

Plight of Immigrants: The Spatial Concentration of Poverty in Canada*

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The radical changes of Canada's immigration law in late 1960s made Asia, Africa, and Latin America the leading sources of Canada's immigrant population. While for the previously dominated European newcomers, immigration meant a window to better and more satisfying living conditions, the Third World immigrants, in most cases, were escaping from extreme poverty and misery to normal lives. For many of them, immigration was a matter of life and death, rather than 'life' and 'better life'.

The Third World immigrants to Canada, however, were not as lucky as their predecessors. They had major difficulties integrating into Canadian societies, both culturally and economically. The cultural differences, along with discriminatory views and actions pushed many of them towards the margins of Canadian society. The timing of their arrival further aggravated their unfortunate situation. The decade of the 70s, when they began to come to Canada in large numbers, was exactly the time that the fast economic growth and the accompanying expanding job opportunities as well as welfare

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privileges began to slow down and shrink. One inevitable consequence of these developments was that the competition over scarce and shrinking resources intensified. As it is normal in such conditions, those unprivileged are the ones likely to suffer the most. In this particular situation, one thing was beyond any doubt: the immigrants were not the privileged ones.

The recent rise of poverty in Canada during the '90s raised the possibility that immigrant, and especially those of certain ethnic origins, may disproportionately fall victim to poverty. Such a concern was not unique to immigrants. It was raised with regard many other segments of the population, as the most vulnerable groups in face of poverty, that is, young adults, women, female single parents, children, disabled and elderly (McFate et al. 1995; Duff and Mandell 1996; Duffy and Pupo 1992; Chekki 1995; Canadian Institute of Child Health 1994). However, surprisingly enough, no serious attempt was made to address the poverty of immigrants, and especially those with certain ethnic characteristics. What further complicates the issue in the case of immigrants is the fact that the rising national poverty rates may compound with some ethnic features of immigrants and create quite complicated, intractable, and unique situations. The study of 'spatial concentration of poverty' (SCOP) in Canadian cities reveals that this, indeed, has been the case.

The 'spatial concentration of poverty' is defined rather differently from the conventional poverty. The latter refers to an individual or a family that cannot afford the basic necessities of life, or the one that spends more than a certain proportion of its income on such necessities; the former looks at the poverty of neighborhood. According to Wilson (1987), a poor neighborhood is the one with more than 20% of its population being poor. The neighborhood poverty rate has the same conceptual properties as the national poverty rate. The national poverty rate expresses the number of poor individuals and/or families as a proportion of the country's total population. The neighborhood poverty rate provides the same information, but with regard to a neighborhood. The national rate allows for international comparisons, and the neighborhood rate facilitates the inter-neighborhood comparisons. Both measures, indeed, tell us about the overall well-being of a community, be it a nation or a neighborhood.

The SCOP researchers have not been primarily concerned with the definition of 'poor' and 'poverty'. They have been more interested in the comparative study of the neighborhoods with different levels of poverty. They are particularly interested in examining the social fabric of the neighborhoods with high poverty rates. However, the SCOP researchers cannot be indifferent to, and independent from, the way 'poor' and 'poverty' is defined. Were some other income thresholds chosen to determine the poverty line, the poverty rates of a certain society would be over- or underestimated, and so would the poverty rates of neighborhoods. Nevertheless, the choice of thresholds would not seriously affect the comparative accounts of

different neighborhoods. Moreover, the SCOP analysts face a practical limitation in their studies. The neighborhoods' poverty rates are available, in most cases, through census data, which are based on the definition of poverty by the authorities. This confines the SCOP researchers to rely on the official poverty definitions.

A Review of SCOP Literature

Despite some scattered previous works, the systematic study of SCOP was initiated in the United States after the publication of William Julius Wilson's *The Truly Disadvantaged* in 1987. Using data on Chicago's neighborhoods, Wilson highlighted the unique social experiences of American Blacks, especially the poor ones. His main concern was the rapid increase in the poverty rates of some inner-city neighborhoods that had traditionally contained Black residents (he called such areas 'ghetto neighborhoods'). These high poverty rates, according to Wilson (1987), resulted from the 'exodus of middle- and working- class families' from such neighborhoods:

“Lower-class, working-class, and middle-class black families all lived more or less in the same communities ..., sent their children to the same schools, availed themselves of the same recreational facilities, and shopped at the same stores. Whereas today's black middle-class professionals no longer tend to live in ghetto neighborhoods and have moved increasingly into mainstream occupations outside the black community, the black middle-class professionals of the 1940s and 1950s (doctors, teachers, lawyers, social workers, ministers) lived in higher-income neighborhoods of the ghetto and serviced the black community. Accompanying the black middle-class exodus has been a growing movement of stable working-class blacks from ghetto neighborhoods to higher-income neighborhoods in other parts of the city and to suburbs. In the earlier years, the black middle and working classes were confined by restrictive covenants to communities also inhabited by the lower class; their very presence provided stability to inner-city neighborhoods and reinforced and perpetuated mainstream patterns of norms and behavior” (Wilson 1987: 7).

The outcome of this development for Blacks in ghettos was the removal of, using Wilson's words, a 'social buffer' that had kept them attached to the main-stream population. The removal of this social buffer led to an extreme 'social isolation' which paved the way for the development of a different sub-culture and life-style:

“This argument is based on the assumption that even if the truly

disadvantaged segments of an inner-city area experience a significant increase in long-term spells of joblessness, the basic institutions in that area (churches, schools, stores, recreational facilities, etc.) would remain viable if much of the base of their support comes from the more economically stable and secure families. Moreover, the very presence of these families during such periods provides mainstream role models that help keep alive the perception that education is meaningful, that steady employment is a viable alternative to welfare, and the family stability is the norm, not the exception” (Wilson 1987: 56).

For Wilson (1987) it is ‘social isolation’, and not a ‘culture of poverty’, that accounts for this situation. Also, he emphasized that the ‘social isolation’ of Blacks resulted from ‘the broader processes of American economic organization’, rather than the ‘race-specific’ factors. In this respect, according to Wilson’s line of reasoning, the poor Blacks are no different from the other poor.

The SCOP research in the United States was furthered by Massey et al (1987), Massey and Eggers (1990), and most significantly, by Massey and Denton (1993). The latter concentrated on the variables that Wilson had regarded as unimportant. For example, they argued that the experience of SCOP by racial minorities was directly related to race-specific factors such as their residential segregation. In their *American Apartheid*, Massey and Denton (1993) show that the same national poverty rate will lead to different levels of neighborhood poverty for racial groups with different degrees of residential segregation. They also raised the point that, as a result of the Blacks’ extreme segregation and high rates of poverty concentration, the ‘culture of poverty’ has developed among them, shaping a distinctive way of life.

The works of Wilson and Massey and Denton triggered a range of studies of SCOP in American cities. Some of these focused on the quality of neighborhoods with a high rate of SCOP and their impact on the residents (Massey et al 1987, 1991). Others examined contributing factors such as migration (Fitchen 1995; Nord et al 1995), housing (Wilson 1987), public housing projects (Massey and Kanaiapuni 1993), urban housing market (Massey et al 1994), and employment. As a consequence of these studies, spatial concentration of poverty became an integrated component of race- and poverty-related research.

Surprisingly, the spatial concentration of poverty has been virtually ignored in Canada. Other than Hajnal (1995), there is no study of SCOP in Canada. There are a number of potential reasons for the failure of Canadian researchers to pursue this line of inquiry. First, compared to the United States, there are fewer and less populous Canadian cities. This difference might have hindered the researchers from acquiring a lively comparative

picture of SCOP at a societal level. Second, from its very beginning, the SCOP analysis has not generally interested the conventional poverty researchers; rather, it became of interest more to spatial analysts, and there were few of them in Canada, already. Third, the conventional poverty research findings (on individuals/families) could be more easily and quickly translated into public policies through monetary measures. This might have led to a lesser degree of enthusiasm for SCOP research among the policy-makers and, hence, the possibility of less financial support. Lastly, in the United States, the SCOP research was strongly boosted after the Los Angeles riots of 1992 (Burton 1992). Those riots brought to light some of the potential dangers associated with highly poor neighborhoods. Lack of such violent and radical incidents in Canada has definitely contributed towards the negligence of the problem.

Why Spatial Concentration of Poverty? A Conceptual Backdrop

Referring to the lifestyle of some Latin American immigrants to the United States in mid-1960s, Oscar Lewis (1971) suggested the notion of 'culture of poverty'. The culture of poverty, as Oscar Lewis (1971) argued, is not 'a term signifying the absence of something'. It was, he believed, a culture developed to 'serve a significant adaptive function', an ideology 'that allowed poor people to cope with feelings of hopelessness and despair that arose because their chances for socioeconomic success were remote' (Massey and Denton 1993). The distance between the general culture and this subculture, developed among those isolated socially and/or physically, is succinctly captured in a quotation cited by Simpson and Yinger (1972: 173):

"In the customs governing sex behavior, the isolation of Negroes from the general culture is easily observable. It is one thing to know what the accepted standards are and then to violate them ... but it is quite another thing to have no conception of such standards. In a group of ten boys in Chicago, ... the investigator found an almost complete absence of inhibition in their reporting of sex relations ... They reported their sex behavior, which a middle-class school-teacher would condemn as immoral, as freely and unemotionally as they did their employment records or their love of swimming ... their sex behavior would indicate that they were thoroughly isolated from accepted middle-class standards".

Lewis (1971) further argues that the development of 'culture of poverty' is not, however, an inevitable experience for all poor. There are many groups

living in poverty but not subscribing to the ‘culture of poverty’, as it is the case with, according to Lewis, white poor in the United States, post-revolutionary Cuban poor, etc. This differential experience of different groups of poor gives rise to the question of what causes some poor to subscribe to this subculture while the others can easily refrain from it. Studying the Black Americans living in high poverty neighborhoods, Massey and Denton (1993) pointed out the possibility that the nature and social fabric of one’s neighborhood may be one of the factors facilitating the development of ‘culture of poverty’.

Relying on the notion of ‘culture of poverty’, Massey and Denton (1993) use the inner city Black ghettos in American cities as an example of how SCOP leads to the formation of a different lifestyle. By concentrating poverty, they argued, ‘segregation simultaneously concentrates male joblessness, teenage motherhood, single parenthood, alcoholism, and drug abuse, thus creating an entirely black social world’. Through gradual distancing from the middle class culture, the ghetto culture represents some features quite at odds with the normative culture of wider society:

“Ghetto blacks ... face very different neighborhood conditions. A large share live in a geographically isolated and racially homogeneous neighborhoods where poverty is endemic, joblessness is rife, schools are poor, and even high school graduates are unlikely to speak standard English with any facility. Employment opportunities are limited, and given the social isolation enforced by segregation, black men are not well connected to employers in the larger economy. As a result, young men coming of age in ghetto areas are relatively unlikely to find jobs capable of supporting a wife and children, and black women, facing a dearth of potential husbands and an absence of educational institutions capable of preparing them for gainful employment, cannot realistically hope to conform to societal ideals and childbearing” (Massey and Denton 1993: 166).

Neither Massey and Denton (1993) nor Lewis (1971), however, elaborate on the mechanism through which the type of neighborhood may influence the development of ‘culture of poverty’. Here, a distinction made by Whyte (1971) seems helpful. He introduces two dimensions of poverty, ‘objective poverty’ and ‘subjective poverty’, and argues that the individual unable to satisfy minimal needs for food, clothing, or shelter and unable to fulfill a normal occupational role to provide for these needs is said to manifest the ‘objective poverty’. ‘Subjective poverty’, on the other hand, refers to ‘the sensation of deprivation’ and results from ‘a comparison of what an individual has with what he would like to have’ (Whyte 1971). According to Whyte (1971: 80), ‘[w]hereas objective poverty is relative deprivation defined by the community standards, subjective poverty is experienced relative deprivation,

defined in terms of individual values rather than shared norms'. Due to this distinction, 'objective poverty can exist without being experienced subjectively'.

One can say that without experiencing poverty subjectively, the poor would not consider themselves as poor and, hence, they will show no effort to change their social conditions, either through collective or individual action. The subjective perception of poverty, in other words, provides the necessary contrast between what 'is' and what 'ought to be'. The discrepancy between the two triggers the effort to overcome poverty, and this discrepancy is almost invisible in the neighborhoods the big part of their population are poor.

A hypothetical example may help at this point. As always, the extreme cases are more telling. The relevant comparison can be made between two poor families, one living in a rich neighborhood, the other in a poor one. Not only has the first family a chance to use the more or less similar facilities and enjoy similar social advantages such as more security, but it also is in constant contact with non-poor families and their lifestyle. This discrepancy makes them aware of their poverty and can potentially mobilize them to do something about it. This discrepancy, however, is not present for the second family living in a poor neighborhood. While the poverty can easily become something 'pathological' and 'problematic' for the first family, it will most likely remain 'normal' and 'unavoidable' for the second one. The transition from objective to subjective poverty, therefore, is more likely to take place for the former, than the latter. As Whyte (1971: 81) points out, 'poverty will be phenomenologically different, and hence it will have a different meaning in a community in which everyone is poor as contrasted to one in which there is a wide range of economic difference'.

The discussion above suggests that the spatial concentration of poverty is not merely about the geographical distribution of a group of people in urban space. It also initiates some new social and psychological processes with far-reaching consequences for the living conditions of poor. If identified and measured properly, then, the spatial concentration of poverty and its consequences can be dealt with more effectively.

Measurement of Spatial Concentration of Poverty and Sources of Data

The spatial concentration of poverty can be examined in a number of ways. While referring to one phenomenon in general, each of these ways highlights a certain aspect of SCOP. The measure that is more appropriate to use in this study is the one concerned with the distribution of city's population in areas with different poverty rates. This measure corresponds most closely

with the whole idea of studying SCOP, that is, to examine those segments of the population who suffer from concentrated poverty. To deal with this dimension of SCOP, we have calculated the number of people living in census tracts with different levels of poverty, both in absolute terms and as proportions of city population.

In the present study, Canada's 1986 and 1991 census-tract data have been used. These data sets contain information on a wide range of variables in an aggregate form. The aggregate nature of data superimposes some limitations. The most serious limitation is the impossibility of acquiring a profile of the socio-economic specifications of the families and individuals who live in different neighbourhoods. This shortcoming becomes more problematic in the inferential analyses concerned with the relationships between the individual and residential characteristics. This limitation is the main reason for the descriptive nature of the present study.

Results

SCOP in Canadian Cities

The levels of SCOP in different cities can be measured with regard to the composition of geographical units, that is, neighborhoods. It can also be measured in terms of the number of people who live in the neighborhoods with different levels

TABLE 1 The Proportion of City Population Living in CTs with Different Poverty Levels, 1986-1991

	Poverty Rate of Census Tracts										% Changes 1986-1991				
	0-9.9%		10-19.9%		20-29.9%		30-39.9%		40%+		0-	10-	20-	30-	
	86	91	86	91	86	91	86	91	86	91	9.9	19.9	29.9	39.9	40+
St. John's	20.0	37.5	51.4	40.0	15.6	10.0	11.5	12.5	1.5	0.0	17.5	-11.4	-5.6	1.0	-1.5
Halifax	47.8	54.7	36.1	30.7	12.0	12.0	4.1	1.3	0.0	1.3	6.9	-5.4	0.0	-2.8	1.3
Moncton	42.1	43.5	30.4	30.4	22.2	26.1	5.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	3.9	-5.3	0.0
Saint John	25.7	27.9	38.8	34.9	20.0	23.3	11.4	7.0	4.0	7.0	2.2	-3.9	3.3	-4.4	3.0
Chicoutimi/ Jonquiere	2.9	28.6	65.3	45.7	21.6	17.1	10.1	8.6	0.0	0.0	25.7	-19.6	-4.5	-1.5	0.0
Quebec	27.5	31.1	44.3	37.1	18.7	16.6	6.1	7.9	3.4	7.3	3.6	-7.2	-2.1	1.8	3.9
Sherbrooke	8.6	25.8	61.7	32.3	12.0	19.4	10.6	12.9	7.1	9.7	17.2	-29.4	7.4	2.3	2.6
Trois-Rivieres	--	11.8	--	55.9	--	14.7	--	8.8	--	8.8	--	--	--	--	--
Montreal	23.5	20.9	39.0	31.3	22.1	25.5	9.5	12.1	5.8	10.2	-2.6	-7.7	3.4	2.6	4.4
Ottawa-Hull	55.2	54.8	27.2	26.0	12.6	12.0	4.1	4.8	0.8	2.4	-0.4	-1.2	-0.6	0.7	1.6
Kingston	54.5	64.7	32.7	23.5	8.1	8.8	4.7	2.9	0.0	0.0	10.2	-9.2	0.7	-1.8	0.0
Peterborough	65.2	56.5	23.8	34.8	6.0	4.3	5.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	-8.7	11.0	-1.7	-0.7	0.0
Oshawa	75.1	69.4	20.4	20.4	2.0	10.2	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	-5.7	0.0	8.2	-2.6	0.0
Toronto	59.8	50.5	26.8	30.5	10.0	14.3	2.3	3.6	1.1	1.1	-9.3	3.7	4.3	1.3	0.0
Hamilton	51.4	45.1	30.8	35.2	10.7	12.3	4.5	4.9	2.6	2.5	-6.3	4.4	1.6	0.4	-0.1
St. Catharines/ Niagara	39.3	50.6	40.2	41.0	19.9	8.4	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.3	0.8	-11.5	-0.6	0.0
Kitchener	49.2	51.9	46.3	43.2	4.4	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	-3.1	0.5	0.0	0.0
Brantford	42.0	52.4	43.0	38.1	13.7	9.5	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.4	-4.9	-4.2	-1.3	0.0
Guelph	68.4	71.4	26.9	19.0	4.7	9.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	-7.9	4.8	0.0	0.0
London	47.3	44.3	38.8	46.6	9.4	8.0	4.6	1.1	0.0	0.0	-3.0	7.8	-1.4	-3.5	0.0
Windsor	48.1	44.1	29.3	30.5	20.2	18.6	0.7	6.8	1.7	0.0	-4.0	1.2	-1.6	6.1	-1.7

Sarnia/ Clearwater	52.0	62.5	44.0	29.2	4.0	4.2	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0	10.5	-14.8	0.2	4.2	0.0
North Bay	49.4	45.0	28.0	30.0	15.3	15.0	4.9	10.0	2.3	0.0	-4.4	2.0	-0.3	5.1	-2.3
Sudbury	22.5	43.2	65.8	45.9	7.1	5.4	4.5	5.4	0.0	0.0	20.7	-19.9	-1.7	0.9	0.0
Sault Ste. Marie	32.0	40.9	57.2	40.9	4.0	13.6	6.8	4.5	0.0	0.0	8.9	-16.3	9.6	-2.3	0.0
Thunder Bay	53.6	53.3	40.5	40.0	5.9	3.3	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.0	-0.3	-0.5	-2.6	3.3	0.0
Winnipeg	41.7	32.3	37.3	34.8	7.8	16.8	7.4	5.8	5.8	10.3	-9.4	-2.5	9.0	-1.6	4.5
Regina	45.6	38.8	29.2	38.8	19.9	14.3	4.5	6.1	0.9	2.0	-6.8	9.6	-5.6	1.6	1.1
Saskatoon	21.4	33.3	58.1	41.7	11.8	16.7	7.8	6.3	0.9	2.1	11.9	-16.4	4.9	-1.5	1.2
Lethbridge	23.5	45.0	62.3	50.0	14.3	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.5	-12.3	-9.3	0.0	0.0
Calgary	39.0	35.9	43.7	40.5	14.6	16.3	2.3	6.5	0.5	0.7	-3.1	-3.2	1.7	4.2	0.2
Red Deer	--	37.5	--	37.5	--	12.5	--	12.5	--	0.0	--	--	--	--	--
Edmonton	37.3	32.3	41.5	35.5	16.2	21.5	3.7	8.1	1.4	2.7	-5.0	-6.0	5.3	4.4	1.3
Kelowna	19.6	53.8	75.6	34.6	0.0	11.5	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	34.2	-41.0	11.5	-4.8	0.0
Kamloops	19.0	40.9	64.3	40.9	5.8	18.2	10.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.9	-23.4	12.4	-10.9	0.0
Matsqui	--	55.2	--	34.5	--	10.3	--	0.0	--	0.0	--	--	--	--	--
Vancouver	30.3	36.2	44.6	46.0	19.2	14.1	3.0	2.0	2.9	1.7	5.9	1.4	-5.0	-1.0	-1.2
Victoria	37.9	60.0	47.5	32.3	13.4	6.2	0.0	1.5	1.3	0.0	22.1	-15.2	-7.2	1.5	-1.3
Prince George	29.8	43.5	56.1	47.8	6.8	4.3	7.3	4.3	0.0	0.0	13.7	-8.3	-2.5	-3.0	0.0
Average	39.1	44.3	43.0	36.6	12.0	12.7	4.6	4.6	1.2	1.8	5.2	-6.4	0.7	0.0	0.6

of SCOP. Due to limitation of space, we focus on the latter. Table 1 contains the detailed information on the number of people as well as the proportions of city population living in neighborhoods with different poverty levels. The data is reported for both 1986 and 1991, to allow a comparison.

As the focus of this paper is on the spatial concentration of poverty, it will be more useful to look at the situations of different cities in terms of the changes in their high poverty neighborhoods, that is, those census tracts with 40% and more, and 30-40% poverty rates. One striking fact in Table 1 is the situation of Quebec as well as Prairie cities. Winnipeg and Montreal, for example, have the highest proportions of their population living in the census tracts with at least 40% poverty rate (10.3 and 10.2 percent, respectively). This is also far higher than the national average for this category of census tracts, that is, 1.8 percent. In Ontario, except for Ottawa-Hull and Hamilton, all the other cities have either zero or a low percentage of their population living in such extremely poor neighborhoods. A similar pattern is more or less visible for 1986, too. Another interesting observation is the situation of some cities in Ontario which have a high proportion of their population living in very low poverty neighborhoods, that is, those with less than 10 percent poverty rate. At least 50 percent of population in cities such as Ottawa-Hull, Kingston, Peterborough, Oshawa, and Toronto live in such census tracts.

Not only do these proportions vary from city to city, their changes over the period 1986-91 also shows distinct patterns. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of these changes between two census years. The chart contains such information for the major cities.

A careful examination of the magnitude of changes in the proportional population of neighborhoods with different levels of poverty shows at least four distinct patterns among Canadian cities. First, those cities which have

experienced a 'betterment' in terms of their spatial concentration of poverty; Kingston, St. Catherines-Niagara, Kitchener, Vancouver, and Victoria fall in this category. In almost all of these cities, the proportions of city population living in high poverty neighborhoods have declined and those of richer neighborhoods have increased. This development may have to do with the declining overall poverty rate in the city as well as the possibility of building up new neighborhoods, which may facilitate a more even redistribution of population.

A second pattern, 'worsening' situation, is noticeable for cities such as Montreal, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Regina, Calgary, and Toronto. In these cities the proportion of city population living in low poverty areas has declined and those of high poverty neighborhoods have risen. Montreal and Winnipeg are the two worst off cases in this category. This is not surprising at all, given the fact that these two cities have been consistently at the lower ranks where the poverty measures have been concerned. Another observation in this regard is the presence of almost all Prairie CMAs in this category. They vary, however, with regard to the severity of the problem.

A third pattern, which may be called 'polarization' situation, can be seen in cities such as Quebec, Halifax, Guelph, and Saskatoon. Cities in this category, for which Halifax provides a perfect example, have experienced declining population in the middle categories and rise in the two extreme ones. This means that if the 1986-91 trend continues, these cities will have more and more of their population living in two types of neighborhoods, drastically different from one another.

The fourth pattern applies to cities such as London, and Hamilton, and to a lesser extent, Windsor. These cities have experienced a rising proportional population of the neighborhoods in the middle categories of poverty at the expense of those in the extreme categories. This indicates that, if the trend continues, more and more people will be living in more or less similar types of neighborhoods as far as neighborhood poverty is concerned. There are some cities such as Oshawa, and other smaller cities not included in the graphs, that do not comply with any of the mentioned patterns. They do not reveal any specific trend, at least in the period under examination.

As mentioned earlier, one major purpose of studying SCOP is to identify the groups which are most affected by it. The aggregate form of data poses severe limitations in this regard, however. In the rest of the present study, we try to focus on SCOP by ethnic groups. Unfortunately, the available data does not provide detailed information on immigrant status and their distribution over census tracts, which was our primary interest. However, ethnic groups of our concern, that is, the visible minorities are largely consisted of immigrants (see Table 2). More specifically, these groups are West Asians, South Asians, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Latin Americans, Arabs, and Blacks. All these groups have a proportion of their populations, varying from 60 to 82 percent, as immigrants. Though not considered as

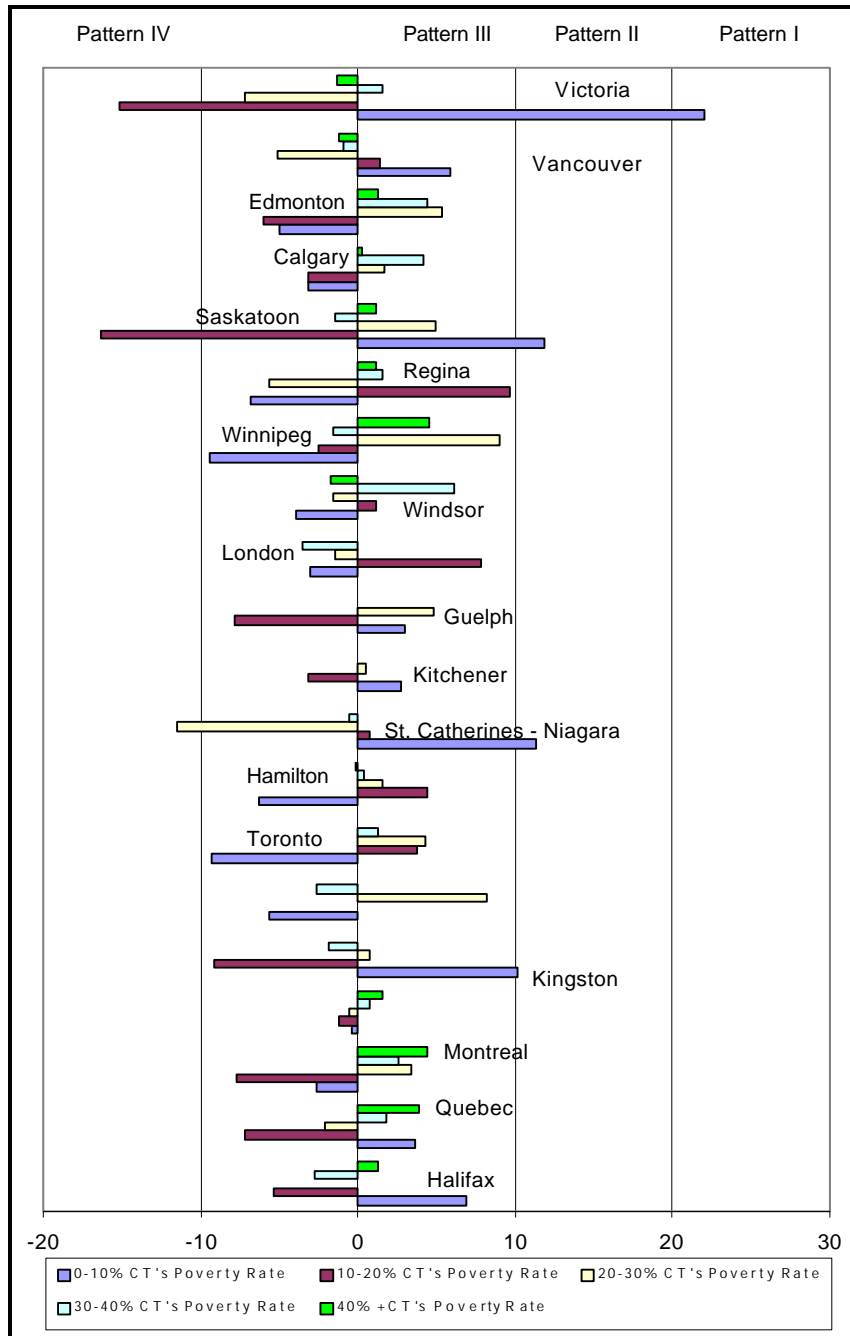


FIGURE 1 Changes in the Proportional Distribution of City's Population in Cts with Different Poverty Levels, Major Cities 1986-1991

visible minorities, the Portuguese and Spanish are also among these groups, with 68 and 67 percent of their populations being immigrants.

Immigrants and SCOP Areas

Table 3 illustrates the correlation between the poverty of neighborhood (Census Tract, to be more specific, technically) and the proportion of its population who are immigrants. Among the major cities in Canada, Edmonton and Toronto show the highest correlation coefficients for the year 1991, followed by Winnipeg and Calgary. Surprisingly, Montreal shows the lowest correlation though SCOP in Montreal is quite high.

Ethnic Groups and SCOP

However, the overall index does not provide information on whether or not the observed trend is applicable to all immigrants. In other words, it does not tell us if immigrants of different ethnic origins have different experiences in this regard. The Appendix illustrates the break-down of the correlation coefficient for specific ethnic groups in different cities. The averaged correlation coefficients for each ethnic group along with the proportion of the group's population who are immigrants are illustrated in Table 4.

While the Aborigines have the highest correlation coefficient, among the immigrant ethnic groups, Vietnamese have the highest value followed by Spanish and Chinese, Polish, Black, Portuguese, Filipino and Lebanese. Indians make an

TABLE 2 Immigrant Status by Ethnic Origin, Canada, 1991

Ethnic Origin	Non-Immigrant		Non-Perm. Resident
	Immigrant	Immigrant	
Vietnamese	15.3%	82.4%	2.2%
West Asian origins	13.6%	74.6%	11.8%
Latin, Central and South American Origins	13.7%	72.7%	13.7%
Filipino	18.6%	72.6%	8.8%
Chinese	22.8%	72.2%	5.0%
Spanish	21.2%	69.9%	8.9%
Asian origins	23.7%	69.6%	6.7%
Arab origins	23.9%	69.0%	7.1%
South Asian origins	25.5%	68.8%	5.7%
Portuguese	30.6%	68.0%	1.4%
Other	23.7%	63.6%	12.7%
Black/Caribbean origins	34.0%	60.9%	5.1%
Balkan origins	37.4%	60.4%	2.2%
Greek	43.7%	55.4%	0.9%
Other East and South East Asian origins	36.6%	55.0%	8.4%
Hungarian (Magyar)	44.1%	54.8%	1.0%
Polish	45.2%	53.4%	1.4%
Italian	51.2%	48.0%	0.8%

Other single origins	51.0%	46.3%	2.7%
Other Western European Origin	57.1%	42.1%	0.9%
Other European origins	59.9%	39.1%	0.9%
Dutch (Netherlands)	61.7%	37.9%	0.4%
Jewish	65.5%	33.3%	1.2%
Other European origins	66.0%	32.7%	1.2%
German	74.1%	25.5%	0.4%
Multiple origins:Other:Canadian and Other;All other	77.7%	20.7%	1.6%
Ukrainian	87.0%	12.9%	0.1%
British:Eng;Iri;Scot;Welsh;Other	87.2%	12.6%	0.3%
Multiple origins:Fre/Other Fre; Fre/Canadian;Fre/other	94.0%	5.7%	0.3%
Multiple origins: British only	94.7%	5.2%	0.1%
Multiple origins:British/Other;British/Canadian	94.8%	4.9%	0.2%
Multiple origins:British, French and other	96.9%	3.0%	0.2%
Canadian	97.3%	2.6%	0.0%
Multiple origins: British and French	97.9%	2.0%	0.1%
French: French; Acadian; Quebecois	98.7%	1.2%	0.1%
Aboriginal origins	99.3%	0.6%	0.1%
Not available	7.0%	88.5%	0.5%

interesting case, with a high immigrant population but a low correlation coefficient. Another interesting feature in Table 4 is the negative values for almost all groups of Western and Northern European origins. This in itself is an interesting finding that those groups with a smaller number of immigrants show a lower correlation coefficient.

Table 4, however, is not very useful in understanding the levels of spatial concentration of poverty for different ethnic groups in different cities. For this purpose, Table 5 is constructed. It shows the representation of different ethnic groups in the neighbourhoods with a poverty rate higher than 40%. Comparing

TABLE 3 The Correlation between the CT's Poverty Rate and Immigrant Population as percentage of CT's Population, 1991 (only statistically significant cases included)

Sherbrooke	.490**
Montreal	.270**
Ottawa-Hull	.430**
Toronto	.559**
Hamilton	.335**
Kitchener	.319**
London	.350**
Windsor	.387**
Thunder Bay	.385*
Winnipeg	.538**
Saskatoon	.455**
Lethbridge	.515*
Calgary	.483**
Edmonton	.633**
Kamloops	.640**
Vancouver	.417**

Prince George

.467*

Note: * = Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) and ** = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

TABLE 4 The Average Correlation Coefficient between CT's Poverty Rate and the Ethnic Population as Percentage of CT's Total Population, 1991

Ethnic Group	Average
Aboriginal (0.6% immigrants)	0.45
Vietnamese (82% immigrants)	0.41
Spanish (69% immigrants)	0.33
Chinese (72% immigrants)	0.30
Polish (53% immigrants)	0.28
Black (60% immigrants)	0.25
Portuguese (68% immigrants)	0.25
French (1.2% immigrants)	0.18
Filipino (72% immigrants)	0.16
Lebanese (69% immigrants)	0.12
Hungarian (54% immigrants)	0.11
Italian (48% immigrants)	0.10
Yugoslav	0.07
Ukrainian (12% immigrants)	0.06
Indian (68% immigrants)	0.05
Greek (55% immigrants)	0.03
Korean	0.00
Croatian	-0.01
Japanese	-0.02
Finnish	-0.03
Norwegian	-0.05
Swedish	-0.05
Danish	-0.06
Jewish (33% immigrants)	-0.07
Dutch (37% immigrants)	-0.09
British (12% immigrants)	-0.18
Canadian	-0.19
German (25% immigrants)	-0.19

TABLE 5 The Proportion of Ethnic Group Population Living in Census Tracts with 40% and More Poverty Rate By City, 1991

	Halifax	Saint John	Quebec	Sherbrooke	Trois-Riviers	Montreal	Ottawa-Hull	Toronto	Hamilton	Winnipeg	Regina	Saskatoon	Calgary	Edmonton	Vancouver	Average	Modified Avg.
Vietnamese	37.6	66.7	17.0	18.5	0.0	25.6	16.8	9.1	32.0	51.1	19.9	0.0	3.4	34.9	12.7	23.0	24.7
Spanish	0.0	22.2	5.4	50.6	23.1	16.8	0.5	3.5	11.8	19.0	5.8	0.0	1.1	8.1	5.6	11.6	11.6
Aboriginal	7.8	23.8	6.0	1.8	8.7	7.3	0.9	3.6	6.8	45.7	16.1	4.0	0.8	7.7	13.4	10.3	10.3
Chinese	2.2	12.2	8.1	24.1	0.0	17.3	3.5	2.4	8.3	16.4	2.2	9.5	1.4	6.7	4.9	7.9	8.5
Black	14.3	16.7	14.6	19.4	0.0	18.7	4.5	3.9	3.6	12.6	0.0	0.0	0.8	4.1	4.7	7.9	8.4
Portugese	0.0	19.0	4.2	18.5	0.0	7.9	1.3	0.6	10.8	20.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	1.8	5.9	6.9
Yugoslav	0.0	--	0.0	40.0	--	8.7	0.0	1.1	0.9	12.9	5.0	0.0	1.2	4.1	1.6	5.8	6.9
Finnish	0.0	50.0	0.0	--	--	3.4	0.0	1.0	0.0	12.8	0.0	0.0	1.9	3.4	1.2	5.7	9.2
Filipino	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	24.2	4.1	3.4	1.5	24.5	6.3	3.9	0.4	3.2	3.0	5.3	7.5
Hungarian	0.0	0.0	5.6	35.0	0.0	9.8	0.7	1.3	2.4	11.2	1.9	2.4	1.7	3.6	3.5	5.3	6.6
Polish	4.3	0.0	0.0	21.7	0.0	11.8	1.8	1.3	2.4	11.1	2.3	1.8	0.9	5.9	5.4	4.7	5.9

Croatian	10.0	--	0.0	0.0	--	5.9	0.0	0.4	0.0	11.2	22.2	0.0	0.0	7.1	2.3	4.5	5.9
Dutch	0.7	2.6	0.0	25.0	14.3	5.1	0.2	0.5	0.5	3.6	1.2	0.6	0.2	1.3	0.7	3.8	4.0
Lebanese	1.8	0.0	5.7	0.0	10.0	5.1	1.6	1.9	10.0	10.5	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.4	1.7	3.4	4.6
French	1.8	6.2	3.9	6.4	4.7	5.1	0.6	1.7	2.0	3.9	2.0	0.2	0.8	1.9	2.7	2.9	2.9
Korean	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	--	7.4	1.7	2.7	3.0	17.6	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.5	2.6	2.8	4.5
English	1.4	4.5	2.4	2.8	7.7	6.1	0.7	1.0	1.1	5.5	3.0	0.5	0.5	1.7	1.0	2.7	2.7
East Indian	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.7	1.8	1.2	5.1	3.3	2.9	0.0	0.4	1.3	0.3	2.5	3.8
German	1.2	5.9	2.9	6.9	4.3	4.3	0.5	0.9	1.1	4.3	2.0	0.3	0.4	1.7	0.8	2.5	2.5
Ukrainian	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.6	0.8	1.2	8.5	1.5	1.3	0.6	2.7	1.2	2.4	3.0
Greek	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	25.8	0.4	0.5	1.7	3.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	1.1	2.4	2.8
Italian	0.0	0.0	0.6	8.0	0.0	3.2	2.4	0.8	1.6	4.6	3.9	0.0	0.2	4.3	1.5	2.1	2.1
Danish	3.1	--	0.0	--	--	2.2	0.0	0.5	1.4	4.2	6.2	0.0	0.5	1.6	1.0	1.7	1.9
Norwegian	0.0	7.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	1.9	0.8	0.0	4.2	3.5	0.4	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.6	2.2
Japanese	0.0	--	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.5	1.2	0.7	0.0	4.1	0.0	5.9	0.5	0.9	1.8	1.5	2.4
Swedish	0.0	0.0	0.0	--	--	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	9.6	2.9	0.0	0.7	2.4	1.1	1.4	2.2
Jewish	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.4	0.1	0.1	0.0	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.5	1.0	1.3
Total																4.9	5.7

the numbers for each ethnic group with the averages indicates that Vietnamese, Spanish, Aboriginal, Chinese, Black, Portuguese, Yugoslav, Finnish, Filipino, and Hungarian have higher-than-average proportions of their population living in the census tracts with more than 40% poverty rate. Four out of five top groups are visible minorities. The fifth is the Aborigines.

Although the present paper is mainly a descriptive one, it may be helpful to make one rather explanatory clarification here. The common sense understanding suggests that the concentration of certain ethnic groups in high poverty neighborhoods may simply be a function of those groups' higher poverty rates. In other words, it may be income that determines both the rate of poverty as well as the level of spatially concentrated poverty for a group. Table 6 shows the ranking of different ethnic groups based on their poverty rates. The ranking of ethnic groups in this table does not match with that of Table 5, suggesting that the poverty rate of the ethnic groups is not a perfect predictor of their spatial concentration of poverty. Among all these groups, Vietnamese make a special case. The conventional poverty rate of Vietnamese, though high, is lower than

TABLE 6 Poverty rate of Ethnic Groups in Canada, 1991

Ethnic Group	Percentage of population living in Poverty	Ethnic Group	Percentage of population living in Poverty
Latin/ South/ Central Americans	41.1	French	16.6
West Asian Origins	41.0	Other Asians	16.4
Arabs	39.4	Ukrainian	15.2
Aboriginal	39.1	Portuguese	15.1
Spanish	38.5	Other Europeans	14.6
Other Single-origins	35.8	Balkan Origin	14.1
Vietnamese	35.1	Jewish	13.9
Blacks/ Caribbeans	32.7	British	13.8
Other East/South-East Asians	26.1	Other European	12.7
Chinese	23.5	German	12.5

Greek	21.1	Italians	11.9
Filipino	20.8	Canadian-born	11.6
Polish	20.5	Other Western	10.8
		Europeans	
Hungarian	18.7	Dutch (Netherlands)	10.4
South Asian Origin	18.6	National Poverty	15.6
		Rate	

some other groups such as Spanish and Aboriginals, and yet, Vietnamese are the ones over-represented in extremely poor neighborhoods. The question, therefore, is why the poorest ethnic groups are not the ones most highly living in extremely poor neighborhoods? The full explanation of this unique situation, and similar ones, which is beyond the focus of the present study, can be a task for future research.

Many of the zeros in Table 5 may be taken literally as the indicator of no member of the corresponding ethnic groups living in poverty areas. However, this might simply be due to the fact that the ethnic groups in question do not have a significant population in those cities. The fact that SCOP is a phenomenon highly related to immigration, and also the fact that most of the Canadian immigrants settle in three major cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver supports such an argument. These zeros, nevertheless, suppress the overall average for the ethnic groups. Comparing the zeros against the proportional population of each group in each city led to a modification of the values in Table 4, reflected in the 'modified average' values. This increased the averages for some ethnic groups as well as the overall average, from 4.9 to 5.75. The changed values altered the threshold for those ethnic groups with higher-than-average SCOP rates. As a result, two other groups, Polish and Croatians, fell into the category of those ethnic groups over-represented in poverty areas.

Conclusion

The combination of rising poverty and an inegalitarian social structure in Canada raises the possibility that the rising misery may be absorbed only by certain segments of the population. The study of spatial concentration of poverty shows that immigrants, and especially those of certain ethnic origins, may be among these segments. Vietnamese, Spanish, Chinese, Black, Filipino are among the minority immigrants who are more likely to be found in high SCOP neighborhoods. This means that, for such groups, poverty is very likely to become persistent, extending over generations. These immigrants' efforts to escape the poverty that they experienced in their places of origin, prove to be futile. The extreme isolation of such groups, resulting from both

their ethnic segregation and their presence in high poverty neighborhoods, poses further impediments to their integration in Canadian society. The high levels of spatial concentration of poverty for some immigrant groups, in other words, is a double-edged sword: it socially partitions Canada; it leaves these groups trapped in the vicious circle of poverty.

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Appendix

TABLE A1 The Correlation of CT's Poverty and Its Ethnic Population as Percentage of CT's Total Population, Major Cities, 1991

	Sherbrooke	Montreal	Ottawa-Hull	Toronto	Hamilton	Kitchener	London	Windsor	Thunder Bay	Winnipeg	Saskatoon	Lethbridge	Calgary	Edmonton	Kamloops	Vancouver	Prince George
French	.03	-.11**	.23**	-.01	.41**	.26*	.24*	-.13	.22	-.06	-.11	.74**	.27**	-.15*	.29	.22**	.69**
British	-.28	-.19**	-.36**	-.42**	-.12	.05	-.25*	.05	.16	-.41**	-.20	-.06	-.16*	-.43**	.20	-.51**	-.14
German	-.06	-.25**	-.29**	-.34**	-.20**	-.27*	-.21	-.25	-.16	-.25**	-.30*	.14	-.08	-.37**	.22	-.31**	-.26
Canadian	-.05	-.03	-.22**	-.32**	-.18*	-.05	.10	-.18	-.39*	-.33**	-.49**	.03	-.04	-.22**	-.49*	-.15**	-.16
Italian	.12	.00	.04	.02	.06	-.08	.07	-.09	.11	-.24**	.26	.43	-.00	.26**	.51*	.12*	.14
Chinese	.38*	.28**	.09	.22**	.39**	.22	-.01	.29*	.50**	.27**	.52**	.51*	.14	.34**	.01	.36**	.64**
Aboriginal	-.13	.16**	.40**	.16**	.57**	.14	.57**	.24	.52**	.84**	.85**	.80**	.42**	.57**	.38	.39**	.76**
Ukrainian	-.12	-.02	-.20**	-.11**	.03	-.19	.01	-.06	.10	.03	.46**	.50*	-.18*	.21**	.35	-.02	.29
Dutch	.04	-.12**	-.30**	-.28**	-.38**	.01	-.28**	.05	-.23	-.31**	-.13	.42	-.05	-.05	.23	-.27**	.08
Indian	-.21	.10**	-.23**	.13**	.02	.12	-.14	-.06	.12	-.12	-.08	.31	.04	.07	.40	.13*	.23
Polish	.43*	.12**	.08	.12**	.27**	.14	.59**	.21	.62**	.25**	.37*	.46*	.40**	.36**	.13	.38**	-.18
Portuguese	.09	.15**	.29**	.29**	.50**	.12	.48**	-.04	.15	.25**	.27	.32	.29**	.40**	.28	.24**	.11
Jewish	-.05	-.10**	-.14*	-.06	-.14	-.09	-.23*	-.07	.01	-.12	-.20	.23	-.17*	-.08	.05	-.07	.10
Black	.18	.34**	.43**	.52**	.30**	.14	.39**	.56**	.07	.34**	-.04	-.08	.22**	.28**	.18	.32**	.11
Filipino	-.18	.11**	-.02	.11**	.03	.06	.23*	-.01	-.03	.42**	.56**	.38	.17*	.22**	.16	.42**	.03
Greek	-.21	.14**	-.03	.12**	.13	.18	.02	.10	-.12	-.17*	-.27	.28	-.01	.08	.02	.05	.25
Hungarian	.32	-.01	-.13	.01	.09	-.05	.14	-.08	.245	.07	.36*	.42	.30**	-.08	.26	.26**	-.23
Vietnamese	.40*	.38**	.42**	.55**	.37**	.37**	.37**	.50**	.17	.58**	.37**	.46*	.61**	.61**	.12	.51**	.13
Spanish	.58**	.38**	.15*	.53**	.52**	.30**	.35**	.42**	.08	.34**	-.03	.38	.57**	.46**	.02	.38**	.15
Lebanese	.00	.03	.30**	.10**	.25**	.04	.05	.39**	-.24	.11	-.07	n.a.	.42**	.16*	n.a.	.08	n.a.
Norwegian	-.18	-.02	-.13	-.09**	-.13	-.02	.08	.27*	-.13	-.16*	-.39**	.169	.04	-.12	-.08	-.06	.17
Japanese	-.16	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.09	-.17	-.08	.05	-.09	-.14	.04	.09	-.03	-.06	.28	.13*	.06
Yugoslav	.29	.01	.03	-.02	-.03	.06	.24*	-.10	.11	.11	-.11	.04	.28**	.14	.39	.13*	-.41
Korean	n.a.	.05	.03	.11**	.07	.06	-.23*	-.17	.10	.13	-.13	n.a.	.01	-.04	-.25	.06	.27
Swedish	-.26	-.15**	-.16*	-.11**	-.07	-.12	-.04	-.20	.05	-.11	-.26	-.40	.14	.01	.53*	-.07	.31
Croatian	-.01	-.06	.09	-.13**	-.10	-.14	-.23*	-.08	.02	.03	-.06	-.04	-.107	.09	-.13	.09	.66**
Danish	-.16	-.12**	-.08	-.17**	-.14	-.08	.02	.19	-.25	-.15	-.02	.27	-.13	-.05	-.07	-.15**	.12
Finnish	n.a.	-.05	-.19**	-.08*	-.12	.10	-.17	.00	-.15	-.04	-.06	.42	.05	.07	-.13	-.04	-.10

Note: ** = Correlation is significant at the .01 level, * = Correlation is significant at the .05 level.