralism, and integration, all which also describe immigrant ethnic groups and their relation to receiving societies (Gavaki).

Being a multicultural country where established policies and government subsidies are provided to ethnic groups and communities, living in Canada offers an essential opportunity for many of these groups to operate (Karlis, 1997). When examining the role of recreation in multicultural societies, Karlis (1997) claimed that the goal of all ethnic community organizations is to provide services to help preserve ethnic culture. With this in mind, the claim can then be made that the primary objective of ethnic communities is to maintain ethnic culture while slowing down the process of assimilation (Karlis). With these goals of ethnic communities in mind, we can see the importance of ethnocultural maintenance in the battle of an immigrant population versus assimilation. Ethnic groups attempt to maintain their ethnocultural identity by having members of the group participate in cultural activities unique to the group (Issari, 2011). Therefore, ethnocultural maintenance of a group can be viewed as the steps taken by an ethnic group to slow down assimilation or even halt the process altogether.

Assimilation is a process that, for the most part, seems to be prevalent among second, third, and fourth generation descendants of immigrants and so on (Gavaki, 1979). As the next generations of ethnic immigrants are raised within the society of their country of birth, children find themselves balancing between the mainstream culture and their own ethnic culture rooted in their family's origin (Tonks & Paranjpe, 1999). This balancing can lead to establishing a

hyphenated identity, where the youth of ethnic backgrounds combine elements of national identity with their ethnic identity (Tonks & Paranjpe, 1999). The hyphen points to the relationship between maintaining a connection to your ancestral ethnic background and one's current native homeland (Byers & Tastsoglou, 2008). Typically, the presence of a hyphen identity shows the acceptance of a host society's culture while still practicing ethnocultural traditions (Gavaki, 1979). An example of this could be Greek-Canadian (Gavaki, 1979).

Adaptation to a host society is important for immigrants regarding social and power structures (Byers & Tastsoglou, 2008). Integration is essential for occupational and financial opportunities as well as limiting possible discrimination by the host society (Byers and Tastsoglou, 2008; Gavaki, 2004). However, adapting and integrating are not the same as assimilating. Assimilation is not an inevitable process (Gavaki, 2004). Dual identity through ethnocultural maintenance is possible and prevalent in a multicultural society such as Canada (Gavaki, 2004).

Place, belonging, and ethnic based cultural leisure activities

Ethnocultural maintenance, as seen, is crucial for immigrant populations in slowing down the process of assimilation. One of the ways immigrant ethnic groups accomplish this maintenance is by participating in leisure and recreational ethnocultural activities. The concept of leisure is broad and all-encompassing. Throughout social science research, the concept of leisure has been studied under various perspectives. For the purposes of this thesis, leisure will be viewed as a free time activity, that is, activities participated involuntarily by individuals outside of work and obligations (Karlis, 2011).

Leisure and recreation may play a vital role in ethnocultural maintenance. Ethnocultural-specific leisure and recreational activities have been seen as a way of providing psychological

comfort to the ethnic immigrant group seeking to maintain a connection with their former ways of life (Stodolska, 2000). In order to maintain a closer relationship to their old way of life and retain cultural traditions, elderly Chinese immigrants would purposefully participate in traditional leisure activities (Stodolska, 2000). Participating in traditional leisure activities facilitated the retention of desired cultural elements (Stodolska, 2000). Additionally, participating in leisure activities served as a "buffer" between immigrants and problems associated with being in a new place, making the adaptation process less traumatic (Stodolska, 2000).

Tirone & Pedlar (2005) examined the experiences of second-generation Canadian youths and the role of leisure when it came to social integration within their communities. In their findings, it was seen that leisure played a role in allowing ethnic youth to connect to various functional communities (Tirone & Pedlar). These communities were described as the traditional family home, the place of the dominant culture, that being Canadian culture and finally, multicultural leisure places (Tirone & Pedlar). Participation in traditional leisure activities was found to strengthen bonds between members of ethnic communities (Tirone & Pedlar). Participation in these activities among minority groups emphasized the importance of traditional leisure activities and their role in creating a sense of community among the individuals (Tirone & Pedlar). Members of each ethnic community group were able to relate to the importance of each activity of the individual ethnic groups, as well as help stimulate social bonds between all groups (Tirone & Pedlar).

Further examination of the impact of cultural traditional leisure activities on ethnic identity and preservation was studied by Kim et al. (2002). In a qualitative study, interviews were used to examine older Korean Americans' perceptions of leisure activity, ethnic

preservation, and cultural integration. Although leisure activities were reported to assist in the integration process into a new country, individuals mainly reported their participation in traditional leisure activities for the purpose of ethnic preservation (Kim et al.). Speaking Korean, watching Korean shows, singing Korean songs, and eating traditional Korean cuisine, were just some ethnocultural activities used to remind this group of immigrants of who they are and where they come from (Kim et al.). Traditional leisure activities assisted these individuals in re-creating a sense of "Koreaness," promoting cultural continuity and ethnic preservation of their Korean heritage (Kim et al.).

When researching second-generation immigrant Canadians within the context of leisure and biculturalism, Tirone and Goodberry (2011) expressed the significance of traditional leisure activities among minority groups in preserving their ethnic identity. While leisure activities, in general, were found to establish a link between ethnic responsibilities pushed by parents and the mainstream culture of living in Canadian society, participation in purely traditional leisure activities was found to also promote ethnocultural maintenance (Tirone & Goodberry). Attending festivals celebrating the culture of a specific group, eating ethnic food, and speaking the language were all ways in which children of immigrants aimed to preserve their ethnic identity (Tirone & Goodberry). Furthermore, second-generation participants in this study stated the significance of living in a multicultural country like Canada gave them the freedom to participate in mainstream leisure activities for integration purposes while still being free to participate in traditional leisure activities (Tirone & Goodberry).

Ethnic community groups have emphasized using leisure and recreation to promote the preservation of cultural traditions and ethnic identity (Karlis, 1997; Karlis & Dawson, 1995; Karlis et al., 2020). Many ethnic groups have established community centers as meeting places

and places to promote ethnicity through recreation (Karlis & Dawson, 1995). Within the Greek community of Ottawa, recreational activities have been used to pass down Greek culture to descendants of first-generation immigrants in a positive way (Karlis, 1997). Karlis (1997) found that participation in Greek cultural dances, festivals, youth group events, and recreational sports leagues established by the community for its members were all ways in which recreation assisted the community in preserving Greek traditions, language, and culture among its members. A more recent case study of the Hellenic Community of Ottawa reinforced the earlier findings on the role of cultural recreation activities (Karlis et al., 2020). Again, ethnocultural-specific activities such as Greek cultural dance were used to promote and preserve Greek culture within the community (Karlis et al.). Additionally, the community also hosted other, more mainstream recreational activities as ways to bring community members together as well as promote integration into Canadian society (Karlis et al.).

Further research into the field of ethnocultural maintenance for minority groups includes with the idea of a feeling of place and belongingness. Across the social sciences, a feeling of place and belonging have been used as synonyms for identity and, in some cases, ethnic or national identity (Atonsich, 2010). A feeling of place and belonging in this context can encompass citizenship, nationhood, and ethnic dimensions of status and attachment (Croucher, 2004; Hartnell, 2006). Atonsich (2010) defines a feeling of place and belongingness in individuals as a personal sense of feeling at home. In the case of ethnic minorities and immigrant groups, place and belongingness to a host country do not necessarily reflect the status of political belonging, such as citizenship (Antonsiuch, 2010). Furthermore, political entitlement, such as equal rights, may also fail to fulfill an immigrant group's feeling of place and belonging

(Antonsich, 2010). According to Antonisch (2010), a genuine feeling of place and belonging can be achieved when people feel they can express their identity freely.

Within a multicultural country, ethnic minorities may reference a feeling of place and belonging to both a sense of national belonging and ethnic belonging (Wu & So, 2020). When analyzing the effectiveness of multiculturalism, Wu and So (2020) examined the relationship between feelings of belonging to a host country and ethnic belonging among ethnic immigrant groups in Canada. It was found that multiculturalism policies supported individuals feeling a sense of belonging to their ethnic background and, in turn, increased individuals' loyalty and sense of belonging to Canada (Wu & So, 2020). This sense of belonging was reported to have increased the propensity for integrating into Canadian society without forcing participants to assimilate (Wu & So, 2020)

Within the field of leisure studies, ethnocultural leisure activities have been examined for their ability to promote the integration of ethnic minority groups and instill a sense of place and belongingness in a host country (Tirone et al., 2010; Yuen, 2013). A study by Tirone and colleagues (2010) in Halifax found that cultural leisure activities were important for the integration of immigrants into society. Furthermore, ethnocultural leisure activities were found to also create a sense of belonging among participants (Tirone et al., 2010). Similarly, Yuen (2013) found that culturally based leisure activities were also important for minority groups in Canada. Her findings indicated that culturally based leisure activities provide a framework for integration into a host community as well as facilitate a sense of belonging (Yuen, 2013).

Greeks in Canada

Greek immigration to Canada which began in 1891, was originally an offshoot of Greek immigration to the United States (Vlassis, 1942). By 1931 the Greek immigrant population in

Canada had reached 9,444 people (Vlassis, 1942). In the early days of Greek immigration to Canada, the Greeks began organizing themselves into communities. The primary purpose of the communities at that time was to preserve their Orthodox faith, which is the primary religion for most Greek citizens (Vlassis, 1942). Greek communities were built alongside churches, and slowly, many communities began to attempt to preserve their language by establishing Greek language schools for community members (Vlassis, 1942).

According to Chimbos (1986) the structure of Greek communities in Canada continued to change in form and diversity. While almost all initial models of Greek community organizations were centered around religion, the establishment on secular Greek communities also became more prevalent in Canada (Chimbos, 1986). Following World War II some Greek communities were established under secular leaders who distanced themselves from the church (Chimbos, 1986). This distancing in turn led to internal conflicts between church leaders and secular administrations within Greek communities in Canada. However, in many cities in Canada today, the initial model is still present whereby Greek community administrative leaders and parish leaders work together, where the church still remains the center of the community (Chimbos, 1986). What is common throughout both community structures is the establishment of organizations to promote Greek culture, such as dance groups and university clubs for students of Greek descent (Chimbos, 1986; Thomas 2000). Many communities have also hosted Greek festivals where Greek Canadians celebrate their culture while sharing it with other Canadian citizens.

Greek-Canadians have generally assimilated into North American culture less than their American counterparts (Chimbos, 1980; Gavaki, 2004). Although Greek-Canadians followed the American style of establishing communities, the difference in assimilation is due, to some

degree, to the cultural difference between the two countries. As mentioned, Canada regards itself as a multicultural country that has encouraged the ethnocultural maintenance of immigrant groups throughout the nation, including the Greek-Canadian population (Chimbos, 1980). Unlike the melting pot ideology structure of integration in the United States, Canada's multicultural policies have allowed the Greek immigrant population to preserve their cultural traditions and ethnic identity without feeling pressured to blend into North American culture (Chimbos, 1980). For these reasons, an overwhelming majority of Greek-Canadians favour the multicultural policies in Canada (Chimbos, 1980).

The GCH is run primarily by the GCCOH, which consists of nine annually elected members (Thomas, 2000). According to Chimbos (1986), while Greek communities across Canada are run secularly, the same cannot be said for the Greek community in Halifax. The Greek community in Halifax still works closely alongside the Greek Orthodox Church in Halifax, St. Georges (Thomas, 2000). The council oversees all church activities and all organizations that fall under the community. The youth group, the Ladies of Philoptochos association, the dance group, and the Greek language school are all run under the supervision of the GCCOH (Thomas, 2000). Just as in other ethnic communities across Canada, the GCH encourages participation within these organizations to promote the strengthening of Greek ethnic identity (Thomas, 2000).

Greek immigration to Canada slowed for some time between the 1980s to the early 2000s (Gavaki, 2004). However, following the economic crisis in Greece from the late 2000s till the present day, Greek immigration began to increase again (Tastsoglou, 2022). New permanent residents from Greece in Canada increased from 74 in 2006 to 409 in 2017 (Tastsoglou, 2022, p.69). As in the early years of Greek immigration to Canada, the driving forces of immigration

stem from the hope of better economic opportunities and a well-organized society (Tastsoglou, 2022). In a qualitative study of twenty semi-structured interviews, recent Greek immigrants to Canada expressed their experiences in immigrating (Tastsoglou, 2022). Almost all participants in the study expressed that connections within Greek communities in their new cities of residence assisted them during the immigration process. The Greek communities gave the immigrants an environment where they could socialize with other Greeks and form connections (Tastsoglou, 2022). Organized Greek communities remain home to new Greek immigrants seeking to stay connected to their Greek heritage (Tastsoglou, 2022), just as in the early years of Greek immigration to Canada.

Ethnic Dance in Greek life

The presence of ethnic dance in Greek culture can be traced back through the country's vast history. The ancient Greeks believed dance to be a social activity by which individuals could express their emotions (Hunt, 2004). This idea of expression through Greek dance is still present today, with dance still being a way of expressing joy and happiness or sadness and sorrow (Hunt, 2004). Modern participation of ethnic Greek dance can be seen in improvised forms such as weddings and baptisms or in more formal environments where dance groups perform for an audience (Hunt, 2004). Both dance styles have prevalent ties to Greek culture and tradition. Within a more improvised setting, Greek dance is seen as a way of celebrating an occasion, with family and friends joined together dancing in rhythm (Hunt, 2004). From a performance as well as a historical perspective, traditional Greek dance reflects the various types of dances found throughout the nation (Hunt, 2004). Geographically speaking, almost every region in Greece has its own unique dance repertoire and style. Within the country, a commonly known dance such as

the "Syrto" can be danced in different ways, with different steps being danced from one region to another (Hunt, 2004).

Ethnic Greek dances can be traced back to a variety of various regions. Regions throughout mainland Greece, island bodies, the Peloponnese, Northern Greece, and Crete all have their own unique dance characteristics when performed, whether it be the rhythm of the music, step speed, hand holding, or the design of the traditional costume (Leonidou, 2004). This allows dancers to learn traditional dances from areas specific to their Greek origin (Leonidou, 2004). When examining the individualization of the Pontian self, learning dances from the region formerly known as Ponto has helped Greeks with roots in the region strengthen their ethnic identity (Zografou & Pipyrou, 2011). Many of these dances have Turkish elements to them, given the geographical location of Ponto in modern-day Turkey. Although initially met with skepticism by some dance troupes, the inclusion of Pontian dancing has helped many individuals become closer to their heritage through dance (Zografou & Pipyrou, 2011). One of the best examples of the importance of Pontian dancing and ethnic dancing as a whole to Greek culture was seen in the Olympics in 2004. During the closing ceremony of the Olympic games in Athens, Pontic dance was performed in front of the world, displaying Pontian culture and, in turn, Greek culture through dance (Zografou & Pipyrou, 2011).

Greek dance in modern times is as alive today as it was in ancient times (Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015; Leonidou, 2000). In various Greek communities worldwide, Greek dance groups have been established where dance is passed down to newer generations, such as in ancient times when grandparents and parents would do the same for their children (Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015; Leonidou, 2000). In a case study of a traditional Greek-Australian dancer, an interview was conducted with a phenomenological approach to examine the participants'

experiences teaching and performing Greek dance (Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015). In this case, the participant expressed his appreciation for Greek dance and how he became closer to his Pontian heritage through this activity (Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015). In this specific case study, Greek ethnic dance was perceived as a way for students and teachers to learn about their Greek heritage and perform (Georgoulas & Southcott, 2015).

In an ethnographic study aiming to contribute to cultural knowledge and insight into small ethnic groups in the United States, ethnic dance within the Greek-American community of Los Angeles, California, was examined (Issari, 2011). Specifically, this study explored ethnic Greek dance and the formation of the Greek-American ethnic identity. Within her findings, Issari (2011) emphasized the importance of Greek dance in learning about one's roots and cultural heritage, socializing within the Greek community of Los Angeles, and joy and pride in participating in the dance group. Participants of the study expressed Greek dance as an avenue by which they learn about their homeland, as different dances share the history and culture of specific regions in Greece (Issari). Greek dance for these participants helped bring them closer to their community. Children would grow up idolizing older dancers and look forward to performing one day (Issari). Finally, dancers expressed their sense of pride and joy that they experienced while dancing. Greek dance instilled a sense of ethnic-cultural pride within the dancers (Issari).

When exploring how dance helps construct a national identity, Kalogeropoulou (2013) used a combination of autobiography and ethnography to analyze Greek dance during community events in New Zealand and Greece. Based on his accounts and interviews conducted within the study, Greek dance was found to strengthen national identity and create a sense of Greekness among participants (Kalogeropoulou). Greek dance allowed individuals to experience

unique aspects of the heritage while also creating opportunities for social interactions with other Greeks at community events and ceremonies (Kalogeropoulou). Greek dance events in this study were also shown to create environments that continue to create a sense of Greekness. These dance events were home to Greek music, food, and language. Thus, it was concluded in research by Kalogeropoulou that, Greek ethnic dancing can be an essential aspect of constructing a Greek national identity both in Greece and in the Diaspora.

Theoretical Framework

Assimilation theory has been examined throughout literature for over half a century. Within the social sciences, researchers have attempted to explain what assimilation means within the context of immigrant populations. One of the earliest proposed hypotheses of assimilation was conceptualized by Gordon (1964). Gordon's explanation of assimilation differentiated the term into "behavioral" and "structural" assimilation. Behavioral assimilation or acculturation was deemed an inevitable process whereby the immigrant populations give up extrinsic traits when adjusting to life in a new country (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gordon). These traits were considered non-vital cultural traits for the immigrant group. Structural assimilation occurs when vital cultural traits, such as religious beliefs, language, music tastes, and other traditional practices are forgotten (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gordon) as immigrants and their descendants through time enter the core society's social cliques, clubs, institutions, and general civic life (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gordon).

Park and Burges (1969) have also examined assimilation theory. Assimilation in this context was described as a process by which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons and become fused into the common cultural life of another group (Park & Burgess). The process of assimilation is completed when an ethnic

minority group or individual becomes fully encapsulated within the mainstream culture of a new home country (Park & Burgess).

Further research by Alba and Nee (1997) depict what is referred to as the "new assimilation theory,". For Alba and Nee the emphasis of assimilation is not only restricted to the impact of time and acculturation on the ethnic group but extends rather on the minority and majority groups' impacts within the process (Alba & Nee; Kivitsso, 2017). The majority group's willingness to accept and provide an opportunity to the minority impacts how the process unfolds (Alba & Nee). At the same time, acculturation may take place. For example, in terms of learning the host country's language, complete assimilation and erasing one's ethnocultural tradition can be avoided and, in some cases, welcomed by a host country (Alba & Nee).

It is important to note that these existing attempts at formally theorizing assimilation were primarily examined within American society, which is not directly comparable to Canada and the emphasis on multiculturalism found within the country. A distinct sociological theory of assimilation within a multicultural society such as Canada has yet to be articulated (Kivitsso, 2005, 2017). Thus, assimilation theory has yet to fully encapsulate the potential for a multicultural society to assist in preserving culture among ethnic minority groups (Kivitsso, 2017). This masters research project utilizes these American established theoretical perspectives of assimilation theory with the hope that the findings of this thesis can contribute to the establishment of an assimilation theory that caters specifically to multicultural societies such as Canada.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Research Design

When formulating the research design for this study, the first step was to decide which epistemological perspective would be best suited for answering the proposed research question. The epistemology one chooses heavily influences how one views, understands, and conducts research (Crotty, 1998). One's epistemological viewpoint affects one's theoretical perspective, which in turn corresponds to choosing methodologies and methods that fall within this perspective (Crotty, 1998). The epistemology chosen for this study stemmed from the belief that meaning is constructed through a person's engagement with the world and everything in it (Crotty, 1998). This belief aligns with the epistemological perspective of constructivism, where it is suggested that people construct their own unique meaning in relation to a given phenomenon (Crotty, 1998).

Interviews with both current and former Greek dance teachers as well as teaching assistants of the RDG were conducted with a qualitative phenomenological approach. Within phenomenology the focus of the researcher is to attempt to understand the perceptions of an individual towards an event or situation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013, 2016). The goal is to understand an individual's experience towards a phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013, 2016). In this case, the phenomenon that was analyzed was the perception of Greek dance teachers and Greek dance teaching assistants toward Greek ethnic dance as a means of ethnocultural maintenance. The use of phenomenological approach for the purposes of data analysis is presented further in the data analysis section of this chapter.

Population Group

This study's population group is comprised of dance teachers and assistant dance teachers of the RDG. Both the dance teachers and assistants are responsible for teaching dance to members of the senior and junior divisions of the group. Both sets of instructors meet to discuss the selection of dances being taught and performed at events for each group. They are expected to develop lesson plans for practices, help their students learn about their culture through ethnic dance, and prepare them to perform at various events. Teachers and assistants are also expected to research traditional Greek dances in order to add to the repertoire of dances taught within the RDG. All teachers are responsible for having knowledge of the costumes being worn and how to help students get dressed in the costumes. Instructors are responsible for doing costume inventory and ensuring costumes are not dirty or damaged.

Full dance teachers, have a more significant role when it comes to the group's financial obligations, such as buying costumes, going on trips, and booking performances, because full dance teachers also comprise the dance committee of the RDG. In recent years, the teaching assistant position has been a route individuals take to become a full teacher. Former dance teachers and assistant as far back as ten years were interviewed. Ten years was deemed as suitable range for selection of participants. Extending the range further back may have limited a participant's ability to answer questions relevant to the RDG's current role in the GCH as stated in the objectives and purpose of this study. Therefore, overall criteria required for this study was having taught within the RDG within the past ten years with no distinction being made between teachers and teaching assistants as their roles are very similar. Participants were also required to have had their role for a minimum of one year. The one-year minimum requirement was deemed necessary in order to ensure participants had a base level of experience teaching in the group.

Sample

Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants for this study. Purposive sampling allows researchers to select participants based on specific characteristics (DeCarlo, 2018). This means that participants are well suited to provide the researcher data, as they are knowledgeable and experienced with the phenomenon of interest (Palinakas et al., 2015). In this case, participants in this study were required to have experience in teaching Greek dance within the RDG.

The phenomenological nature of this study influenced the number of participants required for the sample size. Phenomenological research almost exclusively incorporates the use of lengthy interviews with typically a small sample size, anywhere from 5 to 25 participants being ideal (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). The total population size for this study consisted of the total number of Greek dance teachers and assistants that have taught for a minimum of one year in the group during the past ten years. According to the RDG website, the community bulletin, and responses to advertisement of the study, a total of 21 teachers fit within the deemed criteria required for participation in this study (RDG, n.d.). Of these 21 instructors, the total number of available instructors for interviews determined the sample size used for this study. All available consented instructors were interviewed, that being 16 participants in total.

Parameters of study

The parameters of this study determined the characteristics of the participants. Participants were required to be a current or former teacher or teaching assistant of the RDG, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Participants were required to have had their role for at least one year during the past 10 years.

Data collection and construction of interview guide

Data collected from participants was achieved through the use of qualitative interviews. Following the selection of constructivist epistemology and a phenomenological methodology, interviews were deemed the most appropriate data collection method. Specifically, semi-structured interviews were used to allow participants to express their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and overall perception regarding the phenomenon being researched in this study. The open-ended nature of interviews helped facilitate an environment for rich, in-depth data (Jovechlovitch & Bauer, 2000). Questions asked in this format allowed participants to express themselves easily while also allowing the interviewer to guide interviews through methods such as probing questions, which may offer more profound answers (Jovechlovitch & Bauer, 2000).

The interview questionnaire was constructed after reviewing the literature related to the proposed research question. All interviews were conducted using the same interview questionnaire. Probing questions regarding the research topic were also used. The interview questionnaire is broken down into three general sections as seen in Appendix A. The first section focused on the background and demographics of the dance teacher/assistant within the RDG and their roles as dance instructors. The second section focused on the importance of Greek dance to the ethnocultural identity of Greeks within the community of Halifax. The final section focused on dance teachers'/assistants' perception of ethnic dance as a tool for ethnocultural maintenance and the positive or potential drawbacks of said tool. Examples of the open-ended questions from the interview guide are also found below.

1. Were you ever a dancer in the RDG?
2. What is your opinion on the significance of RDG for ethnocultural maintenance within the GCH? Explain?

3. What would you say are the current goals of RDG? What suggestions would you make for future goals and why?

Before interviews took place, the questionnaires were pilot tested in two phases. The first phase of pilot testing was used to assess the questions best suited for this study. Two individuals associated with RDG and the GCH participated in the pilot testing to assess to test the effectiveness of the interview guide and to obtain feedback as to which questions need to be added, revised, and edited. The two individuals interviewed in this pilot testing phase were not used as participants in the official study. After editing and finalizing the interview guide, the second phase of pilot testing took place. The second phase was a self-assessment bracketing interview where the researcher answered his own questions to identify potential biases in the study.

The use of bracketing is a common practice among phenomenological research (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008). The bracketing process provides the researcher with an opportunity for thorough reflexivity (Davidsen, 2013). Through this process the researchers can address any potential preconceptions they have regarding a specific phenomenon. This information can then be used to be transparent to the audience by acknowledging any potential biases (Davidsen, 2013). In this study, the bracketing interview helped in ensuring leading questions were not being used and that participants had an opportunity to answer openly and honestly regarding their own personal experiences.

Distribution of interview guide

Participants of the study were first addressed by an introductory email with all information regarding the purpose of the study. Email addresses were provided in the GCH bulletin as well as from the researchers own connections with members of the dance group. For

emails not found in the bulletin, the researcher encouraged current teachers to forward the introductory email to other potential participants fitting within the parameters of this study. Furthermore, a poster advertising the study was posted in the GCH bulletin and bi-weekly community wide GCH email. The list of current teachers, former teachers, and teaching assistants was established through the RDG's official website which provided an alumni list of former and current full teachers and assistants.

Attached to the introductory email was a copy of the consent form acknowledging the participant's rights. Following replies from the available participants, meetings were arranged for each interview. Interview locations and times were scheduled over the phone or by email. In an attempt to provide possible accommodations for participants, the researcher was prepared to conduct interviews in one of two possible setting options. The first setting option was in person, where the location was arranged between researcher and participant. The second setting option was online using Zoom. Interviews were conducted in March 2023 and were recorded and transcribed using online transcription software. Online transcription software has been used through qualitative research as means for producing quality automated transcripts effectively and time efficiently (Da Silva, 2021). In total, nine interviews were done online over Zoom, while the remaining seven were done in person. In person interviews were conducted in one of the Greek school classrooms at the GCH community center. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using a phenomenological approach.

Analysis of data

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2016), a phenomenological approach to analyzing data focuses on the participants' lived experiences. Phenomenology refers to a person's perception of a specific phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). When successfully used as a methodology in

research, phenomenology provides insight into individualized perspectives from an unbiased viewpoint (Al-Busaidi, 2008; Mohajan, 2018). Successful use of this methodology typically includes the use of a bracketing interview (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008) which the researcher conducted during the pilot testing portion of this study. When analyzing data in this study, the researcher followed the four steps laid out by Leedy and Ormrod (2013, p.146).

Following the transcription process, the research proceeded to the first step, that being identifying relevant statements relating to the topic (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). This meant analyzing the transcripts for statements relating to the proposed research question and objectives. During this data analysis stage, relevant information was separated from irrelevant information. Relevant information was then dissected and broken down into smaller fragments, such as words or phrases. Relevant information was determined by the relevancy of the information to the purpose and objectives of this study.

The second step involved grouping the smaller fragments into various categories. These categories reflected ways in which the phenomenon was experienced. The third step involved identifying how each participant experienced the phenomenon (Leed & Ormrod, 2013). Finally, in the fourth step, all the meanings identified were used to construct an overall description of the various theme by which the phenomenon was typically experienced (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

Ethical consideration

Within the research process, various steps were taken to ensure trustworthiness and research quality. Participants were provided consent forms which consisted of a complete description of the study's goals, their role as participants, and their rights before, during, and after the study was completed. In terms of ethical consideration for the participants in this study, the researcher ensured the privacy and protection of each individual by using pseudonyms

throughout the study (Tracy, 2010). Procedural ethics continued to be upheld throughout the interview process; as stated, all interview data was safely protected on a password-protected hard drive to which only the researcher had access (Tracy, 2010).

It is important to clarify in this section the relationship of the researcher to the topic and sample population of this study. The researcher has been a member of the GCH for well over ten years. With this being said, the researcher has had many interactions with members of the sample population over the years, forming relationships in the form of friendships, dancer and fellow dancer, and dancer and teacher. With this in mind, it is also important to note that the researcher was committed to limiting all biases when it comes to the research study. All participants were encouraged to share their own unique perceptions of the RDG in relation to the purpose of this study. At no point were participants pushed to answer questions a certain way as that would ruin the integrity of the study and not fall in line with the phenomenological nature of this study, which, again, focuses on individuals' own perceptions and experiences. Furthermore, steps were taken during the construction of the interview guide in order to limit any potential leading questions.

In line with the phenomenological nature of this study, a bracketing interview was conducted by the researcher to provide self-reflexivity on the topic (Callary et al., 2015; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013, 2016). Potential bias towards the topic was acknowledged during the formulation of the interview guide, and pilot-testing was also used to ensure no leading questions were used. As stated, in a phenomenological study, the essential aspect of the research was to understand people's unique perceptions of a phenomenon and express their viewpoints unbiasedly (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013, 2016).

Chapter 4

Results

In this chapter, results addressing the purpose and objectives of this study are presented. Specifically, the data in this chapter is presented in five parts: (1) demographics, (2) ethnic dance and ethnocultural identity, (3) ethnic dance and ethnocultural maintenance, (4) ethnic dance, place, and belongingness in multicultural Canada, and (5) the relationship between ethnic cultural dance and other ethnocultural leisure activities for ethnic cultural maintenance and multiculturalism.

Demographics of participants

Participants in this study had a variety of experiences with teaching the group. Teachers had variations when it came to time spent teaching within the RDG. Years spent teaching ranged from one year to 21 years. Average time spent teaching in the group was four years. In total five participants were male and the remaining eleven were female. Of the participants, seven are current teachers in the group, with two participants having previous experience being teaching assistants. Both these two participants indicated that the 2022/2023 year is their first year being full teachers. Therefore, of the current teachers five are full teachers and two are considered teaching assistants. Of the nine remaining interviews, all of which were former instructors in the group, seven were former full teachers, while the remaining two were former teaching assistants.

Ethnic dance and ethnocultural identity

All 16 participants believed that ethnic dance connects to ethnocultural identity. This was seen in the description of the roles of RDG within the GCH. The two most common themes reported by all 16 participants were the RDG's role in teaching the youth about Greek culture

through ethnic dance and creating a space for the youth of Halifax to connect and form social bonds with one another. Participant 8 described the connection of ethnocultural identity and ethnic dance through the teaching of culture and bringing the youth together:

I think Romiosyni was important because you were learning about other regions of Greece. And it also is a social aspect as well. Getting to connect with other youth in [...] the community. Again, share that love of dance [...]. And also, there was costume history, there's music history, and how all the connections are made (between them). So, a lot of it is learning, and, you know, you can never stop learning (personal communication, March 13).

Furthermore, Participant 9 explained the presence of ethnocultural identity through ethnic dance and the role of ethnic dance in creating social bonds:

I think its greatest role is outreach [...] it definitely serves as a way to keep younger community members involved and teach heritage. And it's super cool because it obviously pulls from all over Greece, especially where the (Greek) community is so diverse here. It's nice to kind of focus on other regions and not necessarily just where you grew up. So, your perspective of what it means to be Greek in different places (personal communication, March 14).

In addition, eight participants also noted the RDG's role in sharing aspects of ethnocultural identity with the greater Halifax area through performances at festivals, most notably the Halifax Greek Festival. The role of dance in this regard was explained by Participant 14:

I think it's kind of, apart from the food, the main visual of the Greek community [of Halifax] because it's hard to describe different things like history and the language without visual aids and dance. It's a visual medium, so you're able to see

it, you're able to kind of experience that culture without any sort of barrier, you watch it, and you understand it. So, I think that the RDG is a visually striking way to communicate our culture (personal communication, March 29).

Furthermore, Participant 1 described the role of ethnic dance in sharing aspects of ethnocultural identity:

The role of the RDG within the community of Halifax [...] is exploring the Greek dance traditions, showing it to the rest of Halifax, and bringing together all the Greek youth and sharing that experience (personal communication, March 3).

The general objectives of the group were in line with the aforementioned roles, again connecting ethnic dance to the ethnocultural identity of RDG members. All 16 participants echoed that teaching dances, the origins of dances, their respective regions and costumes and creating a fun environment for the youth were the groups' most prominent objectives.

Participant 10 described the connection of the RDG's roles to aspects of ethnocultural identity:

The general objective, I think that there's two main ones. And I think they're both equal. [...] The first one that I'm going to address, sometimes I feel like it is the more important one, is to teach people about their culture, and to also make themselves good citizens within the Greek community and become cultural ambassadors[...] we're kind of cultural ambassadors of Greece. So that would be the number one objective, even though sometimes I'll say it might be equal to the next objective [...] The second objective would be to perform. [...] The main thing is to maintain the culture, that's the primary objective, and the second one would be performing. So [...] dispersing the culture to the community here and as well as to the rest of Halifax and across Canada (personal communication, March 21).

Four participants also described the importance of the volunteers who run the group with regards to ethnocultural identity. A desire from the people involved in the RDG to keep the group running and improving was expressed by four participants during the interviews. The consistent researching of dances and adding to the repertoire of dances taught was described as assisting in exploring more aspects of ethnocultural identity. Participant 9 expressed the importance of members in the RDG striving to improve the group consistently:

So, its biggest strength is that, at its core, it has people who are definitely open to constantly learning new things. Whether it be new dances from currently taught regions, new regions, always going seeking personal development and always striving to learn more, and updating things that maybe we were doing previously, that we've found out maybe wasn't working, or this is a different variation. So, knowing that there's constant work to bettering it [RDG] and not that it's a stagnant program is super important (personal communication, March 14).

Finally, Participant 12 added to the theme of consistently improving the group in reflecting more aspects of ethnocultural identity:

I also think we [RDG] do a really, really good job of trying to educate the instructors and provide resources to them. We have a really good master dance list. There are like 1000 dances on it. And it's mind-boggling to me that people spent the time to do that, and then list where they're [the dances] from, down to the actual village. But I think from a research and education side of things, I think we're [RDG] really good at doing that (personal communication, March 22).

Participants were asked to give their opinion on the motivations for students enrolling in the group and the motivations of parents enrolling their children in the group. During analysis of

the interview transcriptions, it was found that there was an overlap between dance teacher opinion on the motivations for both sets of questions.

A common theme regarding enrolment was the idea of forming social bonds with other kids in the GCH. The formation of social as described previously assists individuals of the RDG in keeping a close connection to their ethnocultural identity. Twelve participants believed that students who choose to enroll are sometimes motivated by knowing they will have friends, siblings, or cousins in the group, which is key to them first enrolling. The same 12 participants also believed that the social aspect of dance is essential for parents choosing to enroll their children. Forming bonds with other children in the community was seen by participants as a key factor for parents enrolling their children, as it opens up an opportunity to keep the kids closer to the Greek community in Halifax. Participant 6 described the importance of forming social connections as a motivating factor for parents enrolling their children:

I think parents want their kids to embrace their culture, and they want them to even just hang out with their Greek friends. They want them to be involved in that sense. And keep those connections (personal communication, March 16).

Furthermore, Participant 8 described the social aspect of dance as a motivating factor for children enrolling in the group:

I think the social thing, I think that's where it starts. I mean, I remember, when I danced with my church group growing up, it was like, you know, all your friends from Greek school, your friends from Sunday school will be there, and it's like okay, we're finally old enough to start dancing, okay, let's do that. I think it sort of starts with the social aspects (personal communication, March 13).

Although not connected to the idea of ethnocultural identity, participants described other motivation for enrolment into the RDG. Four participants believed that children are motivated to enroll based on the memories of watching Greek ethnic dance performed by the RDG at events. Three participants believed that ethnic dance being a form of exercise motivates enrollment as well. Finally, ten participants indicated the importance of maintaining culture as motivating factor for enrolment, which relates ethnic dance and ethnocultural maintenance.

Ethnic dance and ethnocultural maintenance

Strengths

Participants in this study were asked to explain their opinion on the strengths of the RDG regarding ethnocultural maintenance and the preservation of Greek culture. In this section, strengths regarding this topic are presented.

The repertoire of dances taught by the group was a common theme during the interviews. Nine participants expressed the importance of teaching dance from a variety of Greek regions and having costumes from these regions when it comes to ethnocultural maintenance. The repertoire of regions was said to help reflect different aspects of Greek culture from around the country, present the history of each region, and help individuals connect to their homeland. Participant 8 described the importance of having a diversity of sets taught with regards to ethnocultural maintenance within the RDG:

I think that we do a really good job at portraying the diversity that happens across Greece, and I feel like a little bit of a broken record saying that, but I think we do a really good job. You know, the Pontian set is a really good example of that.

There are really only two families in the entire community that are of Pontian origin. But we still made a point to have those costumes anyway, you know, we

have a lot of different sets of costumes; I think there's eight in total. And I think there are not many families that have a very strong Anatoliki Roumelia background as well. And so, in that sense, I think we're very good at trying to capture and keep the diversity of the Greek culture alive (personal communication, March 13).

In addition, Participant 15 expressed the importance of teaching dances from a variety of Greek regions in order to strengthen Greek identity, as well as ethnocultural maintenance:

It also [RDG] helps with knowing where you're from. So, for example, in the Greek community, there are different Greeks from different regions of Greece. So, for example, I knew a friend who is Cretan, and for him, [...] learning dances and information from Crete, where his ancestors are from, creates a closer relationship to those dances and to the community because it helps them with their maintaining identity. And people will find this out and say, okay, this is where I'm from, or this is who I am. So, I definitely think it has a huge role in maintaining culture and ethnicity in a community (personal communication, March 26).

Another important strength that seven participants mentioned was that the RDG provides the GCH with a fun, open environment for the youth to come and participate in Greek dance in order to preserve their culture. The importance of having a fun environment was significant to ethnocultural maintenance, as a fun environment keeps the members of the RDG's involved in the group and the GCH. The seven participants expressed that for many of the youth in the community, the RDG next step for participating in the community after graduating from Greek school. Participants stressed that the group allows the youth to come together and maintain their culture in a fun way. Participant 3 described this idea:

So, they [the RDG] are really good at welcoming anybody that wants to dance. That has always been something that the group has maintained. I think that it's a fun environment. I believe that it teaches our youth something different than language, which may sometimes be difficult for people to do, and they may be removed from it if they don't have people in their lives that speak Greek. I think that they're really good at providing another avenue to express your culture and keep that alive. Yeah, and keeping it close together, I think it does a really good job of if you're in the dance group, then, you know the kids in the community. I think that's what's important (personal communication, March 9).

Participant 13 articulated the importance of the RDG to the ethnocultural maintenance of the youth of the GCH and the future of the community as a whole:

Well, I think it's [the RDG] very important. It's one output that we have for the youth. It gathers the young people, the new generations, to identify themselves as Greek, to hear the language through song, through the music, they realize that the music is Greek, that there are the different parts of Greece. And also, that they [students of the RDG] will be our continuation one day. Those kids from Romiosyni are one big group that has a lot of members. And those members keep coming back every year because they want to learn something new, and they belong to the community. So, the community has different parts; it's the older individuals that, you know, they, they'll continue on, but then the youth, if the group [RDG] didn't exist, they [the youth] would leave [the community]. They'll disperse, they still are Greek, but they won't be identifying themselves as much as they do now, as Greek (personal communication, March 28).

Finally, Participant 10 expressed the importance of fun within the RDG and preserving culture through ethnic dance:

So, the strength would be people's motivation to maintain the culture. [...] And I think dance is like the perfect hook that brings people in. [...] I think it also has to do with the fact that dance is just such a fun activity that you're learning the culture through steps and movements. [...] I think that's a strength because it's a fun activity. You're not just sitting somewhere you know, learning about it, or watching a YouTube video on Greek culture, even though those activities are fun too. Don't get me wrong. But, when you're actively dancing, you're actively engaging with the culture. And I think that's a good strength for Romiosyni, the fact that we are a dance group, and that people can engage with the culture in a fun way (personal communication, March 21).

Weaknesses

In contrast to the previous section, the subsequent findings suggest some of the weaknesses involved with the RDG regarding ethnocultural maintenance and the preservation of Greek culture. This section will present themes on weaknesses articulated by the participants in this study.

The most common theme in this portion of the interviews was "politics" and "drama" within the RDG. For the purposes of describing this theme, both "politics" and "drama" refer to miscommunication and administrative disagreements between members of the RDG. Thirteen participants emphasized the lack of proper communication among the dance committee as the most significant weakness of the group regarding ethnocultural maintenance and preservation of Greek culture. Participants believed that in some cases, drama can spill over to the group leading

to conflicts between committee members, teachers, dancers. In some cases the persistence of the politics in the RDG leads to individuals leaving the group. Participant 4 described their experience of leaving the RDG due to this weakness:

I felt the dance committee was very misguided in a lot of the decisions. And I don't know if it was political or just, you know, they thought they were doing the right things. I don't think anybody wants to be malicious down there or wants to do things badly. Everybody wants to do what they think is best for the group. But I felt that there was a poor choice and direction in the way that dance group was going. And that's one of the reasons I left. I couldn't deal with it anymore. I was more or less on my own with some of my opinions. Or people just wouldn't speak up. I was insulted several times. And I took it because I had people in the group I wanted to teach, and I wanted to be involved with. I didn't want to leave them. But at a certain point, it got to be too much. And I was like, you know what? This is not it, and I can't be part of where this is going (personal communication, March 9).

Furthermore, Participant 13 described the importance of limiting miscommunication in the group in order to keep students enrolled and included:

The only weakness I can see [...], I find that sometimes there are personal things going on amongst the dancers or amongst the teachers. And they have to work them out in order to co-exist. Sometimes people will ask why is he in the front [of a dance] or why he is not. Or why did they pick him or her, little things like that. I don't want the personal things to come into the group. Because when it does, it ruins the atmosphere of being together and getting everything done. That's the

only thing, so if we can avoid it, if the teachers can actually make sure that these things don't happen or if they do happen, they [the teachers] now that it [drama] cannot continue if it ever happens. That would be amazing because we don't want any separation. We don't want anybody to exclude anyone. No exclusion. Everybody should be included. Everybody's opinion is valid (personal communication, March 28).

One participant also expressed a lack of support from the GCCOH as a critical weakness of the RDG. The GCCOH oversees the services provided within the community, including the RDG. The participant expressed that in the past, the council had assisted the group financially when it came to purchasing costumes. However, in recent years, the participant expressed a disconnect with the council, leading to a lack of support. Participant 10 described their feelings regarding the lack of community support as a weakness to the RDG regarding ethnocultural maintenance and preserving Greek culture:

There are two things that I can say are weaknesses, and it's really not directly the fault of Romiosyni. I think the first one is administrative neglect of the dance group. And when I say that I'm talking about the community council. [...] So I think because we've been neglected by our council, I believe that has negative effects on the administrative side of Romiosyni. I believe that a lot of times, we're running uphill and that's not technically our fault. We're doing our best to maintain the culture, and that's what we're there mainly for. I have readily seen the dance group as the cultural wing of the community. But when your cultural wing of the community is not well supported, and the powers that be are not supporting it for years, I feel that a lot of teachers just get burnt out. And sometimes, they're

in despair, and I find that sometimes it can reflect on the quality of the group sometimes. I'm not saying that the quality of the group is bad. But it could be even better if we had support from the powers that be (personal communication, March 21).

Another weakness regarding ethnocultural maintenance was expressed by three participants. That is, a lack of support and resources. Neglect from the GCCOH and a lack of resources was described as inhibiting potential improvement in the RDG's ability to continue passing on culture through ethnic dance. As previously mentioned, teachers and assistants within the RDG strive to keep the group running as well as improve the group by researching and adding dances. Participant 10 described their feelings regarding the lack of community support as a weakness to the RDG regarding ethnocultural maintenance and preserving Greek culture:

There are two things that I can say are weaknesses, and it's really not directly the fault of Romiosyni. I think the first one is administrative neglect of the dance group. And when I say that I'm talking about the community council. [...] So I think because we've been neglected by our council, I believe that has negative effects on the administrative side of Romiosyni. I believe that a lot of times, we're running uphill and that's not technically our fault. We're doing our best to maintain the culture, and that's what we're there mainly for. I have readily seen the dance group as the cultural wing of the community. But when your cultural wing of the community is not well supported, and the powers that be are not supporting it for years, I feel that a lot of teachers just get burnt out. And sometimes, they're in despair, and I find that sometimes it can reflect on the quality of the group sometimes. I'm not saying that the quality of the group is bad. But it could be

even better if we had support from the powers that be (personal communication, March 21).

When asked about the significance of the RDG regarding ethnocultural maintenance within the GCH, all 16 participants in the study expressed the important role that the group plays in preserving Greek culture. For ten participants, the significance lies in the RDG's ability to attract youth to the community following Greek school. As described by Participant 16:

I think it is very important. It's one of the few branches of the community that can collect and attract our children, the youth, to stay within the community to identify themselves as Greeks (personal communication, March 27).

Furthermore, Participant 4 explained the RDG role in ethnocultural maintenance by bringing members of the youth together:

The significance of the dance group is maintaining the community. It is one of the most significant ways that youth can stay involved. We don't have a whole lot other than the church. And then as soon as you're done Greek school, basically, you're not going to see the community, maybe at an event, but that's really it. So, the dance group keeps those kids involved in the community (personal communication, March 9).

Six participants believed that the significance of the RDG regarding ethnocultural maintenance is due to its ability to help in preserving aspects of Greek culture through dance. As Participant 6 explained:

I think it (the RDG) plays a significant role within our community. For example, if you didn't know how to Greek dance at an event, like a gala dinner, or some of the basic stuff, it can be very easy to feel left out. I feel like it definitely brings

everyone together. At almost all our events in the community, we have music and dance, so the RDG helps maintain that portion of our culture for kids in the group (personal communication, March 16).

Moreover, Participant 3 described the preservation aspects of Greek culture through ethnic dance:

I think it's significant. It's not that if you're not part of the dance group, you cannot maintain your culture. However, I believe that it's just an easier avenue for you to maintain that culture and that ability to express yourself. When you're at a party at the hall, like the New Year's party, and you don't know how to dance, then you're sitting there holding up the wall. I don't think it's as fun for those people, and they don't feel as connected to their culture because they can't dance. They can't partake in that part of our culture. So, the group is important in helping those involved in connecting to that aspect of our culture (personal communication, March 9).

All 16 participants believed that the RDG is important for ethnocultural maintenance in future generations of Greek-Canadians within the community of Halifax. As Participant 4 described, “We can pass the torch through dance; we can pass down our culture. Who's going to teach my grandkids one day? Without the group, how would we do that? It's super important” (personal communication, March 13). All participants also believed that the group would become more significant for preserving Greek culture in the future. The need to continue in maintaining culture through ethnic dance and the RDG was articulated by participant 2 “maintaining culture does get harder and harder as time goes on” (personal communication, March 8). Moreover,

Participant 5 explained the importance of the RDG in ethnocultural maintenance for future generations:

100% it [the RDG] is important and will be more important because as we go up in the generations, there are more mixed marriages. So, my friend actually has two kids. Her kids dropped out of Greek school. They don't have any Greek friends, and she said she's always regretted letting them drop out of Greek school or not connecting them with more Greeks because they have no idea about their Greek heritage, and both of their parents are Greek. So, she often tells me to make sure to keep my kids involved. The RDG is a good option to have. And if it was lacking, I think the maintenance of our cultural identity in Canada would slowly dissipate (personal communication, March 12).

Participants were asked if they believed the RDG could improve its approaches to help further sustain ethnocultural maintenance while slowing down or halting the assimilation process. Responses and possible suggestions to improve the RDG in this regard are presented in this section. Nine participants believed that the RDG already helps the youth within the GCH preserve their culture and ethnic identity. These participants believed that RDG should continue to exist and continue helping children learn ethnic dance. As Participant 8 described, "The group should keep sharing knowledge of dance and sharing the love of dance and its inclusivity. It should continue being a resource for our youth" (personal communication, March 20).

While the majority of participants had no suggestions to offer, some participants did share some potential ideas. Two participants believed an administrative improvement could be made when it comes to dancers' voices being heard. These two participants believed administrative members of the RDG should be more open to suggestions from dancers with regarding opinions

such as dances performed. Two other participants suggested having more RDG-run events in the future: hosting galas, Greek nights, dance-a-thons, and other events where the group can perform. Hosting events run by the RDG was suggested as a way to further emphasize the significance of dance to Greek culture for members of the group and the community as a whole. Two more participants suggested expanding the group and creating a division for adults. These participants explained that having a group for adults could help in bringing in more parents and promoting ethnocultural maintenance among the older age groups. Finally, one participant believed the RDG should begin utilizing social media to attract more youth to join and stay in the group.

Ethnic dance, place, and belongingness in multicultural Canada

Participants were asked their opinion on whether ethnic dance is important towards place and belongingness in multicultural Canada. All 16 participants indicated that ethnic dance was important, with four key themes being expressed: ethnic dance is a form of self-expression; ethnic dance groups can create a sense of community; ethnic dance provides an opportunity to blend ethnic identities; and, ethnic dance assists in maintaining aspects of culture for ethnic groups in a multicultural country.

Six participants believed ethnic dance is a form of self-expression and is essential for place and belongingness in multicultural Canada. Participants described that self-expression through ethnic dance allows an individual to share aspects of their culture. Through ethnic dance, people can celebrate a part of their heritage, and through ethnic dance, people can come together in a form of culture sharing, as Participant 4 articulated:

Dancing is a significant portion of our culture and other cultures. So, it's a way people culturally express themselves. You can show music, and you can show

costumes, you can show physical attributes and styles, all with a single dance. So that is a huge aspect. It's definitely a very significant way to present your culture. And in a multicultural environment and country like Canada, having a well-organized, well-run, ethnic dance group can go a long way to promoting culture and showing it off to everybody and coming together to share with others (personal communication, March 9).

Furthermore, Participant 2 described ethnic dance and its importance to a feeling of place and belonging, as in some cases, ethnic dance can be the only way to express yourself:

I think it is important, and my main explanation for this is that ethnic dance is a form of self-expression. And being part of the Greek community, which is technically a minority within Canada, it is important to hang on to dance and cultural belonging. As I said, ethnic dance is a form of self-expression, and it's hard to put this into words, but sometimes, as someone from this background, there is no other way to express yourself other than dance, whether it be during a positive time or a not-so-easy time (personal communication, March 8).

Eight participants indicated that ethnic dance assists individuals in becoming closer to their ethnic community, thus enforcing a feeling of place and belongingness in multicultural Canada. Participant 3 described, "It's been really instrumental in my feeling of place and belonging in the community. And I'm trying to instill that in my kids as well." (personal communication, March 8). Furthermore, Participant 7 explained, "Dance plays a huge part; it connects you to your roots, and through dance, you feel a sense of belonging within the community (personal communication, March 13). In addition to these perceptions of ethnic

dance and its role in contributing to a sense of place and belonging, Participant 8 articulated the following:

Yeah, it does because it goes back to how dance brings everybody together. For those that are coming over to Canada, for example, if you find an ethnic community group, and there's a dance group, I just think that it's another way of meeting other Greeks or other people that share the same culture as you. Through ethnic dance, you can make connections with other people who share the same culture as you, which would help in belonging (personal communication, March 13).

Two participants indicated that ethnic dance helped them feel a sense of place and belongingness in multicultural Canada by acting as a way to balance their Canadian ethnic background and their Greek ethnic background. In turn, this helped blend the two backgrounds, which was vital to the participants as both ethnic backgrounds were viewed as essential to who they were as people. Participant 6 explained that through the RDG, they were able to balance the two. They were able to form a group of friends different from the ones they met growing up in school. They referenced their dance group friends as their Greek friends who played an important role in them feeling a sense of belonging to their Greek roots. Additionally, Participant 15 explained the importance of ethnic dance place and belonging in a multicultural society:

I had my English side, and I had my Greek side. So, a lot of times, those were intertwined. So, for me, [ethnic] dance definitely helped that. On one side, I am Canadian. I do go to school and learn English. I have all those friends, but I have a separate life. On that side, I go to church, to dance, and to Greek school. And that helped me. It made me feel more at home because instead of having to choose

one side or the other, I got to have both. So, for me, it was beneficial because I was able to live both lives (personal communication, March 26).

One participant also expressed the vital role ethnic dance plays in maintaining culture. This participant believed that, in this way, ethnic dance supports a feeling of place and belongingness in multicultural Canada. When asked if ethnic dance is important for a feeling of place and belongingness in a multicultural society, Participant 5 explained, "Yes, because it's a way to maintain your culture and your heritage in a foreign land. In this way, it helps you feel a sense of belonging to your cultural roots" (personal communication, March 12).

All 16 participants unanimously expressed the importance of the RDG regarding multiculturalism. For all the participants, the RDG's role regarding multiculturalism has to do with being a great way of sharing aspects of Greek culture. Participant 12 described the RDG's role regarding multiculturalism "I think that we contribute to multiculturalism in the sense that we showcase our dances and our culture" (personal communication, March 22). The sharing of culture with the city of Halifax, as well as within the province of Nova Scotia, through dance, was viewed by participants as the primary role of the RDG. As Participant 10 explained:

I think that our role in a multicultural society is to show a piece of Greek culture to the people of Canada. And through dance, we can show just how diverse our culture is. So that it also can be something that other ethnic groups can look at and say, oh, cool, they (the RDG) went that far into it; there's more than just food and breaking plates (personal communication, March 21).

Six participants indicated that, while the RDG plays an essential role in multiculturalism, there is room to improve in continuing to share aspects of Greek culture. Participant 5 articulated this idea:

We used to be really good at getting out in and performing at multicultural festivals and sharing our culture. I know the city knows about the Greeks because of the Greek fest. They're exposed to Greek culture in that way, but I feel if the dance group were a bit more involved with some of the other multicultural festivals, ethnic communities, and organizations, it might help in sharing our culture (personal communication, March 12).

Furthermore, Participant 2 expressed the opportunity the RDG has to grow in terms of promoting multiculturalism in Halifax through Greek dance:

I think Romiosyni's role with regard to multiculturalism is very important and that there could be an opportunity for growth here. We live in Halifax, a pretty multicultural city, and it's growing each and every year. [...] I think that Romiosyni could improve its role by reaching out to other communities and other dance groups and helping organize multicultural events. Or take part in more festivals. [...]. So I think the RDG has a huge role in promoting multiculturalism within our city going, but there's definitely room to grow (personal communication, March 8).

Finally, four participants believed promoting multiculturalism through performing was a main objective of the RDG. Participant 4 described the significance of multiculturalism and the RDG:

To teach Greek traditional and modern dances to the community of Halifax [...] you know, pass on the knowledge as a part of teaching [...] that sort of stuff. Promote multiculturalism and promote Greek culture around Nova Scotia because we used to perform around the province. We performed in Amherst, Cape Breton,

and Digby [...]. But yeah, teach it and promote it [Greek dance]. Support the Greek community and promote the culture and dance around Nova Scotia (personal communication, March 9).

Relationship between ethnic cultural dance and other ethnocultural leisure activities for ethnic cultural maintenance and multiculturalism

Participants were asked to compare the RDG with other ethnocultural leisure activities within Halifax's Greek community. The activities were compared based on their importance of maintaining "Greekness" in multicultural Canada. Additionally, participants were asked to rank the following ethnocultural leisure activities based on their importance. The activities were: ethnic dance through the RDG; the Greek community religious youth group Met Youth Halifax; the Halifax Greek festival; and, community events. It is important to note that two participants indicated that each of these factors help in shaping the community on their own and help in maintaining "Greekness" differently. For these two participants, all four activities were tied.

Eleven of the 16 participants indicated that the RDG has the most important role in the community for maintaining "Greekness" in a multicultural country and within the community itself. For most of the participants, this was due to ethnic dance being present in some way in the remaining activities. The RDG has a significant role as a performance piece during the Greek festival. Additionally, participants explained that dancing is commonplace during almost all community events. Dancing at events is also the case for Met Youth, as during many of their conference retreats, there is always Greek ethnic dancing. Furthermore, participants believed that the RDG's role in bringing the youth together puts it above the rest, as through the RDG, many dancers begin volunteering or participating in the other activities listed. All 16 participants did have Romiosyni in their top two activities or tied with the rest.

For two participants, the Halifax Greek festival was their number one ranked ethnocultural leisure activity within the GCH. As Participant 4 described, "Greek Fest promotes all aspects of our culture. So, I would probably say Greek Fest would be the most important" (personal communication, March 9). Furthermore, Greek Fest was described as the biggest community fundraiser; therefore, making it significant to the community in this regard. However, six participants believed the festival was the least important for maintaining Greekness. This was due to the Greek Fest being viewed as a way to share culture with the city of Halifax but not necessarily to preserve it for the Greeks in the community of Halifax.

Only one participant believed that community events were the most important ethnocultural leisure activity for maintaining Greekness. Participant 9 explained that community events provide the best combination of maintaining Greek culture through dance and food, tradition, religion, and sharing culture. Furthermore, participant 9 explained that community events are also key fundraisers for the community. As Participant 9 articulated:

If we think of Greek identity as a diamond, it has different facets to form that diamond. And while each facet is important on every side, ultimately, you need those sides to fit together. I think the community events category would be at the top because it catches all those facets, all those aspects of our culture (personal communication, March 14).

Finally, while no participant had Met Youth ranked as the most important ethnocultural leisure activity in the community, participants did emphasize its importance in connecting the youth to religion. It is also important to note that five participants were never a part of Met Youth and knew little about the group and therefore ranked it near the bottom.

While participants in this study believed that each service offered by the community is significant and each plays a part in ethnocultural maintenance within the GCH, participants also believed that only two of these services were important with regards to multiculturalism. The Halifax Greek Festival was viewed by 13 participants as the most significant ethnocultural leisure activity with regards to multiculturalism. The festival was described as the biggest event of GCH when it comes to sharing Greek culture with the city of Halifax. Furthermore, participants also continued to articulate the importance of RDG with regards to multiculturalism. As stated, primarily through performing at events in the city, including the festival, the RDG play an important role in sharing Greek culture through ethnic dance.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Summary

The following is summary of the relevant themes identified in this study. Relevant themes are based on findings that adhere to the purpose and objectives of this study. The presentation of this summary will following the same format as the results section in chapter 4, that being: (1) demographics, (2) ethnic dance and ethnocultural identity, (3) ethnic dance and ethnocultural maintenance, (4) ethnic dance, place, and belongingness in multicultural Canada, and (5) the relationship between ethnic cultural dance and other ethnocultural leisure activities for ethnic cultural maintenance and multiculturalism.

In total 16 participant were interviewed during this study. In summation:

- Seven were current instructors;
- Nine were former instructors.

Teaching experience ranged for one year to 21 years. The average length of teaching was approximately four years. Furthermore:

- Five current teachers are full teachers;
- Two current teachers are considered teaching assistants;
- Seven former teachers were full teachers; and,
- Two former teachers were teaching assistants.

Finally, a gender breakdown of the participants is listed below,

- Five participants were male; and,
- Eleven participants were female.

Ethnic Dance and Ethnocultural Identity

Themes regarding ethnic dance and ethnocultural identity were identified during the analysis of the interviews. The roles of the RDG within the GCH and the groups' objectives reflect the importance of teaching, sharing, and promoting aspects of ethnocultural identity through ethnic dance. As stated:

- 16 participants believed the primary role of the RDG is teaching the youth about Greek culture through ethnic dance. Eight participants believe another role of the RDG is sharing culture through performing, both for the GCH and the city of Halifax.
- 16 participants indicated the main objective of the RDG is teaching traditional Greek dance to the youth of the community. Three of these participants explained creating a fun environment for the youth to come together is another objective; and, two more participants indicated that performing for an audience is another objective of the RDG.
- Twelve participants believed the social aspect of ethnic dance is a motivating factor for enrolment. Ten participants believed maintaining culture is another motivating factor for enrolment. Four participants believed looking up to other dancers is a motivating factor for enrolment and, three participants indicated that ethnic dance being a form of exercise is a motivating factor for enrolment.

Ethnic Dance and Ethnocultural Maintenance

When analyzing the importance of the ethnic dance towards ethnocultural maintenance of the Greeks within the GCH, the strengths and weaknesses of the group were analyzed. The following presents the strengths and weakness of the RDG as perceived by the participants:

- Nine participants indicated the diversity of dance repertoire within the RDG was a strength and, seven participants expressed that creating a fun environment that brings youth together was a strength of the RDG.
- 13 participants believed "Politics" within the RDG and lack of proper communication was a weakness and, three participants believed lack of support and resources was a weakness.

Participants were asked to describe their perceptions regarding ethnic dance as a tool for ethnocultural maintenance. The following is a list of themes regarding this topic:

- All 16 participants indicated that the RDG has an important role in preserving Greek culture within the community. Ten participants indicated that this was due to the RDG's ability to attract youth to the community following Greek school and, six participants believed the significance of the RDG is due to its ability to help in preserving aspects of Greek culture through dance.
- All 16 participants believed that the RDG is significant when it comes to ethnocultural maintenance for a future generation of Greek-Canadians within the GCH. Participants were asked to make suggestions pertaining to the RDG in continuing to promote ethnocultural maintenance and slow assimilation in the future. Nine participants had no suggestions to offer. Two participants suggested being better at ensuring dancers' voices are heard. Two participants suggested organizing more RDG events. Two participants suggested creating an adult group and, one participant suggested utilizing social media to attract the youth.

Ethnic Dance, Place, and Belongingness in Multicultural Canada

- All 16 participants indicated that the sharing of Greek culture through ethnic dance was important in the RDG's role regarding multiculturalism. Furthermore, all 16 participants indicated that ethnic dance promoted a feeling of place and belongingness in a multicultural society. Eight participants referred to the feeling stemming from creating a sense of community through ethnic dance, six participants believed the feeling was due to self-expression through ethnic dance, two participants believed ethnic dance assisted in blending ethnic identities and, one participant believed it was due to maintaining culture.

The Relationship Between Ethnic Cultural Dance and Other Ethnocultural Leisure Activities for Ethnic Cultural Maintenance and Multiculturalism.

- All 16 participants believed that the RDG ranked in the top two of the most important ethnocultural leisure activities offered by the GCH in terms of preserving Greekness in a multicultural society. Eleven of the participants believed the RDG was the most important when compared to the Halifax Greek Festival, Met Youth Halifax, and community events. However, it is important to note that all participants believed that each activity plays a role in cultural maintenance. In terms of multiculturalism, the RDG and the Halifax Greek Festival were deemed to be the most important activities.

Discussion

The findings from this study suggest that ethnic dance taught in the RDG in Halifax, Nova Scotia, positively impacts ethnocultural identity and ethnocultural maintenance for members of the group. According to Gavaki (2004), preserving elements of culture and ethnic identity is essential for ethnic minority groups. Successful preservation of ethnocultural elements is vital to slowing down assimilation in future generations of ethnic minority groups in a host

country (Gavaki, 2004). Individuals of an ethnic minority group who become assimilated will no longer identify as members of a specific ethnic group (Gavaki, 2004). Every participant in this study indicated that one of the roles of the RDG is to facilitate the passing on of Greek culture through ethnic dance. Through ethnic dance, members of the group can learn about traditional aspects of Greek culture, thus strengthening a connection to their ethnocultural identity.

Participants also expressed the significance of the RDG in passing on culture and slowing down assimilation within the community. Furthermore, according to all 16 participants, the RDG's role within the community is to assist in the passing on of culture to younger generations. In this regard, the RDG plays a role in preserving the ethnocultural traits of some GCH members. This aligns with the goal of ethnic community organizations presented by Karlis (1997). According to Karlis, the goal of ethnic community organizations is to offer services, such as leisure and recreational activities, to members of these communities. The purpose of these services is to preserve the ethnocultural traits of immigrants and their descendants (Karlis).

Along with describing the role of the RDG within the community, participants were asked to share their beliefs on the objectives of the RDG. Unanimously, all 16 participants shared that the main objective of the RDG is to teach Greek dance to the youth of Halifax, with the goal being to pass on aspects of Greek culture to future generations of Greek-Canadians within the community. This objective is consistent with the goal of ethnic community groups and organizations as described by Karlis (1997). It has been found that ethnic community groups incorporate the use of ethnocultural leisure and recreational activities to promote the retention of cultural traits among its members (Karlis; Karlis & Dawson, 1995; Karlis et al., 2020). The RDG positively reinforces this sentiment, as described by Participant 10 when referring to the RDG's objectives, "The main thing is to maintain the culture, that's the primary objective [...] dispersing

the culture to the community " (Personal communication, March 21). In addition, the importance of the role and the objectives of the RDG fall in line with the process of slowing down assimilation. Traits such as music, language, and traditional practices are deemed as vital cultural elements to an immigrant group in the process of assimilation (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gordon, 1964). The omission of these traits leads to full assimilation in mainstream society (Alba & Nee; Gordon). The RDG's commitment to promoting the retention cultural traits through dance can be considered vital in slowing down this process.

Results in this study indicated that there were four primary motivating factors for enrollment into the RDG. The first motivating factor is based on social interactions which emphasizes the role of creating lasting relationships in the group which was expressed by twelve participants. Parents encourage their children to enroll in order to create bonds with other children of Greek descent and cultural interests, in hopes that the student will continue enrolling to sustain these relationships. The importance of creating and sustaining social bonds with individuals of the same ethnic background in relation to preserving culture is a central claim presented by Tirone and Pedlar (2005). The formation of social bonds between members of ethnic minority groups stimulated richer experiences during participation in traditional leisure activities (Tirone & Pedlar, 2005). The role of preserving culture through ethnic dance is a final motivating factor for enrolment. Ten participants believed that for some parents, this might be the initial motivating factor, while for students, preserving culture becomes a motivation to continue enrolling as they get older tying into the idea of preserving aspects of culture through ethnic dance.

The role of ethnocultural-specific leisure activities among ethnic minority groups has been shown to help in facilitating the retention of ethnocultural traits among group members.

Stodolska (2000), suggested that participation in traditional leisure activities can assist individuals in retaining desired cultural elements. This sentiment was further magnified by Tirone and Gallant (2017). In their study, participants expressed the significance of traditional leisure activities among immigrant minority groups in Truro, Nova Scotia (Tirone & Gallant, 2017). Participants of this study expressed a sense of comfort and connection to their homeland after participating in various ethnocultural-specific leisure activities, including eating traditional foods, listening to traditional music, and ethnic dancing (2017). As described by the dance teachers of the RDG, the group learns an assortment of ethnic dances from various regions around Greece. The persistence of the group's commitment to authenticity through this extensive repertoire of dances was a significant factor that was outlined for its ability to pass on cultural traditions to group members. Therefore, the assumption could be made that the leisure activity of ethnic dance provided by the RDG provides the GCH with a service by which youth can seek to preserve aspects of their Greek heritage therefore promoting ethnocultural maintenance.

Perceptions of the participants are in line with current literature regarding the use of ethnocultural-specific leisure activities in the process of ethnocultural maintenance. According to Tirone and Pedlar (2005), the consumption of ethnic goods, such as music, food, and dance, among ethnic minority groups is important for remaining connected to one's homeland. In agreement with this idea is the emerging theme of ethnic dance in connecting members of the RDG to their Greek heritage. As the participants explained, Greek ethnic dance encapsulates a range of Greek culture such as history, geography, and music. The RDG facilitates a space for youth within the community to learn about these aspects of Greek culture, thus the retention of these vital cultural traits slows down, or even halts, the process of assimilation (Alba & Nee, 1997; Gordon, 1964). Furthermore, this finding positively correlates with the idea of Greek

ethnic dance promoting the retention of ethnocultural traits (Issari, 2011), and facilitating a connection for individuals to their homeland (Hunt, 2004; Zografou & Pipyrrou, 2011).

Results in this study point to the significant role the RDG plays in ethnocultural maintenance. Perceptions of participants in this study present the various strengths of the RDG as a service in both sharing Greek ethnic dance with the groups' members and preserving Greek culture within said members. The two main strengths of the group in this regard were the diversity of the dances taught within the RDG's repertoire and, creating a fun environment for people to participate and learn Greek dance.

The diversity of the RDG's repertoire and its importance to ethnocultural maintenance was perceived as the biggest strength of the group. Participants believed the repertoire taught by the group represents a diverse range of Greek culture. This repertoire is a significant factor because the participants recognized the RDG as a vessel to explain the history and distinctive cultural features of each region. Some of these features include dance style, costume design, and language dialects which help dancers gain a strong understanding of specific areas of Greece. Additionally, the participants expressed how much they valued the desire of community members to volunteer in not only teaching the group, but also developing new teaching material which helps ensure that the group continues running. Teachers and assistants volunteer many hours of their time to set up lesson plans, running the practices, organize performances, and preparing their students to perform. They also consistently seek to update the material taught by finding new dances to teach from year to year.

Finally, establishing a fun environment for the youth of the community was seen as a strength when it came to ethnic dance and its perceived role in ethnocultural maintenance. Establishing a fun environment was viewed as imperative in keeping students enrolled in the

group. This finding relates to the group's objectives of keeping the youth involved and teaching them about their culture.

While the results of this study do indicate the importance of ethnic dance and the RDG in ethnocultural maintenance, there are weaknesses within the RDG that are important to include. Chimbos (1980, 1986) and Vlassis (1942) both expressed concerns within Greek ethnic communities when it comes to divisions among community members. Infighting, politics, and differences in the organizations' philosophies were all seen as weaknesses to the sustainability of Greek communities within Canada (Chimbos, 1980, 1986; Vlassis, 1942). This coincides with one of the perceived weaknesses of the RDG. Participants expressed concern regarding drama, poor communication, and politics within the dance committee as a dominant drawback for the group. Some participants felt that, although every teacher in the RDG has good intentions, an inability to communicate and be open to all opinions has pushed away former teachers and dancers over the years.

Additionally, three participants expressed that a weakness of the group was lack of support and resources. As an example, participant 4 explain that while in the past, the GCCOH had assisted the RDG through funding, in recent years, there has been a lack of support from the council. While the participant does maintain that the overall quality of the group still remains high, with funding and support from the GCCOH, this participant felt that the quality of the group could improve. Moreover, it was explained that with increased funding and financial aid from the community, participants believe that the quality of the group could increase. This positive result of increased support could be done through purchasing new costumes or attending more conferences. Whether the investments go towards new costumes or attending a conference, both means present a valuable medium to preserving culture and interest of the group. Despite

the outlined weaknesses, the participants' perceptions in this study contend that the RDG plays a significant role in ethnocultural maintenance in the GCH.

Furthermore, it seems that the ethnocultural leisure activity of ethnic dance plays a vital role in creating a sense of place and belongingness in a multicultural society and promoting multiculturalism in the city of Halifax. Within the context of multiculturalism in Canada, researchers have identified the significance of multiculturalism policies and its role in promoting the preservation of culture for an ethnic group and the sharing of culture with other Canadians. According to Bahkov (2015), the purpose of the multiculturalism policy in 1971 was to promote the maintenance and sharing of culture. Participants in this study expressed the role of the RDG and ethnic dance when it came to this idea. Sharing culture through festivals, events and performances was also viewed as an objective of the group. Participants believed that along with maintaining culture, another vital role of the group was promoting culture throughout Halifax and the province of Nova Scotia.

Participants suggested that the activity of ethnic dance through the RDG had a positive impact on a feeling of belonging and place in a multicultural society. Two participants indicated that this feeling occurred through being able to practice the cultural traditions of their Greek heritage while not sacrificing their Canadian culture. The idea of balancing aspects of multiple ethnic backgrounds has been examined by many scholars who presented varying opinions. Gordon (1964) suggested that multiple cultural influences end up competing with each other rather than meshing together, leading to individuals choosing between one or the other. However, Berry (2006) stated that, individuals living in multicultural societies can form a balance between ethnic identities, thus creating a feeling of belonging to both the host country and a minority ethnic group within it. Furthermore, participants in this study expressed the importance of the

RDG in creating a sense of community and a space where they can connect with others. This sense of community was described as assisting in formulating a feeling of place and belongingness. Having an opportunity to interact with members of ones' ethnic community has been shown to enhance a feeling of belonging to both a host country and a minority ethnic group (Chow, 2007; Portes & Zhou, 1993). It can be deduced that ethnic dance can enhance an individual's ability to feel a sense of belonging and place in a multicultural society. Additionally, when describing assimilation theory, Alba & Nee (1997) as well as Gordon, (1964) refer to the significance of structural assimilation as the process which leads to eventual full assimilation of an immigrant group, Structural assimilation refers to the process by which immigrant groups begin to join social cliques and clubs of the host country (Gordon, 1964). By having a social aspect through dance keeping the youth of the GCH together, it can be perceived that the RDG may assist in slowing the process of structural assimilation as well as total assimilation.

Subsequently, participants identified that the RDG played a more significant role in providing opportunities for ethnocultural maintenance than other entities and services in the GCH. While there was no clear distinction on whether the RDG is the most important service provided by the GCH, participants did emphasize its role as significant, as all 16 participants had ranked the RDG in the top two or higher when compared to Met Youth Halifax, the Halifax Greek Festival, and community events. It is essential to note that all participants indicated that each activity has its own unique role within the community, fulfilling different characteristics of ethnocultural maintenance. Participants did express that ethnic dance is commonplace, in some degree, in the remaining activities listed. Due to this reason, it was suggested that the RGD is intertwined throughout the rest of the offered community ethnocultural leisure services, again elevating its importance to the community.

Finally, participants believed that the RDG and the Halifax Greek Festival had the most significant role within the GCH when it came to multiculturalism. The Halifax Greek Festival was noted by all participants as being essential in the sharing of Greek culture with city of Halifax. In addition, participants believed that RDG and ethnic dance also have significance in this regard. Performing at various events including the festival were as important when it came to multiculturalism. As for Met Youth and community events, these ethnocultural leisure activities were described as more significant when it came to preserving culture, but they played a small role in terms of sharing and promoting multiculturalism.

Participants provided recommendations on how the RDG can improve its approach to continue promoting ethnocultural maintenance to its members. First, two participants believe leaders within the RDG should focus on being more open to criticism, suggestions, and recommendations from dancers regarding dances taught and performed. In addition, these participants voiced that there was an urgent need to improve communication between dance committee members. Improving this communication will also help the members of the group be more receptive to all of the dancer's recommendations. Additionally, two participants suggested hosting more events through the RDG such as dances and a gala as another way to promote sharing aspects of Greek culture to the GCH while also strengthening RDG's members connection to the ethnic identity. An expansion of the group through the formation of an adult division was also recommended by two participants. Finally, utilizing social media to continue expanding enrolment in the group was another suggested option by one participant.

Limitations

As is common in research of any nature, there were limitations in this study that are important to identify. The first limitation to note is the sample size used for this study. While the

rationale for the sample used was presented in the methodology section of this study, it is important to note that the themes presented are only representative of the unique perceptions of the participants in this study. The sample used was based on the characteristics explained earlier in this study: all participants must have taught in the RDG in the past ten years for a minimum of one year. This may limit the current findings of the study to be purely representative of the current sample. Therefore, the sample size may inhibit generalizing these findings to other ethnic dance groups in Canada or other ethnocultural leisure activities.

Additionally, it is important to identify potential biases that may have limited this study. Firstly, teachers and assistants may have been biased when asked questions about the RDG given that they are or were responsible for running the group. Further research with other members of the group or GCH may provide more insight. Also, where the researcher is a current member of the group, participants may have been biased when it came to answering questions. While this was addressed in the ethical consideration section, further research by an external researcher may help in providing variation in results.

Furthermore, for the purposes of examining ethnocultural maintenance and the process of slowing down assimilation, it may have been beneficial to focus on specific generations of immigrants. In this study, there were a variety of participants, ranging from first-generation Greek-Canadian immigrants to third and fourth-generation Greek-Canadian immigrants. Focusing directly on a specific generation may have helped in getting a more accurate representation of the RDG's role in ethnocultural maintenance.

Second, it is essential to note that the focus of this study was purely on the perceptions of dance teachers and assistants. Within the RDG, a multitude of avenues could have been examined to understand better the role of the RDG in the GCH. Some other individuals

perceptions that could have been considered includes the perceptions of parents, dancers, or members of the GCCOH. The perceptions of these individuals may have provided a different perspective on the RDG and the role of ethnic dance in preserving culture as well as helping promote a sense of place and belongingness.

Thirdly, the study may have been limited by the variation in interview locations. While some interviews were conducted in person, others were conducted virtually over Zoom. These locations were selected based on participants' preferences and availability. However, having a consistent interview location throughout the study may have been beneficial. Perhaps the variance in interview location may have affected participants' ability to elaborate when asked questions.

Furthermore, a fourth limitation may have been in the construction of the interview guide itself. While current literature regarding the topic was examined during the formation of the interview guide, there was a lack of literature explicitly pointing to the use of ethnic dance as a tool for ethnocultural maintenance and in promoting a sense of place and belongingness. Future research in this area may help construct a better interview guide.

Additionally, the role of the RDG in passing on knowledge and culture to students and performing may differentiate it from other ethnic dance groups in Canada. Furthermore, the repertoire of dances taught may also limit the ability to adapt the findings of this study to other ethnic dance groups. To the researcher's knowledge, many other ethnic dance groups in Canada focus primarily on performing or focus primarily on one or two regions. Therefore, the findings of this study may only represent the RDG and their current goals and objectives.

Recommendations

The purpose of this study and its objectives create an opportunity for future research in this field from many perspectives. Based on the findings of this study, it seems as though ethnic dance as means of ethnocultural maintenance is present within the RDG and the GCH. This study contributes to the current literature regarding ethnocultural leisure activities and their propensity for preserving culture and ethnic identity among ethnic minority groups. Ethnic dance also seems to have a role in facilitating a sense of place and belonging in a multicultural society based on the participants' perceptions in this study. With this in mind, future research regarding the results of this study is recommended in this section.

Firstly, future research regarding ethnic dance and its role in ethnocultural maintenance could be further examined within the GCH. As mentioned in the limitations section of this study, future research focusing on the perceptions of other members of the RDG, such as dancers or other members of the community, could present data pertaining to the topic. In addition, it could reveal new information and promote more development in the community.

Secondly, future research focusing on specific generations of immigrants could reveal more perspectives on the effectiveness of ethnic dance in ethnocultural maintenance. A study focusing primarily on second and third-generation immigrant perspectives within the RDG may present different findings. This generation of ethnic immigrants would indeed provide an exciting perspective by third-generation immigrants. As discussed by Gavaki (2004), the process of assimilation may be further along or completed in some individuals which could yield varying results.

A third recommendation would be to expand the parameters of this study further back than the ten-year range dictated for participants to have taught. Widening this range would bring a larger sample size which would contribute to the number of perspectives collected as data.

Additionally, future research could focus on having annual or biannual research studies on the perceptions of dance teachers. This research might confirm the effectiveness of the recommendations suggested in this study and if and how they were to be implemented by the RDG. Over time, new teachers would hopefully join the group again, creating an opportunity for more perceptions to be presented and ensuring that the group is constantly active and improving. Furthermore, research into the administrative approaches of the teachers and teaching assistants in the group may provide more insight in possible ways to approve approaches of ethnocultural maintenance through ethnic dance.

Moreover, the basis of this study was focused primarily on the Greeks in Canada. A fourth recommendation would be to shift the focus to a different ethnic group in Canada. While ethnic dance has a significant role in Greek culture, a perspective from another ethnic group may shed more light on the role of ethnic dance in ethnocultural maintenance within other ethnic minority groups in Canada. Such a study could contribute to research on the role of ethnocultural maintenance in a larger context and capitalizes on Canada's multiculturalism and the experience of Canadians from diverse backgrounds.

Finally, recommendations will be made to the RDG based on this study to potentially improve aspects of ethnocultural maintenance provided by the group. Firstly, recommendations will be made when it comes to listening to voices of dancers and suggestion. Additionally, improvement in communication and the handling of administrative issues when it comes to politics and drama will be suggested as an area to work on for sustaining the retention of group

members. The utilization of social media to help increase group enrolment in the future will be suggested. Lastly, the formation of an adult group in order to reach a new audience will be recommended.

Conclusion

Results in this study indicate that ethnic dance plays an important role in ethnocultural maintenance and equally in creating a feeling of place and belonging among individuals in a multicultural society. These sentiments, however, only reflect the perceptions of dance teachers within the RDG in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The perceptions of these dance teachers highlight the critical role ethnic dance plays as a tool for teaching members of the group aspects of the ethnocultural identity and promoting ethnocultural maintenance within the GCH. Perceptions of participants in this study indicate the significance of the ethnocultural-specific leisure activity of ethnic dance in preserving Greek culture among the Greek-Canadian youth in the community and promoting a sense of place and belonging in a multicultural society. Finally, the RDG plays a significant role alongside other ethnocultural leisure activities provided by the GCH in ethnocultural maintenance and promoting multiculturalism.

The strengths of the RDG support its ability as an ethnic dance group to facilitate the preservation of Greek culture. The vast repertoire of dances taught, the desire from volunteers to keep the group running and improving over time, and the establishment of a fun environment to teach Greek dance are all essential to the objectives of the RDG; that being teaching Greek dance and, therefore, Greek culture to the youth of the community. Recommendations regarding the weakness of the group will be relayed to the dance committee as well as the GCCOH to offer insight as to ways the group could continue improving its service to the community in the future.

Further research is still needed in order to truly understand the role of leisure activities in ethnocultural maintenance among ethnic minority groups. Moreover, the impact of ethnic dance, specifically in this regard, should also be further examined. Additionally, further research on the role of leisure activities in promoting a sense of place and belongingness among ethnic minority groups in a multicultural society is suggested.

References

- Al-Busaidi, Z. Q. (2008). Qualitative research and its uses in health care. *Sultan Qaboos University Medical Journal*, 8(1), 11–19.
- Alba, R. & Nee, V. (1997). Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration. *The International Migration Review*, 31(4), 826–874. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2547416>
- Antonsich, M. (2010). Searching for belonging - An analytical framework. *Geography Compass*, 4(6), 644–659. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8198.2009.00317.x>
- Bakhov, I. S. (2013). Government multicultural policy in Canada in the period of 1970-2000-s. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 15(10), 1450-1454.
- Berry, J. W. (2013). Research on multiculturalism in Canada. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37(6), 663–675. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2013.09.005>
- Bloemraad, I. (2012). Understanding “Canadian Exceptionalism” in immigration and pluralism policy. In *Policy File*. Migration Policy Institute. *Gütersloh*, 145-170.
- Burnet, J. (1981). Minorities I have belonged to. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 13(1), 24–36.
- Byers, M. & Tastsoglou, E. (2008). Negotiating ethno-cultural identity: the experience of Greek and Jewish youth in Halifax. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 40(2), 5–33.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/ces.2010.0003>
- Chimbos, P. (1980). *The Canadian odyssey : the Greek experience in Canada*. McClelland & Stewart in association with the Multiculturalism Program, Department of the Secretary of State and the Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Supply and Services, Canada.
- Chimbos, P. (1986). The changing organization of Greek Canadian communities. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 27(3-4), 208–216.
<https://doi.org/10.1163/156854286X00168>

- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research*. SAGE.
- Croucher, S. (2004). *Globalization and belonging : The politics of identity in a changing world*.
Rowman & Littlefield
- Da Silva, J. (2021). Producing ‘good enough’ automated transcripts securely: Extending Bokhove and Downey (2018) to address security concerns. *Methodological Innovations*, 14(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059799120987766>
- DeCarlo, M. (2018). *Scientific inquiry in social work*.
<https://scientificinquiryinsocialwork.pressbooks.com/chapter/10-2-sampling-in-qualitative-research/>
- Ford, C. L. & Harawa, N. T. (2010). A new conceptualization of ethnicity for social epidemiologic and health equity research. *Social Science & Medicine (1982)*, 71(2), 251–258. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.04.008>
- Gavaki, E. (1977). *The integration of Greeks in Canada*. R & E Associates.
- Gavaki, E. (1979). The Greek family in Canada: Continuity and change and the process of adjustment. *International Journal of Sociology of the Family*, 9(1), 1–16.
- Gavaki, E. (2004). Maintenance and transmission of ethnic identity: the case of the Greeks in Canada. *ANU Centre for European Studies (ANUCES)*.
<http://hdl.handle.net/1885/41781>
- Georgoulas, R., & Southcott, J. (2015). A case study of a Greek Australian traditional dancer: Embodying identity through musicking. *Victorian Journal of Music Education*, (1), 9-17.

- Giorgi, A., & Giorgi, B. (2008). Phenomenology. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (pp. 26-52). SAGE.
- Golic, R., Vujadinovic, S., & Sabic, D. (2016). Ethnocultural diversity and multiculturalism in Canada. *Zbornik Radova (Univerzitet u Beogradu. Geografski Fakultet)*, 2016(64), 255–289. <https://doi.org/10.5937/zrgfub1664255G>
- Gordon, M. (1964). *Assimilation in American life the role of race, religion, and national origins*. Oxford University Press.
- Government of Canada. (2015). Applicants assisting ethnocultural communities. From <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/policies-guidance/policy-statement-023-applicants-assisting-ethnocultural-communities.html>
- Hartnell, H. E. (2006). Belonging: Citizenship and migration in the European Union and in Germany. *Issues in Legal Scholarship*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.2202/1539-8323.1087>
- Hunt, Y. (2004). Traditional dance in Greece. *Anthropology of East Europe Review*, 22(1), 139-143.
- Issari, P. (2011). Greek American ethnic identity, cultural experience and the “embodied language” of dance: Implications for counseling. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 33(4), 252–265. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-011-9135-3>
- Jovechelovitch, S. & Bauer, M. W. (2000). Narrative interviewing. In M. W. Bauer & G. Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook* (pp. 57-74). SAGE.
- Kalogeropoulou, S. (2013). Greek dance and everyday nationalism in contemporary Greece. *Dance Research Aotearoa*, 1(1), 55-74.

- Karlis, G. (1997). The evolution of ethnic community organizations in multicultural societies: The role of recreation. *World Leisure & Recreation*, 39(3), 41–45.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10261133.1997.9674078>
- Karlis, G. (2011). *Leisure and recreation in Canadian society: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Thompson Educational Pub.
- Karlis, G., & Dawson, D. (1995). Ethnicity and recreation: Concepts, approaches and programming. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 27(2), 166–179.
- Karlis, G., Gravelle, F., Stratas, A., & Makrodimitris, P. (2020). Inclusion and integration: A case study of the Hellenic community of Ottawa’s cultural recreation activities. *Athens Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(1), 39-48.
- Kim, E., Kleiber, D. A., & Kropf, N. (2002). Leisure activity, ethnic preservation, and cultural integration of older Korean Americans. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 36(1-2), 107–129. https://doi.org/10.1300/J083v36n01_07
- Kivisto, P. (2015). *Incorporating diversity: rethinking assimilation in a multicultural age*. Routledge.
- Kivisto, P. (2017). The origins of “new assimilation theory.” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 40(9), 1418–1429. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1300299>
- Kymlicka, W. (2021). The precarious resilience of multiculturalism in Canada. *The American Review of Canadian Studies*, 51(1), 122–142.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02722011.2021.1878544>
- Leedy, P. D. & Ormrod, J. E. (2013). *Practical research: Planning and design* (10th ed.). Pearson.
- Leedy, & P. D. Ormrod, J. E. (2016). *Practical research: Planning and design* (11th ed.). Pearson.

- Leonidou, A. (2000). Portrait of Greek dance. RPM Lithographica LTD. www.nostos.com/dance
- Mann, J. (2012). The evolution of Commonwealth citizenship, 1945–1948 in Canada, Britain and Australia. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 50(3), 293-313.
- May, P. (2022). Canada: The standard bearer of multiculturalism in the world? An analysis of the Canadian public debate on multiculturalism (2010-2020). *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 45(10), 1939–1960. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2021.1977366>
- Mohajan, H. K. (2018). Qualitative research methodology in social sciences and related subjects. *Journal of Economic Development, Environment and People*, 7(1), 23-48.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.26458/jedep.v7i1.571>
- Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health*, 42(5), 533–544.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y>
- Park, R. E. & Burgess, E. W. (1969). *Introduction to the science of sociology* (3d. ed.). University of Chicago Press.
- Romiosyni Dance Group [RDG]. (N.D.) <https://romiosyni.org/>
- Soroka, S. N., & Robertson, S. (2010). *A literature review of Public Opinion Research on Canadian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration, 2006-2009*. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Research and Evaluation.
- Statistics Canada (2016). Applicants assisting ethnocultural communities.
<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/policies-guidance/policy-statement-023-applicants-assisting-ethnocultural-communities.html#toc17>

- Statistics Canada (2016) Ethnic and cultural origins of Canadians: Portrait of a rich heritage.
<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016016/98-200-x2016016-eng.cfm>
- Stodolska, M. (2000). Changes in leisure participation patterns after immigration. *Leisure Sciences*, 22(1), 39–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/014904000272966>
- Tastsoglou, E. (2022). Twenty-First century “new” Greek transnational migration to Canada. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 20(1), 65–78.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2021.1900481>
- Thomas, G. (2000). Peoples of the Maritimes: Greeks. *Four East Publications*.
- Tirone, S., & Goodberry, A. (2011). Leisure, biculturalism, and second-generation Canadians. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 43(3), 427-444.
- Tirone, S., Livingston, L. A., Jordan Miller, A., & Smith, E. L. (2010). Including immigrants in elite and recreational sports: The experiences of athletes, sport providers and immigrants. *Leisure = Loisir*, 34(4), 403–420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2010.542887>
- Tirone, S., & Pedlar, A. (2005). Leisure, place, and diversity: The experiences of ethnic minority youth. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 37(2), 32–48.
- Tonks, R. G., & Paranjpe, A. C. (1999, January 15). *Two sides of acculturation: Attitudes toward multiculturalism and national identity amongst immigrant and Canadian born youth*. [Paper presented] *Third National Metropolis Conference*.
<http://rgtonks.ca/Papers/met99.htm>
- Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: eight “big-tent” criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16(10), 837–851. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410383121>

United Nations, UN, I. (2019). World migration report 2020.

https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf

Wu, Z., & So, V. W. Y. (2020). Ethnic and national sense of belonging in Canadian society.

International Migration, 58(2), 233–254. <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.12650>

Yuen, F. (2013). Building Juniper: Chinese Canadian motivations for volunteering and experiences of community development. *Leisure/Loisir*, 37(2), 159–178.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2013.803677>

Zografou, & Pipyrrou, S. (2011). Dance and difference: Toward an individualization of the Pontian self. *Dance Chronicle*, 34(3), 422–446.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/01472526.2011.615235>

Zubrzycki, J. (1956). *Polish Immigrants in Great Britain: A Study of Adjustment*. Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 80-86.

Appendix A

Interview Guide

Background and demographic section

1. Can you tell me a few things about yourself?
2. Connection as a dancer, what does dance mean to you
3. What is/was your position in the RDG?
4. How long have you been/had this position?
5. Were you ever a dancer in the RDG?
6. What were your motivations to teach in the RDG?
7. Can you describe the role of RDG within the GCH?
8. What are the general objectives of the RDG?
9. Describe your role as an instructor?

Importance of Greek dance to the ethnocultural identity of Greeks within the community of Halifax section

10. In your opinion what are the strengths of RDG with regards to maintaining ethnic identity and the preservation of Greek culture? Explain?
11. In your opinion what are some weaknesses, if any, of the RDG with regards to maintaining ethnic identity and the preservation of Greek culture? List weaknesses and explain? Which weaknesses cause the greatest challenges?
12. In your opinion what motivates students enrolling in the RDG?
13. In your opinion, what are some of the motivations for parents enrolling their children in RDG?

Perception of ethnic dance as a tool for ethnocultural maintenance

14. What is your opinion on the significance of RDG for ethnocultural maintenance within the GCH? Explain?
15. What is RDG's role with regards to multiculturalism? Explain.
16. In your opinion, is ethnic dance important towards place and belongingness in multicultural Canada? Explain.
17. How does RDG compare with other ethno-cultural leisure activities found within the community of Halifax, such as within the youth group, festivals, and community events? Explain. Which of these activities do you feel have a greater impact on the maintenance of Greekness in multicultural Canada? Can you please rank them in order of importance?
18. How important do you believe RDG is for future generations of Greek-Canadians within the GCH for Greek cultural maintenance? Do you see the RDG playing a more important role for Greek ethnic cultural maintenance in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th generations? Explain.
19. What would you say are the current goals of RDG? What suggestions would you make for future goals and why?
20. In your opinion, do you believe the RDG could improve its approaches to help further sustain ethnocultural maintenance while slowing down or halting the assimilation process? If so, do you have any suggestions as to how?

Appendix B

Consent form



uOttawa

Université d'Ottawa

École des sciences de l'activité physique

Pavillon Montpetit
125 Université, pièce 240
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5 Canada
hkesap@uottawa.ca

University of Ottawa

Faculty of Health Sciences
School of Human Kinetics

Montpetit Hall
125 University, room 240
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5 Canada
hkesap@uottawa.ca

Consent Form

Title of the study: Ethnic Cultural Dance, Ethnic Cultural Maintenance, Place, and Belongingness in a Multicultural Society

Yanni Karmas
Faculty of Health Sciences

Supervisor: Dr. George Karlis
Faculty of Health Sciences

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Yanni Karmas.

Please note: This Masters' thesis project will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. George Karlis.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to examine the perceptions relationship between ethnic cultural dance, ethnic cultural maintenance, place, and belongingness in a multicultural society.

Participation: My participation will consist of completing a qualitative interview consisting of open-ended questions. During the interview I will be asked questions relating to perceptions of Greek ethnic dance and its potential role in ethnocultural maintenance. One interview will occur. It will be recorded for transcription.

Risks: My participation in this study will entail that I, (name), a Romosini dance teacher/ assistant teacher/former teacher may cause me to feel *potential social risks within the Greek community of Halifax*. I have received assurance from the researcher that every effort will be made to minimize these risks. Measures such as option to refuse to answer questions, withdraw from the study, the protection of my identity will be provided.

Benefits: My participation in this study will help in understanding the role of ethnic Greek dance in promoting of Greek identity and culture within the Greek community of Halifax.

Confidentiality and Privacy I have received assurance from the researcher that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. I understand that the contents will be used only for examining the perceptions relationship between ethnic cultural dance, ethnic cultural maintenance, place, and belongingness in a multicultural society. My identity will be protected as the researcher has assured me that anonymity will be provided to me through the use of pseudonyms.

To minimize the risk of security breaches and to help ensure my confidentiality, it is recommended that I use standard safety measures, such as signing out of my account, closing my browser, and locking my device when I am no longer using it/when I have completed the study.

Conservation of Data: The data collected whether electronic transcriptions, electronic notes, and hard copy notes will be kept in a secure manner. Electronic data will all be saved on a password protected hard drive that only the researcher will have access to, and hard copy data will be store in the researchers private safe.

Compensation: There will be compensation of a 15-dollar gift card to Tim Hortons. If I choose to withdraw from the study, I will still receive this compensation.

Voluntary Participation: I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be removed from the dataset and not used in the study.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the researcher or their supervisor. If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity via email (ethics@uottawa.ca) or telephone (613-562-5387).

It is recommended that I (*keep/print/save*) a copy of this consent form for my records.

Acceptance: By signing my name below, I agree to participate in this research study.

Participant's name: _____ Date: _____
Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____
Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C

Recruitment email

Hello,

My name is Yanni Karmas, and currently I am working on my Masters' thesis project. This qualitative study will be focusing on ethnic dance and its role in ethnocultural maintenance. Specifically, how important, and significant is the leisure activity of Greek dancing for the maintenance of ethnicity in a multicultural society. Furthermore, how important, and significant is ethnic dance for enhancing cultural awareness and contributing to a multicultural society?

Current dance teachers, assistant teachers, and former dance teachers (within the last ten year) of the Romiosyni Dance Group are welcome to participate in this study. Participants will be asked to participate in interviews regarding this topic. Attached to this email is a copy of the consent discussing the rights of the participants in this study. If interested, please read over the consent form and contact me if you have any questions.

Please note, this project will be also conducted under the supervision of Dr. George Karlis of the University of Ottawa whose contact information is also listed within the previously mentioned consent form. Additionally, there is no pressure to any current or former dance teacher of the Romiosini Dance Group to participate in this study.

Thank you,

Yanni

Ethnic Cultural Dance, Ethnic Cultural Maintenance, Place, and Belongingness in a Multicultural Society

Current dance teachers, assistant teachers, and former dance teachers (within the last ten years) of the Romiosyni Dance Group are welcome to participate in this study. Participants in this study will be asked to participate in interviews.

How important and significant is the leisure activity of Greek dancing for the maintenance of ethnicity in a multicultural society. Furthermore, how important and significant is ethnic dance for enhancing cultural awareness and contributing to a multicultural society?

For more information please contact Yann Karmas



Recruitment poster

Appendix D

Appendix E

Ethics Approval

28/02/2023

Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE | CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

Numéro du dossier / Ethics File Number	H-02-23-8891
Titre du projet / Project Title	Ethnic Cultural Dance, Ethnic Cultural Maintenance, Place, and Belongingness in a Multicultural Society
Type de projet / Project Type	Thèse de maîtrise / Master's thesis
Statut du projet / Project Status	Approuvé / Approved
Date d'approbation (jj/mm/aaaa) / Approval Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	28/02/2023
Date d'expiration (jj/mm/aaaa) / Expiry Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	27/02/2024

Équipe de recherche / Research Team

Chercheur / Researcher	Affiliation	Role
Ioannis KARMAS	École des sciences de l'activité physique / School of Human Kinetics	Chercheur Principal / Principal Investigator
George KARLIS	École des sciences de l'activité physique / School of Human Kinetics	Superviseur / Supervisor

Conditions spéciales ou commentaires / Special conditions or comments

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154 Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

613-562-5387 • 613-562-5338 • ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics

28/02/2023

Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche (CÉR) de l'Université d'Ottawa, opérant conformément à l'*Énoncé de politique des Trois conseils* (2014) et toutes autres lois et tous règlements applicables, a examiné et approuvé la demande d'éthique du projet de recherche ci-nommé.

L'approbation est valide pour la durée indiquée plus haut et est sujette aux conditions énumérées dans la section intitulée "Conditions Spéciales ou Commentaires". Le formulaire « Renouvellement ou Fermeture de Projet » doit être complété quatre semaines avant la date d'échéance indiquée ci-haut afin de demander un renouvellement de cette approbation éthique ou afin de fermer le dossier.

Toutes modifications apportées au projet doivent être approuvées par le CÉR avant leur mise en place, sauf si le participant doit être retiré en raison d'un danger immédiat ou s'il s'agit d'un changement ayant trait à des éléments administratifs ou logistiques du projet. Les chercheurs doivent aviser le CÉR dans les plus brefs délais de tout changement pouvant augmenter le niveau de risque aux participants ou pouvant affecter considérablement le déroulement du projet, rapporter tout événement imprévu ou indésirable et soumettre toute nouvelle information pouvant nuire à la conduite du projet ou à la sécurité des participants.

The University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board, which operates in accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (2014) and other applicable laws and regulations, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above-named research project.

Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and is subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions or Comments". The "Renewal/Project Closure" form must be completed four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval or closure of the file.

Any changes made to the project must be approved by the REB before being implemented, except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) only pertain to administrative or logistical components of the project. Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes that increase the risk to participant(s), any changes that considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project or the safety of the participant(s).

Riana MARCOTTE

Responsable d'éthique en recherche / Protocol Officer

Pour/For **Daniel LAGAREC** Président(e) du/ Chair of the **Comité d'éthique de la recherche en sciences de la santé et sciences / Health Sciences and Sciences Research Ethics Board**

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

613-562-5387 • 613-562-5338 • ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics