Measuring Prejudice: Comparing Canadian and Finnish Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants after COVID-19

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Andrea Lynn Dunkerley, 2001501

Supervisor: Karin Österman

Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies

Åbo Akademi University, Finland

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Andrea Lynn Dunkerley

Abstract

Aim: The aim of the study was to investigate Canadian and Finnish attitudes toward Chinese immigrants in their respective countries.

Method: An online questionnaire was completed by 249 participants, 171 Canadians and 78 Finns. The data was analyzed in SPSS using two sample t-tests, factorial ANOVAs, and ANCOVAs.

Results: The study showed that Canadians ($M = 4.26$) had significantly more positive attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than Finns ($M = 3.6$) when using the Bogardus Social Distance Scale. Similar results were found when measuring the topics of culture (Canada $M = .44$, Finland $M = .2$) and safety (Canada $M = 1.03$, Finland $M = .94$). The topic of employment and general attitudes had no significant difference. Gender, education, political beliefs and if participants personally knew someone Chinese were all found to have some effect on results.

Conclusions: Overall, Canadian and Finnish attitudes toward Chinese immigrants tended to be quite similar, with Canadians having more positive attitudes than Finns in some areas. Further research is required to validate these findings within the field.

Key Words: Canada, Finland, Chinese, immigrant, attitudes, prejudice

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1. Introduction

1.1 Aim of Study

This study investigates similarities and differences between Canadian and Finnish attitudes toward Chinese immigrants in their respective countries. As both of these countries have distinct histories of contact in connection with Chinese immigrants and attitudes towards them, and in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic that led to a large surge in hate crimes and other discrimination against various minority groups around the globe (e.g., Guterres, 2020; United Nations [UN], 2020), especially against Chinese and other East Asians (e.g., Dionne & Turkmen, 2020; Fight COVID Racism [FCR], 2020; Gray & Hansen, 2021; Grover et al., 2020; Han et al., 2023; Haynes, 2021; Hswen et al., 2021; Human Rights Watch [HRW], 2020; Jacques et al., 2023; Lantz & Wenger, 2023; Li et al., 2021; Lou et al., 2021; Lou et al., 2022), this study aims to indicate the current levels of prejudice against Chinese immigrants within Canadian and Finnish societies.

1.2 Definitions and Key Concepts

1.2.1 Social Identity Theory and In-/outgroups

Social Identity Theory (SIT) in the field of social psychology is based on intergroup relations and how they can create and/or maintain one's own (individual or group) identity (Kite & Whitley, 2016; Terry et al., 2001). One's own identity is reinforced through the interaction with another group that is viewed as being different. To clarify, this means "We are what we are because *they* are not what we are" (Tajfel, 1979, p. 188). This way of thinking creates division and separation from others so that one can recognize the self (*us*) of their ingroup. The others (*them*) in this situation are outgroups. Bratt (2005) proposes that a logical interaction and understanding of who is and is not a member of the ingroup enables one to better identify themselves. Ergo, without social interaction and recognizing difference means that an understanding or identification of the self as its own entity is quite difficult.

Regarding *us* and *them*, or *ingroup* and *outgroup*, individuals belong to a variety of clusters or groups that vary overtime. For instance, while one might be passionate about swimming at one point in their life (thereby making them a member of an ingroup that enjoys swimming) this could change at a later date. However, there must be some consensus that the group exists. This consensus typically comes from the outgroup as they note an emergence of intergroup behaviour (Tajfel, 1982). While some might associate certain individuals together, it does not mean that those who have been associated together as an ingroup know or acknowledge that they are members of such group (Tajfel, 1982). Though, SIT goes further than this. Gabbarot et al. (2009) describe how ingroups try to differentiate themselves from outgroups in efforts to maintain a distinct sense of self. This has led to theories that groups which are quite similar might be more overt in noting differences between them

(Brandscombe et al., 1999; Gabbarot et al., 2009; Johnson et al., 2005; Kite & Whitley, 2016). This is done in efforts to have clear distinctions between what the group *is* and what the group *is not*. Creating this distinction can thus potentially lead to increased levels of discrimination and prejudice between the groups (Brandscombe et al., 1999; Gabbarot et al., 2009).

An increased level of difference between groups is also thought to increase levels of prejudice and discrimination, because similarity could mean that more commonalities could bring groups closer together (Gabbarot et al., 2009; Rokeach 1960). Yet Louis et al. (2007) argue that it depends on the group, or, more specifically, the specific group members. For instance, if an ingroup is opposed to discrimination and prejudice, then actions, thoughts, attitudes and behaviours of ingroup members will shift if they wish to continue being an ingroup member. Should they not wish to conform, then they will no longer be a member of that group. Hence, if the ingroup supports discrimination and prejudice towards outgroups then ingroup members will adhere to the group norms (Louis et al., 2007). Yet, even within groups there are differences of opinions. As studied by Terry et al. (2001), white Australians would only express their prejudice against non-white Australians if they felt that the other white Australians were accepting of their views. If an individual felt that those around them would be intolerant of such attitudes or behaviours, and would therefore condemn the individual for it, such attitudes and behaviours would be withheld (Gabbarot et al., 2009; Terry et al., 2001). Similarly, Johnson et al., (2005) note when white Australians felt their status position was threatened, they would show increased levels of prejudice against those they felt threatened by. Alternatively, those who felt secure in their status position of their ingroup likely did not react in such a way, and thus were less likely to demonstrate prejudice (Johnson et al., 2005; Louis et al., 2007).

1.2.2 Othering

Closely connected to SIT and intergroup relations is the concept of *othering*. In identifying those of the ingroup, one also denotes those of an outgroup which is also described in scholarship as the *other* (e.g., Dionne & Turkmen, 2020; Kagedan, 2020; Sonnis-Bell, 2019). By establishing the *other*, one thereby also establishes what makes up the *self* (Sonnis-Bell, 2019). This process of othering, or the politics of such, however, goes deeper than simply noting who is part of an outgroup. Dionne and Turkmen (2020) state that this practice is when an ingroup, typically a majority, views the outgroup, typically a marginalized group, as being lesser than the ingroup. They also note that instability can intensify this, in efforts from the majority group to distance itself from those perceived as being part of the marginalized group. Kagedan (2020) argues that noting an individual is not part of the ingroup, or that they are simply different, has been found to be a universal human behaviour. He continues, stating that recognizing difference is often used both politically and socially to condone prejudice. In

response, Kagedan (2020) states that fairness and empathy are also universal human behaviours. However, these behaviours are part of inclusion, not of othering. Thus, he states that othering demolishes individuals and communal peace. And, when interpersonal interactions are based on fragments of respect, recognition, and trust, it is fair to say that "Once compromised, the results are policies and laws to discriminate, marginalize, and, in some instances can trigger relocation or culturally-focused genocide" (Kagedan, 2020, p. 149). Therefore, the process and politics of othering are extremely destructive when used as more than discerning difference.

1.2.3 Citizenship

Citizenship, as described by Kagedan (2020), is putting aside group differences in favour of one unit, typically political. Moreover, it is a distinct signifier of acceptance into the group. The concept of citizenship is also meant to be exclusionary as it denotes who *is* and *is not* accepted by the ingroup or the state (Liew & Galloway, 2015). While not all ingroup members may welcome this newcomer into the group, Kagedan (2020) notes that it is typically a step above an immigrant's previous status as an outgroup member, a non-citizen. Citizenship, consequently, creates new boundaries within the ingroup for what section of the ingroup that a citizen is deemed to belong to. As Razack (2002) writes, many societies are continually structured by racial or ethnic hierarchies, as denoted by those with the most power within society. This is particularly relevant in white settler societies such as Canada where the mythology is that since white people were the ones who came and "developed the land" (p. 1) that they are thus the most intelligent and most evolved of the racialized groups within the nation-state. While not all citizens might agree with this mythology, it is still found to be quite popular in a number of countries around the world as it creates not only a sense of identity or purpose within the ingroup, but that it also creates levels within the ingroup thereby promoting certain individuals with increased levels of status and power within the ingroup in comparison to others who are considered to be on the fringes or borderlines of the ingroup (Kagedan, 2020; Razack, 2002).

1.2.4 Stereotypes

Allport (1979) describes stereotypes as "an exaggerated belief associated with a category [whose] function is to justify (rationalize) our conduct in relation to that category" (p. 191). Stereotypes may originate from a seed of truth, but this is not always the case (Allport, 1979). They serve a significant part of social interaction, as they create expectations within the self of what could come from an interaction with outgroups (Stephan et al., 1999). Though stereotypes can be both positive and negative (Ward, 2002), negative ones can be the most harmful as they are more frequently used as

justifications for prejudice or other violence (Stephan et al., 1999). Furthermore, stereotypes are also formed through the recognition of selective observations that highlight certain traits or characteristics about outgroups (Ward, 2002). Thus, not all stereotypes are negative, but it is the harmful ones which are more closely tied to prejudice, discrimination, and other forms of intergroup violence.

1.2.5 Discrimination

Discrimination, as described by Allport (1979), "comes about only when we deny to individuals or groups of people equality of treatment which they may wish" (p. 51). A simplified definition is the treatment of others in ways that they would not otherwise receive solely based on (potentially perceived) group membership (Kite & Whitley, 2016). An example of discrimination is an employer refusing to hire members of an outgroup simply due to their association with such outgroup (Allport, 1979). Those being discriminated against might not even be aware that they belong to such outgroup, as simply even the perception that they do can occasionally be enough for some to discriminate against them (Allport, 1979). Discrimination, as described by Kite & Whitley (2016) is a behaviour, whereas prejudice is an attitude. Though the current study investigated attitudes, discrimination requires some attention because it is highly relevant to discussions of prejudiced attitudes. This is because prejudice is the attitude an individual or group has against that of another, whereas discrimination is the behaviour which is practiced, thereby expressing the prejudice outward from the individual or the ingroup.

1.2.6 Prejudice

As Allport (1979) stated, prejudice in its simplest form can be understood as "thinking ill of others without sufficient warrant" (p. 6), with the others being members of an outgroup (Allport, 1979; Johnson et al., 2005; Kessler et al., 2010). Though not all generalizations are prejudice. Misconceptions involving generalizations are different because an individual who can correct or update their mistaken information would, as Allport (1979) argues, not be prejudiced. Hence, an individual who is prejudiced chooses to maintain their previous verdicts even after updated information proving otherwise is made known to them (Allport, 1979; Curşeu et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2005; Kite & Whitley, 2016). A prejudiced individual does this because they typically claim the supposed differences between them and the *other* is justification for being prejudiced (Allport, 1979). The idea or possibility of bridging those supposed differences is frequently perceived to be an impossible feat or something that might not even occur to them to attempt (Allport, 1979).

Prejudice can also be positive (Allport, 1979; Kite & Whitley, 2016). However, as Kite & Whitley (2016) note, positive prejudice often leads to comparatively less problems than negative prejudice. Implicit and explicit prejudice are intrinsically tied to this. Implicit prejudice can be understood as when attitudes belonging to an ingroup "are activated in memory when the person encounters a member of an outgroup without the person being aware that the activation has occurred" (p. 177). Consequently, explicit prejudices are the attitudes intentionally expressed in social situations. These attitudes can be positive or negative, and both can cause harm. (Allport, 1979; Kite & Whitley, 2016). Though, as aforementioned, it is negative prejudices which typically cause more harm or problems within intergroup relations. And, it has also been found that those who are prejudiced of one outgroup are more likely to also be prejudiced towards various outgroups, though this can be at various levels depending on specific intergroup relations (Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014).

Prejudice does not need to be overt. It has been argued that most prejudice is subtle as it only becomes overt when those expressing it feel they can justify it in non-prejudiced ways (Brochu et al., 2008; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Kessler et al., 2010; McConahay et al., 1981). This is what some scholars refer to as *modern prejudice* (Brochu et al., 2008; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; McConahay et al., 1981)*.* It has been coined as such because *old-fashioned prejudice* is understood as, for example, accepting and supporting overt discrimination and the belief that certain groups are inferior to others (Brochu et al., 2008; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; McConahay et al., 1981). Modern prejudice has thus been dubbed as such because the types of views and overt nature of the prejudice is no longer supported by larger society (Brochu et al., 2008; McConahay et al., 1981). Modern prejudice is also a term that is more closely associated with prejudice as it appears within conservative or right-leaning individuals and ingroups (Brochu et al., 2008; Choma & Hodson, 2008).

Additionally, Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) examined many studies and found that prejudiced attitudes are often present within groups who have more right-wing or conservative political views than those whose political views are more leftist or liberal. However, prejudice also is present amongst individuals and groups that are most left leaning or liberal (Brochu et al., 2008; Choma & Hodson, 2008). This is often referred to in literature as *aversive prejudice* (Brochu et al., 2008). Aversive prejudice is understood as describing the theory of individuals who typically react to discrimination and believe that it is wrong, but that the individuals or groups still have negative reactions to certain outgroups (Brochu et al., 2008). Similar to modern prejudice, aversive prejudice is only actively expressed when there are perceived justifications (Brochu et al., 2008). Thus, aversive prejudice is quite similar to implicit prejudice with some differences. Those who would be associated with aversive prejudice are more likely to not view themselves as prejudiced but would still have their prejudices expressed when the situation (or justification) presented itself (Choma & Hodson, 2008).

1.2.6.1 Prejudice and Intergroup Contact

Intergroup contact is also thought to either increase or decrease levels of prejudice between groups (Allport, 1979; Barni et al., 2020; Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009; Curşeu et al., 2007). Allport (1979) found that occasional contact was more likely to increase levels of prejudice. This is believed because humans are sensitized to see things that will support the preconceptions. As Allport (1979) describes, when in a public place with many individuals belonging to various groups, humans are more likely to pay more attention to those of the outgroup which support preconceptions than they are those who are acting similarly to themselves. Noting difference, as aforementioned in the discussion on in- and outgroups, is essential for maintaining distinction between groups. However, once the occasional contact evolves into acquaintance or even friendship, most findings, as reported by Allport (1979) and Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2019) have shown that prejudice is lessened due to the increased interaction and connection. Though, this is only for positive encounters, as negative ones would be more likely to increase levels of prejudice (Gorodzeisky and Semyonov, 2019).

Yet it is also worth noting that prejudice which is rooted very deep within a group is unlikely to change without high levels of resistance (Allport, 1979; Bratt, 2005). This then leads into the theory that outgroup size matters (Allport, 1979). Though Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes (2017) reviewed 55 studies that measured group size's impact on anti-immigrant prejudice and found that there was no statistically significant effect in 60% of the reviewed studies. What does this then say about contact theory regarding prejudice? Well, if outgroup size has been more frequently found to not have any effect on levels of prejudice, then perhaps it is the quality of the interaction rather than the frequency of it. Christ et al.'s (2014) study on effects of positive intergroup contact found that societal contact (e.g., total levels of contact within a neighbourhood or organization, for instance) has a greater level of influence over attitudes than individual encounters and experiences. However, it has also been found that many ingroups will avoid meaningful interaction with outgroups (Paolini et al., 2018). Due to a preference for increased contact with the ingroup rather than the outgroup, many who would like to have meaningful interactions with outgroup members must then schedule and plan for meetings that would otherwise not occur (Paolini et al., 2018).

Some scheduled, quality interactions have been found to reduce levels of prejudice. Living libraries are one example. These workshops are made up through a gathering of volunteers who agree to share their stories of prejudice and other violence connected to it, and participants who agree to interact with and ask questions to the volunteers (Orosz et al., 2016). Living libraries are meant to challenge prejudice and (hopefully) eliminate it through dialogue between the *book* (the individual sharing their story) and the *reader* (the one listening and asking questions) (Orosz et al., 2016). Since all participants are engaged in the intergroup interaction presented in these workshops, the

possibilities for engaged learning and common perceptions or stereotypes of the *other* are challenged (Orosz et al., 2016). Hence, the quality connection developed in the living library workshops creates a space where prejudiced attitudes can be confronted. This is why they have been found to reduce prejudice between groups (Orosz et al., 2016). Furthermore, they support Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes' (2017) and Paolini et al.'s (2018) findings, where it is not the frequency of interaction but rather the quality of such interactions that can successfully lessen prejudice.

1.2.6.2 Right-wing Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation

Right-wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) are theories relevant and important regarding specific types of studies involving attitudes toward immigrants (Cohrs & Stelzl, 2010; Esses et al., 2008). Furthermore, they are both considered to be strong predictors of prejudice amongst individuals (Choma & Hodson, 2008). Those considered to fall into the category of RWA tend to submit to authority, assuredly support traditions and traditional values, and are willing to defend against those deemed to challenge either of these in their eyes (Esses et al., 2008). From the perspective of RWA, the world is understood to be dangerous and threatening to the everyday individual's life (Cohrs & Asbrock, 2009) thereby they tend to have negative views of ethnic outgroups, often believing them to be of low status in comparison with the ingroup (Bratt, 2005; Johnson et al., 2005). On the other hand, those considered to fall into the category of SDO tend to support inequality within society view the world as increasingly competitive where only the best dominate and survive, often through the discrimination or the putting down of others (especially those in outgroups) to maintain ingroup superiority (Esses et al., 2008). In this sense, individuals ranking highly within RWA tend to be more focused on realistic threats than symbolic ones, and the opposite can be said with regards to individuals ranking highly within SDO (Cohrs & Stelzl, 2010). However, both are concerned with keeping the ingroup or nation safe from perceived threats, most often from ethnic outgroups (Cohrs & Stelzl, 2010).

1.2.7 Integrated Threat Theory

Perceived threats have been found as more detrimental or pervasive regarding increased levels of prejudice than what is created by legitimate threats (Pottie-Sherman & Wilkes, 2017). Threat perception is therefore integral to studies involving prejudice and intergroup relations as they assist in understanding how and why threats (real or perceived) come about. Integrated Threat Theory (ITT) encompasses several theories involving prejudice, specifically intergroup anxiety, realistic threats, symbolic threats, and negative stereotypes (Curşeu et al., 2007; Stephan & Stephan, 1996).

Intergroup anxiety is when individuals feel threatened or experience anxiety during encounters or interactions with members of an outgroup (Nshom et al., 2022; Stephan & Stephan, 1996). These feelings of threat and/or anxiety often occur due to the fear that such social interaction will cause them to experience negative emotions such as rejection, humiliation, and embarrassment (Stephan & Stephan, 1996). Hence, interactions with outgroups are often completely avoided (when possible) by ingroup members when the anxiety is very high (Paolini et al., 2018). Moreover, it can also be the anticipation of such interactions that triggers anxiety (Curşeu et al., 2007). The fear of such incidents occurring can also lead to negative intergroup relations, thereby producing hostile or discriminatory behaviours between the groups (Curşeu et al., 2007).

Realistic threats are perceived threats from outgroups against the ingroup. These threats can be regarding power, resources, or even the well-being of ingroup members (Curşeu et al., 2007; Muis & Reeskens, 2022; Nshom et al., 2022; Pottie-Sherman & Wilkes, 2017; Stephan & Stephan, 1996; Stephan et al., 1999). Meanwhile symbolic threats concern morals, values, beliefs and attitudes, and the threats that outgroups pose (or are perceived to pose) to the ingroup (Curşeu et al., 2007; Nshom et al., 2022; Stephan & Stephan, 1996; Stephan et al., 1999). Simply, symbolic threats are the perception that the outgroup poses a high level of risk against the ingroup's "way of life" (Stephan & Stephan, 1996, p. 418). The risk is perceived because the ingroup feels that their views and values are better than those of the outgroup, and thus that they ought to be protected from forces that would harm or change them (Stephan et al., 1999).

Negative stereotypes are the final theory involved in ITT. As aforementioned, not all stereotypes are negative (Ward, 2002). However, it is not the positive stereotypes which are known to potentially cause harm or further prejudices against outgroups (Stephan et al., 1999). As such, it is only negative stereotypes that are connected to ITT. Stereotypes are important to this theory due to them serving as indicators of the types of intergroup encounters and behaviours (Curşeu et al., 2007; Nshom et al., 2022). Ergo, when the stereotypes are negative, they are likely to create a hostile and prejudiced environment for intergroup relations.

An important element of ITT is that each of these four theories will support one another throughout intergroup relations (Curşeu et al., 2007). Meaning, that negative stereotypes will support the feeling of threat by an outgroup. Conversely, the instances of perceived threat will then reinforce or create stereotypes of the outgroups. Intergroup anxiety will also be in play here, where it can assist in creating and supporting negative stereotypes, and vice-versa. Likewise, the existence of negative stereotypes can bolster intergroup anxiety. Hence, the four theories that make up ITT are all able to support and be supported by one another to create an atmosphere that can increase levels of prejudice amongst intergroup relations.

1.3 Measuring Attitudes

Measuring attitudes towards immigrants is a popular topic of study within scholarship. One vital reason for its longevity and continued interest from scholars and politicians alike, for instance, is because attitudes are known to change slowly over time (Kite & Whitley, 2016). Hence, as Kite and Whitley (2016) discuss, studies that are conducted with the exact same participants, method and procedure can obtain differing results for reasons other than a certain degree of error. Though, they continued, stating that if studies are conducted within a short range of time the responses are expected to be "pretty much the same" (p. 50). Methods to accurately measure attitudes are thus integral to this field. ITT, which was previously explained, is one of the useful theories in understanding and measuring attitudes. While it is worth noting that Stephan et al. (2005) has noted that much of the evidence present in scholarship regarding the relationship between threats and prejudice is correlational. Still, this does not mean that a discussion of such topics together is without merit. Rather, it means that more research must be conducted to properly evaluate whether there is a connection or if it is only correlational.

Much scholarship dedicated to measuring attitudes regarding immigrant groups is closely tied to the perception by the host nation that immigrants pose a threat to the either it or the host culture (e.g., Erhart, 2016; Esses et al., 1998; Esses et al., 2006; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; Hellwig & Sinno, 2017; Koikkalainen et al., 2021; Mols & Jetten, 2014; Muis & Reskeens, 2022; Nshom et al., 2022; Stephan et al., 2005). It has also been found that, generally, those who are more politically conservative and/or those with identities intricately tied to nationalism tend to be associated with more negative attitudes toward immigrants (Erhart, 2016; Mols & Jetten, 2014). Similarly, one's level of education is also linked to attitudes toward immigrants, as typically those who have obtained higher levels of education have more positive attitudes (Erhart, 2016; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). These findings can be associated with ITT and overall threat perception due to the fears of the *other* in response to an individual's role in their ingroup. For instance, those with strong national identities could feel more threatened by immigrants as they potentially bring different values, norms, and cultures with them when they arrive in the host nation (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014). As described by Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014), recent trends in this field has found that attitudes toward immigrants are more often supported by symbolic concerns about the host nation. Meaning, that perceived symbolic threats are actively connected with attitudes toward immigrants.

However, Lahav and Courtemanche (2012) found that politically liberal Americans were more likely to have more negative attitudes toward immigrants and immigration when they were framed as a national security threat. As such, when immigrants were framed as threats to the host culture, politically liberal Americans tended to have more positive attitudes toward immigrants and

immigration. Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) agreed, finding this theory common with other studies conducted around the same time. Hence the framing of the threats and/or benefits which immigrants or, more specifically, certain immigrant groups, offer to the host society is vital when measuring attitudes toward immigrants. Furthermore, there has been an increase in openly advocating anti-immigration sentiments in many Western countries in recent years (Mols & Jetten, 2014). And, to garner more support, anti-immigrant policy leaders will often use what can ensure them the most support, without, of course, changing their stance entirely (Mols & Jetten, 2014). Ergo, presenting an alarmist account could be used to bring about support for those who might otherwise have more positive attitudes toward immigrants or even specific immigrant groups (Mols & Jetten, 2014). Many citizens in various countries have also expressed feelings that there are simply *too many* immigrants in their countries (e.g., Esses et al., 1998; Esses et al., 2006). However, there are a series of studies which have found a trend of overestimation regarding immigrant population size (e.g., Gordon et al., 2020; Koikkalainen et al., 2021). Typically, this overestimation leads to increasing immigration restrictions within host nations (Gordon et al., 2020; Koikkalainen et al., 2021). Thus, presenting an alarmist account of *too many immigrants* could benefit the agendas of those with negative attitudes, and, more generally, those with negative prejudices. This is simply an example of how ITT works.

Another element of ITT present in attitudes toward immigrants and specific immigrant groups is the threat of competition. This threat is the fear that immigrants are taking up all the available resources from the host nation's citizens (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2019; Hellwig & Sinno, 2017). Meaning, that the ingroup fears that the outgroup will prevent them from succeeding and/or having access to what they feel is theirs. This phenomenon is classified as the Competitive Threat Theoretical Model (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2019). As described by Gorodzeisky and Semyonov (2019), this model means that negative attitudes toward immigrants are reactionary in response to alleged notions of threat regarding competition (both real and otherwise) regarding economics (e.g., labour market) or culture (e.g., societal values). However, they note this theory does not allow for other sources of negative attitudes to be included in the equation or reasoning for such perspectives.

The perception of threat regarding competition for resources can simply be enough to encourage negative and prejudiced attitudes (Esses et al., 1998; Hellwig & Sinno, 2017). Societal context is also important to consider when conducting studies in this field. For instance, Palmer (1996), in their analysis of various studies conducted in Canada, found that higher levels of unemployment went alongside anti-immigration views. In later analysis, as the unemployment rate decreased, so did reported anti-immigration attitudes (Esses et al., 1998). Hence, it can be argued that there is some correlation between the security that Canadians (the ingroup) felt regarding the number of immigrants (outgroups) in the country when there was both high and low rates of unemployment in the country.

This is further supported by Hainmueller and Hopkins (2014) who reviewed around 100 recent studies and found that immigration attitudes were often fueled by symbolic concerns regarding the nation. In many European countries, immigrants are also often viewed as taking away employment opportunities from host nation citizens (Nshom et al., 2022). Furthermore, these immigrants are also viewed as a drain on the economy and state due to their perceived reliance on the welfare system that might exist in the host country (Nshom et al., 2022). Negative stereotypes regarding immigrants and specific immigrant groups also have a heavy impact here, as they can further negative prejudices which might already exist within the host culture (Nshom et al., 2022).

Hainmueller and Hopkins' (2014) also found that immigrants who did not culturally fit in with the host nation were often regarded as more threatening than those who did not economically fit in. This could be viewed as a fear of a perceived threat that differing cultures have on the host culture (Gorodzeisky & Smyonov, 2019; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014; Hellwig & Sinno, 2017). As, if a new culture were to be integrated into that of the host nation, the host nation's culture would then be different than what it was previously. Values, norms, and beliefs might shift, as well as what it means to belong or adhere to the national identity. Hence, this perceived threat to the host culture, that the integration could harm the host culture could be perceived as more of a threat than a benefit by some.

Another method to measure attitudes between groups is the Bogardus Social Distance Scale (Allport, 1979; Wark & Galliher, 2007). This scale is comprised of several situations in which varying levels of intimacy or interaction are presented. Respondents would then select the option that they feel the most comfortable with regarding their level of intimacy or interaction with members of a specific outgroup. The most intimate level would be to have a member of the outgroup as a partner or close relative. Respondents who select this option tend to be the most open to relationships or interactions with outgroup members and thus would generally demonstrate highly positive attitudes to the specific outgroup (Allport, 1979; Wark & Galliher, 2007). The least intimate level would be to have a member of the outgroup completely excluded from interaction with the respondent, their ingroup, and even their country. Respondents who select this option tend to demonstrate very high negative attitudes of the outgroup in question (Allport, 1979; Wark & Galliher, 2007). The other levels of intimacy would be somewhere on the lines of (from most to least intimate situations): willing to have a member of the outgroup as a close personal friend, as a neighbour, to become a citizen of the ingroup's country, and to be able to visit the country as a noncitizen. This scale has been found quite useful as it gages the positive or negative attitudes which an ingroup has regarding the outgroup member (Allport, 1979; Wark & Galliher, 2007).

Generally, much of the scholarship related to measuring attitudes toward immigrants has not separated them by ethnicity. While there are some studies which do this, the overwhelming, historical

majority has not (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2019). This is incredibly problematic as individuals might have different ethnic groups in mind when they are asked about their attitudes toward immigrants (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2019). Thus, if not all respondents have the same immigrant group in mind it can drastically affect how they participate in studies and can negatively affect the data collected. However, some studies have found little difference between attitudes toward immigrant groups amongst respondents when being specific as to which ethnic groups are attitudes being measured (Hainmueller & Hopkinds, 2014). Important in this discussion is also what stereotypes and which ethnic groups the media mentions frequently, as the media has been found to have a large impact on attitudes toward ethnic groups (Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014).

1.4 Migration

In 2019, the United Nations (UN) reported that the global number of international migrants had reached an estimated 272 million. This number would have been approximately 3.5% of the global population at the time (United Nations [UN], 2019). The largest global migrant group were those whose place of birth was India (18 million living abroad), followed by those born in Mexico (12 million) and China (11 million) (UN, 2019). Interestingly, the UN (2019) also reported that approximately half of all international migrants resided in only ten countries. The top three being the United States of America, Germany and Saudi Arabia. Canada was listed seventh. Finland was not mentioned in this statement.

Much scholarship has been dedicated to the discussion of how international migrants can simultaneously be a benefit and liability to home and host countries (e.g., Bell, 2019; Biles & Frideres, 2012; Kosic & Phalet, 2006). Often, this is because what is considered a boon for one country can be detrimental for another. However, there are also diverse perspectives of immigrants when it is different ethnic groups being mentioned (Gorodzeisky & Semyonov, 2019). One theory is that the feasibility or acceptance by the host culture regarding an immigrant group's integration plays an important role (Biles & Frideres, 2012). This is because integration has been defined as a complementary process for both host and immigrant as they both need to adapt to one another on some level to properly integrate with one another (Biles & Frideres, 2012). Therefore, successful integration also changes or reshapes the host culture on some level. Immigrants who become permanent residents or, later, even citizens of the host country will often reproduce children that are distinctly part of both cultures. In doing so, the future of the host culture will continue to change as it adapts to the new levels of integration by evolving to encompass things which, before the integration process began, might have never been considered as being part of the culture or identity of the host (Biles & Frideres, 2012).

1.4.1 Chinese Migration

Chinese individuals have participated in global migration for centuries (Cao, 2011; Ma, 2003). However, before the mid-nineteenth century, Chinese international migration was predominantly found to be kept within the confines of Southeast Asia (Cao, 2011). With technological advancement and the industrialization of the Western world, large numbers of Chinese immigrants were able to make their way out of the Southeastern Asiatic region and into parts of North America and Oceania (Ma, 2003). Much of the mid- to late-nineteenth century Chinese international migration stemmed from the importation of Chinese labour (Kuhn, 2008). This, Kuhn (2008) argues, was because various empires and countries around the world began to abolish slavery. Without access to slaves, Chinese labourers were used as cheap labour that could be exploited due to their status as Chinese or, more specifically, non-white (Kuhn, 2008; Mooten, 2021). Kuhn (2008) continued, noting an example of some of these exploitations involved contracts where employers owned the labour, not the individual. This was due to many of the contracts being forcibly renewed, making them more akin to indentured servitude. Europe, fascinatingly, is without a centralized or notable history documenting Chinese migration to the region (Cao, 2011). Rather, Chinese communities in Europe are quite scattered (Cao, 2011). Europe's relative hesitancy to accept Chinese immigrants into its borders has also had a significant role in Chinese migration to the region (Kuhn, 2008).

Yet, even in countries with large Chinese immigrant populations, within the established Chinese communities there are differences (Ma, 2003). For instance, Chinese immigrants from different regions or social classes in China might settle in different cities or neighbourhoods of the host nation, signifying that they are more diverse than the often categorized homogenous group (Ma, 2003). Yet many host nations do not recognize the difference between Chinese immigrants and simply lump them all together as one distinct group (Ma, 2003). Many studies also do this (Ma, 2003). However, if there is a lack of understanding of the diversity amongst Chinese immigrants by various host countries then studying the differences between attitudes, for instance, amongst the different groups of Chinese immigrants could be challenging due to this lack of awareness amongst respondents. For example, in the Canadian cities of Toronto and Vancouver (which house large Chinese populations), it is known within Chinese communities that those who live in suburban neighbourhoods typically have higher socioeconomic status than those in or near the city centers (Ma, 2003). Also, within these different socioeconomic statuses there are groupings of Chinese immigrants from certain regions who, typically, tend to live closer to one another than Chinese from other regions (Ma, 2003). As Canadians might recognize these socioeconomic differences, they are also often unaware of the cultural differences between Chinese migrants and therefore might not notice the distinctions between them, nor might they be aware of the stereotypes amongst Chinese cultures that could be painting the

communities positively or negatively as a whole (Ma, 2003). As such, when measuring attitudes, most studies tend to group Chinese immigrants together due to the difficulties in being able to measure attitudes towards specific groups of Chinese migrants from others by the host populations.

1.4.2 History in Canada: Chinese Immigrants and Chinese Immigration

Canada has a long history of Chinese immigration that began before it was established as its own country (Holland, 2007). Since then, the Chinese population in Canada has grown to approximately 1.8 million, made up from a mixture of immigrants and their descendants (Lou et al., 2021). Of all Chinese communities in Canada, the three largest concentrations of the group are the cities of Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal (Paquet et al., 2022). The province of Ontario, in which sits the city of Toronto, lives approximately 50% of all those with Chinese ethnicity (Kong et al., 2021). Pottie-Sherman and Wilkes (2017) found that in the early 2000s, around 70% of all new immigrants lived in these three cities. This also has potentially complicated matters further in Canada, as other studies found that some of the most exclusionary and prejudiced attitudes are highest in cities and regions with small populations of foreign-born residents (Pottie-Sherman & Wilkes, 2017).

Historically, many Chinese immigrants arrived in what is now Canada around the 1850s due to the construction of the railway and the popular gold mining industry on the west coast (Holland, 2007; Mooten, 2021). Connected to similar trends within international Chinese migration, Chinese were preferred for these types of laborious positions because they would only be paid one-fifth the wage of other, typically white, workers (Holland, 2007; Wang et al., 2012). Thus, Chinese were valued less than many other ethnic groups. This is further reflected in various acts of legislation. For example, Canadian policies created in 1872 established criteria for who was and, more importantly, who *was not* allowed into the country (Liew & Galloway, 2015). Furthermore, between 1878 and 1908, the western province of British Columbia, which houses the city of Vancouver, repeatedly attempted to control Asian persons throughout the region, including attempting to exclude them from entering it entirely (Liew & Galloway, 2015; Ward, 2002). In fact, the fear of too many Chinese entering British Columbia, that their number was "becoming superior in number to our own [white/Canadian] race" (Liew & Galloway, 2015, p. 15), meant that Canadians living in British Columbia, especially Vancouver, felt threatened by Chinese immigrants and their cultural differences and thus reacted with prejudice and discrimination. This was furthered through the stereotypes of the time, depicting Chinese as poor, diseased, backwards, suspicious, criminal, cruel, and as those who held little value of the lives of others (Morra, 2004; Ward, 2002). Additional support for this fear of perceived threat that the Chinese would overrun Canada and spread their non-civilized attitudes and culture to all, a perceived detriment to Canadian society at the time (Ward, 2002). Similar thoughts also existed

outside of Canada in many other Western countries at the time (Ward, 2002). The idea that Chinese would never be able to assimilate or integrate into Canadian society, argued Ward (2002), was also perceived as a mark against them.

1.4.2.1 Chinese Immigration Policies

While indigenous peoples did inhabit North America long before Europeans ventured over the Atlantic, Canada is still recognized as a settler nation as much of its current population comes from immigrant settlement, especially Europe (Razack, 2002). Throughout this history, certain ethnic groups were deemed as "more suitable" for settlement than others and this led to various preferential deals or treatment for certain ethnic groups to better entice them to immigrate to what is now Canada (Ward, 2002). Chinese, for example, were not deemed suitable and thus a series of legislative acts were implemented to discourage them from immigrating (e.g., Biles et al., 2012; Cho, 2018; Holland, 2007; Liew & Galloway, 2015) and thus, the *Head Tax* was born. In 1885 the Canadian government implemented a $50 head tax on every Chinese person who wanted to immigrate to Canada, a significant amount of money at the time (Holland, 2007; Liew & Galloway, 2015). The subsequent acts of 1900 and 1904 raised the taxation amount to $100 and $500, respectively (Cho, 2008; Holland, 2007; Liew & Galloway, 2015). Hence, the head tax system was used as a tool to define the Canadian ingroup from those deemed *other*.

The exclusion of those considered unworthy of entering Canada extended further than just Chinese. *The Immigration Act of 1910*, for instance, specified that race was grounds for exclusion from Canada (Mooten, 2021). Furthermore, ethnic groups whose cultures were deemed unable to be assimilated into Canadian culture were also excluded, even if their race was believed to be of a preferred (i.e., white) category (Mooten, 2021). Despite this and the ongoing head tax system, many Canadians still felt that the Chinese population was too large and threatening to Canadians and their culture (Cho, 2018; Liew & Galloway, 2015). Ergo, in 1923 the Canadian government passed *The Chinese Immigration Act* which prohibited the entry of all Chinese individuals into the country, no matter their circumstances (Liew & Galloway, 2015; Wang et al., 2012). This legislative act was not abolished until 1947 (Wang et al., 2012).

1.4.2.2 Shifting Attitudes from Postwar era to the 21st Century

The postwar era was a period of increased immigration to Canada (Biles et al., 2012). In 1962, race was no longer a criterion asked of hopeful immigrants, besides a few specific instances (Liew & Galloway, 2015). Further ramifications to the immigration system were made in 1967, establishing

the so-called "points system" that aimed at removing the bias of immigration staff and solely on the alleged suitability of those who completed an application, where skills and education were deemed more important than ethnicity (Biles et al., 2012; Liew & Galloway, 2015; Mooten, 2021). This then led to an increase in non-European immigrants entering the country in numbers that had not been legally allowed beforehand (Biles et al., 2012; Liew & Galloway, 2015).

The goal by the 1980s and 1990s was to invite immigrants into the country that would support Canada's development in various levels such as culture and economy (Biles et al., 2012). Around the turn of the century new updates to Canadian immigration policy, as Liew and Galloway (2015) argue, shifted the focus from bringing immigrants considered "the best and the brightest" (p. 28) to those which would best fill gaps in the employment sector. Around this time, reports were published noting that there were approximately six million immigrants in Canada in 2006, with Chinese immigrants being one of the largest groups of permanent residents in the country (Biles et al., 2012). These numbers show that approximately one of every five Canadians was an immigrant at the time (Biles et al., 2012). The 2016 national census indicates that Chinese is the second largest minority group (20.5%) at almost 1.6 million (Statistics Canada, 2017). Between 2016 and 2021, 8.9% of the 1.3 million immigrants who settled permanently in Canada were of Chinese ethnicity (Statistics Canada, 2022b). On the 2021 national census, approximately 1.7 million people identified as having Chinese origin (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Just under three quarters (71.6%) of the Chinese population in Canada were born abroad, with the most popular responses being China (47.8%), Hong Kong (12.8%), Taiwan (4.1%) and Vietnam (1.9%) (Statistics Canada, 2022a). Around half of the Chinese population said that they came to Canada before the recent turn of the century, with the majority of the rest arriving pre-2015 (Statistics Canada, 2022a).

Despite this large immigrant population in Canada, it has been found that prejudice, racism and discrimination is abundant throughout the country (Biles et al., 2012). This is in stark contrast with the national rhetoric of tolerance and acceptance (Black & Hicks, 2008), though there are some findings which have also supported this rhetoric (e.g., Sharples & Chasteen, 2021; Wilkes & Corrigall-Brown, 2011). Yet, it has also been noted that it does depend on the type of immigrant and how accepting or tolerant Canadians tend to be towards them (Black & Hicks, 2008). Some of the prejudice and discrimination against immigrants in Canada has been linked to levels of integration (that immigrants should be better integrated), and that new immigrants place too much strain on publicly available services such as health care (Sharples & Chasteen, 2021).

Recent trends in Canadian politics and immigration policy legislation found that a key goal is to keep Canadians safe and secure from international threats (Paulson, 2013; Tilson, 2013). However, there has also been a significant push to bring in those with higher levels of education or training to

fill gaps in the Canadian workforce (Moffitt et al., 2020, p. 85). This, in connection to the general points system, presents the idea that individuals must prove themselves worthy for the ability to legally immigrate into Canada (Moffitt et al., 2020). As Paulson (2013) found in their analysis, Canada wants to be perceived as both generous and good in their treatment of new immigrants. Yet they also emphasize that Canadians will be protected from harm and other threats through the current immigration system. So, while Canada wants to be open and accepting of others, it still wants to be selective in only allowing those who are considered unthreatening for society (i.e., the ingroup) into the country. This has been a significant trend throughout Canadian immigration history, that the prejudices and discrimination against other ethnicities, especially Chinese, was justified as being for the protection and safety of Canadians, their society and their culture (Tilson, 2013).

1.4.3 History in Finland: Chinese Immigrants and Chinese Immigration

Finland, compared to many other countries in the world, has had a very short period as a net receiver of migrants as this transition only began in the early 1990s (Busk & Jauhiainen, 2022; Koikkalainen, 2021). Numbers from the mid-2010s put the foreign-born population living in Finland around 5% (Habti & Koikkalainen, 2014) as in 2011, there were approximately 183,000 immigrants living in Finland (Komulainen, 2013). Statistics Finland (n.d.) has more recent numbers, as they state in 2021 that number of immigrants was approaching 300,000. There were also roughly 470,000 individuals with foreign backgrounds living in the country. Additionally, approximately 388,000 of them were born outside Finland. Though the overall immigrant population size in Finland has grown rapidly since the early 1990s, it is still one of the smallest in Europe (Jasinkaja-Lahti et al., 2007).

In 1990, there were approximately 300 Chinese living in Finland (Cao, 2011; Nie & Lämsä, 2018). This number has since grown to almost 9,000 in 2013, bringing them up to the fourth largest immigrant group in the country (Nie & Lämsä, 2018). As of 2020, there were approximately 10,500 Chinese immigrants living in Finland (Rauta, 2021). The vast majority of all immigrants live in the Helsinki area (e.g., Jauhiainen & Tedeschi, 2021; Martikainen et al., 2012) and the same can be said for Chinese immigrants (Cao, 2011). Because of the small number of those with Chinese ethnicity in Finland, there are very few studies involved in this field (Cao, 2011). However, some information is known. For instance, it was not until the late 1990s that Chinese could more easily immigrate to Finland (Katila & Wahlbeck, 2011). This was because up until that time hopeful Chinese immigrants were only granted a visa as a student or labourer in a field that Finland could not supply their own workforce to fill, such as Chinese herbal medicine or cuisine (Katila & Wahlbeck, 2011).

As Finland's immigrant population grew throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s, Finnish attitudes towards immigrants were also found to become more positive (Nshom et al., 2022). This is

believed to be due to an improving economic situation within the country, as there was perhaps less fear that immigrants would take valuable resources away from Finns (Nshom et al., 2022). Though this does not mean that negative attitudes disappeared entirely. In reality, it might have made Finns' stances on immigration quite polarized. Immigrants in Finland have been placed into the situation where they are either viewed as a threat or as a benefit to Finnish culture and society (Nshom et al., 2022; Pitkänen & Kouki, 2010). The threat perception stems from not only the idea that through more immigrants comes more integration and a real shift of what Finnish culture is, but also that immigrants are more likely to bring crime and violence that would put Finns at risk (Pitkänen & Kouki, 2010). The fast growing immigrant population has also added to this situation. In 2000 immigrants made up around 2.6% of the total Finnish population (Pösö, 2014). Ten years later, the immigrant population had almost doubled to around 4.6% (Pösö, 2014). While this is still a small portion of the overall population, it did create a sense of fear for what Finland could look and be like in the future. This fear was further exaggerated in the so-called "Refugee Crisis" of 2015 in Europe (Nshom et al., 2022). The fear in Finland, and Europe more broadly, was that these refugees could bring crime and violence to their new societies, and that violent individuals could be hiding amongst the refugees to then gain access to European societies (Nshom et al., 2022). However, with the little scholarship focused on Chinese in Finland, this information is still quite general as it is regarding all immigrants, rather than specific ethnic groups. Thus, this information is currently unavailable when specifically discussing Chinese immigrants and the attitudes towards them by Finns.

1.4.3.1 Recent Attitudes and Immigration

Finland's 2020 strategy for future immigration legislation aims to be unprejudiced and maintain a safe and diverse nation for both citizens and newcomers (Ministry of the Interior 2013, as cited by Habti & Koikkalainen, 2014). In a more recent report, safety and threat prevention is also considered to be a high priority regarding both immigration and life in Finland, no matter one's ethnic background (Ministry of the Interior, 2021). However, the rapid growth of the general immigrant population has led to an increased level of over prejudice and hostility against all types of immigrants and even those who might not "look" Finnish (Jauhiainen & Tedeschi, 2021). Reports analysed from the mid-2010s found that most crimes involving ethnicity or race are reported by Middle Eastern and East African ethnic groups (Koskela, 2014). Conversely, Japanese are regarded quite highly, and this is thought to be attributed to an appreciation of Japanese culture, values and norms by many Finns (Koskela, 2014). This stance is intriguing as in the 2019 Finnish election, the Finns Party (the far-right political party) received 17.5% of the national vote, emerging second (Nshom et al., 2022). The recent 2023 election maintained the Finns Party's position in second, though they received more

support, emerging with 20.1% of the national vote (YLE, 2023). Thus, there is a distinct tension amongst Finns for their attitudes regarding immigrants and the integration of newcomers.

Also in the mid-2010s, various studies found that almost half of all Finns viewed immigration as a solution to the gaps in the Finnish workforce, especially regarding the quickly aging population (Haavisto, 2012, as cited by Koskela, 2014). However, there were also other findings that showed cultural proximity to Finnish culture being key to the acceptance of new immigrants into the country (Koskela, 2014). Meaning that those perceived the most culturally different from Finns would be accepted the least by society. This is similar to Canada's history, as both countries want immigrants deemed to be more acceptable. Interestingly, Palander and Pellander (2019) have found that since the 1980s, Finnish immigration legislation has steadily been more focused on the securitization of the nation and those who are allowed to enter the country. This is especially the case since 2000, they argue, as the foreign-born population continued to rise at high rates. As such, immigrants were increasingly viewed as a threat, as there was this perceived need for increased safety and security (Palander & Pellander, 2019). However, legislation has made some changes to ensure that prejudice does not value certain ethnic groups over others (Koskela, 2014). Yet, choosing to let those who are perceived to bring the most benefit to the host country can also be a form of discrimination, as it values skills and education, meaning that often those from lower socio-economic status in their home countries are less likely to be allowed entry into the respective countries. Furthermore, countries which are more impoverished are also at a general disadvantage because many of their citizens do not have access to higher education or training that might make them more desirable by host nations.

Through the Finnish Aliens Act immigration authorities can be discretionary regarding who they allow to immigrate into Finland (Todorov, 2019). Thus, while potential immigrants might fit all of the requirements, there is a potential bias of the immigration staff as to who they believe would be the most deserving of obtaining the status of an immigrant to Finland. Though there have been a number of updates and amendments to the Finnish Aliens Act throughout the years, Todorov (2019) reports that there is little information demonstrating whether or not these modifications have made substantial differences in the lives of migrants and their potential for residence in Finland. Additionally, he states, many of the amendments have been made to adjust language and terminology, which was only meant to make things clearer, not necessarily better or worse. Todorov (2019) continues, stating that he believes the Finnish Government meant to make modifications and adjustments to the Aliens Act for the specific aim at reducing undesirable migration to the country. Ergo, it might have made a difference in the lives of some potential migrants, but only those that the Finnish Government deemed as most suitable for living in and being part of Finnish society.

1.4.4 The COVID-19 Pandemic

A common trend in disease outbreaks is blaming others or isolating them to make the disease appear more containable and the situation to be more under control than what reality might be (Dionne & Turkmen, 2020). Infectious outbreaks with new diseases, as Dionne and Turkmen (2020) write, often have limited medical knowledge available due them not having been experienced before. This can then lead to an allocation of blame according to current negative stereotypes, prejudices, and/or discrimination on minority groups within society. Furthermore, the idea that it is immigrants that bring the diseases into the country, thereby harming the nations' ingroup, is a common trend in disease outbreaks as they are perceived to be an easy scapegoat for the current situation (Dionne & Turkmen, 2020). Ingroups targeting those deemed as *other* during pandemic situations are present throughout global history, such as in the examples of smallpox, the Spanish flu, SARS, and Ebola (Dionne & Turkmen, 2020; Lou et al., 2021; Ward, 2002). Chinese individuals, specifically, have especially been targets for this type of scapegoating rhetoric in various countries throughout history (Dionne & Turkmen, 2020; Newbold et al., 2021). The reliance on the ingroup in times of confusion and perceived threats is also common in pandemic and other similar situations (Muis & Reeskens, 2022).

COVID-19 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, or SARS-CoV-2) also went through similar issues, where Chinese and, more generally, East-Asians were often blamed for the origins of the virus (e.g., Dionne & Turkmen, 2020; Muis & Reeskens, 2022). Though there were also other groups targeted in connection to COVID-19 (e.g., Guterres, 2020; UN, 2020), Chinese were the most frequent to receive blame or harm regarding the disease (e.g., Muis & Reeskens, 2022). The virus was found to have originated in Wuhan, China in late 2019, which prompted much of the blame to be directed at Chinese (Yang et al., 2019). Various slogans targeting Chinese connectd to COVID-19 have also been visible in many countries, with statements such as "China kids stay home" (Muis & Reeskens, 2022) and commonly referring to the disease as "the Chinese virus" (Yang et al., 2022).

However, there is also the argument that COVID-19 made in- and outgroup lines less clear cut, as the illness did not target specific groups and instead brought people together in times of strife (Adam-Troian & Bagci, 2021); group barriers were believed to be blurred due to the need to overcome a common enemy (Adam-Troian & Bagci, 2021; Muis & Reeskens, 2022). However, this does not explain the drastic increase of anti-Chinese and anti-Asian hate crimes during the pandemic (e.g., Lou et al., 2021; Lou et al., 2022; Newbold et al., 2021). Notably, Li et al. (2021) found that in 33 countries there was a correlation between Chinese individuals and increased levels of discrimination against them during COVID-19. Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic has been found to be unique considering traditional scholarship on intergroup conflict (Muis & Reeskens, 2022).

In Canada, discrimination and hate crimes against Chinese and other East Asian individuals was found to have drastically risen during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic (Triadafilopoulos, 2021). One study conducted found that half of the 500 respondents of Chinese ethnic origin were called names or insulted due to COVID-19 with an additional 43% of them having reported that they had been intimidated or threatened linked to the pandemic (Triadafilopoulos, 2021). Some Chinese elders in Canada also claimed that this increase was more akin to the mid 20th century, when the Chinese exclusion immigration policy was still in effect (Kong, 2020). Reports of discrimination and attacks among South Asians went up by 318% throughout the pandemic, with incidents against Southeast Asians rising by 121% as well (FCR, 2022). Most notably, Vancouver, the Canadian city with the largest Chinese population, found that anti-Asian hate crimes increased by 717% in 2020 alone (Lou et al., 2021). Furthermore, it has been found that in these types of situations involving the self-reporting of hate crimes or other types of assaults that not all incidents are reported to authorities or other organizations (Lou et al., 2021), so the number of actual incidents could be much more.

Finland, as aforementioned, has very little information on Chinese immigrants living in their country. A police report in 2020 mentions the number of general hate crimes, with some information on specific groups who were targeted (Rauta, 2021). The 2020 number of all hate crimes reported was around 5% less than the number reported in 2019, though over 75% of these were connected to ethnicity (Rauta, 2021). The Police University College (Rauta, 2021) in Finland reported that there were 4 known incidents found to be major crimes related to ethnic or minority background. This, they continued, was an increase of 276% from reported incidents in 2019. In this report, there is information regarding some incidents which occurred against other East and Southeast Asians. Two incidents against Taiwanese (up 200% from 2019), two incidents against Vietnamese (no change from 2019), and five incidents against Filipinos (up 344% from 2019) also occurred in 2020, though there is no guarantee that they are connected to anti-Chinese prejudice or sentiment in relation to COVID-19. Ergo, these might simply be occurring at the same time, though international trends of increases of violence and hate crimes against Chinese and East Asians, and a stark increase in anti-Chinese and anti-Asian sentiment might show otherwise (Wu et al., 2020). Moreover, these statistics should be treated with caution as only a small percentage of these types of violence and hate crimes are usually ever reported to authorities or other organizations, and thus there is the possibility of more having occurred (Ministry of the Interior, n.d.).

1.8 Research Questions

(1) Are Canadians or Finns more prejudiced toward Chinese immigrants?

(2) Are Canadian and Finnish attitudes toward Chinese immigrants similar or different?

(3) Are Chinese immigrants perceived as more of a benefit and/or a threat to the Finnish workforce than to the Canadian workforce?

(4) Do Canadians perceive Chinese immigrants as more of a benefit and/or a threat to their host culture than Finns?

(5) Do Finns feel that Chinese immigrants are a benefit and/or a threat to their safety and security than Canadians?

2. Method

2.1 Sample

The sample consisted of 249 respondents. Of which 171 completed the Canadian version of the questionnaire and 78 completed the Finnish version. All but five respondents reported that they were citizens of either Canada or Finland, and thus they were excluded from further analysis. Of the Canadian respondents, 114 identified themselves as women, 53 as men, 1 as nonbinary and 1 as other. Of the Finnish respondents, 38 identified themselves as women, 36 as men, and 1 as nonbinary. The mean age was 41.5 (SD = 17.3) for Canadian respondents and 37.9 (SD = 16.4) for Finnish respondents. The age difference was not significant ($t(242)$ = 1.57, p = 0.13). The youngest respondent was 18 and the oldest was 84. Additional details regarding the demographics of study participants are displayed in Table 1.

2.2 Instrument

The questionnaires (see Appendix A) used for this study each comprised of 23 questions. Sixteen of those were to measure positive Canadian and Finnish attitudes toward Chinese immigrants. The response alternatives for the first 16 questions were on a five-point Likert scale (0 = strongly disagree, 1 = slightly disagree, 2 = neutral, 3 = slightly agree, 4 = strongly disagree). The numbers used in the questionnaires were recoded from a 0 to 4 scale to that of a -2 to +2 scale for ease of analysis. Eight negative items were additionally recoded in order to obtain a higher reliability (questions 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16). Cronbach's alpha for the scale was 0.73.

One question (17) used to measure attitudes was a multiple choice question, created using the format of a Bogardus Social Distance Scale (Allport, 1979; Wark & Galliher, 2007). This scale consisted of six social situations in which varying levels of interaction are presented (0 = least amount of interaction, 6 = most amount of interaction). Respondents were then asked to select the one which best fits their attitude towards Chinese immigrants and the level that Chinese immigrants should interact with them and/or their country. Questions used to measure attitudes were grouped into five scales: general (3 questions) culture (4 questions), safety (4 questions), employment (4 questions), and the one question using the Bogardus Social Distance Scale.

There were an additional seven questions asked to gather specific details about the respondents, such as age, level of education, and gender identity. One question (16) used the same five-point Likert scale as those questions used to measure attitudes. As aforementioned, this question was recoded in order to obtain a higher reliability. The other six were a combination of multiple choice (18-21) and short answer (22 and 23).

Table 1

Demographics of Study Respondents (Total N = 244)

Nationality	Canadian			Finnish			Total	
	N	Column N %	Row N %	N	Column N %	Row N %	N	%
Gender								
Men	53	31.4	59.6	36	48.0	40.4	89	36.5
Women	114	67.5	75.0	38	50.7	25.0	152	62.3
Nonbinary	1	0.6	50.0	1	1.3	50.0	2	0.8
Other	1	0.6	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	2	0.4
Education								
Primary School	1	0.6	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	1	0.4
Secondary School	30	17.8	57.7	22	29.3	42.3	52	21.3
Bachelor's degree or technical college (post-secondary)	103	60.9	76.9	31	41.3	23.1	134	54.9
Master's degree	32	18.9	61.5	20	26.7	38.5	52	21.3
Doctorate	1	0.6	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	1	0.4
Other	2	1.2	50.0	2	2.7	50.0	4	1.6
Do you personally know someone Chinese?								
Yes	155	91.7	80.7	37	49.3	19.3	192	78.7
No	14	8.3	26.9	38	50.7	73.1	52	21.3
Native language								
English	145	85.8	96.7	5	6.7	3.3	150	61.5
French	12	7.1	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	12	4.9
Finnish	0	0.0	0.0	42	56.0	100.0	42	17.2
Swedish	0	0.0	0.0	23	30.7	100.0	23	9.4
English & French	2	1.2	100.0	0	0.0	0.0	2	0.8
Finnish & English	0	0.0	0.0	2	2.7	100.0	2	0.8
Swedish & Finnish	0	0.0	0.0	1	1.3	100.0	1	0.4
Chinese languages	4	2.4	80.0	1	1.3	20.0	5	2.0
Other languages	6	3.6	85.7	1	1.3	14.3	7	2.9

There were two versions of the questionnaire constructed and both were in English. One was meant for distribution in Canada, and the other in Finland. The differences between the two were the references to the nations themselves and their citizens. For example, the terms Canada, Canadian, and Canadians that were used in the Canadian questionnaire were changed to Finland, Finnish, and Finns in the Finnish one. All other aspects of the questionnaires remained the same.

2.3 Procedure

Two electronic versions of the questionnaire were constructed in Google Forms. The Canadian questionnaire was distributed to friends, family, and acquaintances, and they were asked to answer it and to forward it via the snowball effect. They were originally contacted via email, WhatsApp,

Facebook, and Instagram. Several social media posts were made on the author's Instagram and Facebook accounts in efforts to obtain more respondents. Furthermore, the author also contacted close friends and relatives (using the aforementioned methods) to forward it to others once more, to ensure that a larger sample size could be obtained. Much of this late push for respondents was to obtain more men and those who identified as neither man nor woman, in order to broaden the participant pool.

The Finnish questionnaire was distributed in similar ways to friends and acquaintances, and they were asked to answer it and forward it via the snowball effect. They were originally contacted via email, WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Several social media posts were made on the author's Instagram and Facebook accounts, in efforts to obtain more respondents. It was much more difficult to gather enough Finnish participants than Canadian ones. To counteract this, four Facebook Groups based in Finland were also contacted. Half of the Facebook Group administrators that were contacted either did not respond to the message or did not approve the sharing of the questionnaire in their group. Permission was asked because all had rules regarding the topic and relevancy of what could be posted in their respective group page. Two Facebook Groups were agreeable to the post, however. Thus, posts asking for Finns to answer a short questionnaire were made in the Life in Vaasa and Lärkan, Vaasa groups. Additionally, forty paper handouts with information and a QR code (that brought individuals to the Finnish questionnaire) were handed out in Vaasa, Finland. A few of these flyers were given to non-Finns who said they could pass it along to Finns they knew. An additional five posters were put up at Åbo Akademi, Vasa campus and the Vaasa city library. Much of this late push was to obtain more Finnish participants, no matter their gender. Some images of the various methods used for study distribution during the data collection period can be seen in Appendix B. The data collection was active from 30 January 2023 to 10 March 2023.

2.4 Ethical Considerations

The study follows the principles regarding human research ethics of the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013) and it adheres to the guidelines for responsible conduct of research from the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2012).

3. Results

Three tests were conducted on the collected data in this study: a two samples *t*-test, a factorial ANOVA and an ANCOVA. A two samples *t*-test was used to compare Finns and Canadians. The factorial ANOVA was used to investigate interaction effects between nationality and three additional factors (education, gender, and personally knowing someone Chinese (PKSC)) in relation to the five scales. For feasibility when conducting the factorial ANOVA, respondents' education was grouped into two categories: those with and those without a high level of education. An ANCOVA test was also used to analyze the collected data. Only the general and culture scales were used in this test as multiple conditions were not met regarding the safety, employment and Bogardus scales. Age and political beliefs were the two covariates used in the ANCOVA test, with nationality as a fixed factor.

3.1 Conservative Political Beliefs

A two samples *t*-test was used to compare Finns and Canadians. When comparing the political beliefs as seen in Table 2, there was no significant difference between Canadians and Finns, and it had a small effect size (Cohen's $d = -0.08$). Both samples were slightly non-conservative with means of .59 and .69, respectively. In the Likert scale (after recoding), respondents who answered -2 strongly agreed with the statement that their political beliefs tended to be conservative. Those who responded with 0 felt neutral to this statement, and those who selected +2 strongly disagreed with it. This means that Finns and Canadians were equally conservative in their political beliefs.

Table 2

Differences in Political Beliefs between Canadian and Finnish Respondents

	Canadians		Finns					
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p =*	Cohen's *d*
Conservative political beliefs	.59	1.30	.69	1.28	242	-.60	*ns.*	-.08

3.2 Differences between Canadian and Finnish Attitudes

Table 3 illustrates that Canadian and Finnish respondents revealed no significant difference toward Chinese immigrants on the general or employment scales. The safety and the culture scales both demonstrated a significant difference ($p < .01$) between Canadians and Finns. Canadian respondents scored higher than Finnish respondents on both the culture and the safety scales, meaning that Canadian attitudes towards Chinese immigrants were more positive than Finnish attitudes. The safety (Cohen's $d = .49$) and the culture (Cohen's $d = .39$) scales also had a medium effect size on the results.

Table 3

Differences between Canadian and Finnish Respondents' Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants

Scales	Canadian		Finnish					
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p* ≤	Cohen's *d*
General	0.40	.59	.47	0.70	124	-0.77	*ns.*	-.11
Culture	0.44	.66	.20	0.57	242	2.77	.01	.39
Safety	1.35	.81	.92	1.03	242	3.53	.01	.49
Employment	1.03	.68	.94	0.98	107	0.72	*ns.*	.12

3.3 Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale

The results pertaining to the Bogardus Social Distance Scale from a two samples *t*-test are shown in Table 4. On this scale, Canadian and Finnish respondents revealed significant difference ($p < .01$) with a medium effect size (Cohen's $d = .51$). Once recoded, respondents who selected the least intimate level of interaction (0) wanted Chinese immigrants to be excluded from their country (Canada or Finland) in every way. Those who reported the most intimate level of interaction (5) were comfortable having Chinese immigrants as either a spouse or close family relative. Finnish respondents ($M = 3.6$) scored significantly lower than Canadian respondents ($M = 4.26$) on this scale, signifying that the Finns in the sample desired less intimate interactions with Chinese immigrants, thereby demonstrating less positive attitudes.

The factorial ANOVA test found no significant interactions between nationality and education ($F_{(1,236)} = .58, p = .45$), nationality and gender ($F_{(1,237)} = .10, p = .75$) or nationality and PKSC ($F_{(1,240)} = .94, p = .33$) regarding the Bogardus Social Distance Scale. Interestingly, PKSC had a significant effect ($F_{(1,240)} = 4.77, p = .03$) with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .02$) regardless of nationality. All participants who did not PKSC ($M = 3.44$) were significantly less comfortable having intimate interactions with Chinese immigrants than those who did PKSC ($M = 4.22$).

Table 4

Differences between Canadian and Finnish Respondents on the Bogardus Social Distance Scale

Scales	Canadians		Finns					
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p* ≤	Cohen's *d*
Bogardus Social Distance Scale	4.26	1.21	3.60	1.49	119	3.38	.01	.51

3.4 Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants on the General Scale

Regarding respondents' attitudes toward Chinese immigrants measured in the general scale, nationality and education ($F_{(1,236)} = 1.31, p = .25$), nationality and gender ($F_{(1,237)} = .51, p = .48$), as well as nationality and PKSC ($F_{(1,240)} = .08, p = .78$) had no significant interaction when conducting

a factorial ANOVA test. Though, PKSC did have a significant effect ($F_{(1,240)} = 4.64$, $p < .01$) with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .05$). This means that PKSC did have an impact on how participants responded to the general scale questions. All respondents who did not PKSC ($M = .21$) were found to have more neutral attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than those who did PKSC ($M = .48$). Though, the general scale findings should be treated with some caution as the homogeneity condition was not met.

An ANCOVA test revealed that age had no significant connection to the general scale ($F_{(1,240)} = .31$, $p = .58$). Political beliefs, as shown in Table 5, had a significant connection to general attitudes ($p < .01$), with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .09$). Nationality ($p = .8$) had no significant effect, nor was there a significant interaction between nationality and political beliefs ($p = .06$). Thus, participants' political beliefs were found to be moderately impactful, regardless of nationality. Though, these result should be treated with some caution as the homogeneity condition for the ANCOVA was not met.

Table 5

ANCOVA Results with Nationality as Fixed Factor and Political Beliefs as Covariate. Measuring Canadian and Finnish Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants.

Source	SS	*df*	MS	F	$p \leq$	$\eta^2 \leq$
General Scale						
Nationality	0.02	1	0.02	0.07	*ns.*	.01
Political Beliefs	8.68	1	8.68	24.06	.01	.09
Nationality * Political Beliefs	1.25	1	1.25	3.46	*ns.*	.01
Error	86.58	240	0.36			
Culture Scale						
Nationality	2.05	1	2.05	5.65	.02	.02
Political Beliefs	6.41	1	6.41	17.66	.01	.07
Nationality * Political Beliefs	0.24	1	0.24	0.65	*ns.*	.01
Error	87.17	240	0.36			

3.5 Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants on the Employment Scale

The employment scale had no significant results concerning the interaction of nationality and education ($F_{(1,236)} = .03$, $p = .86$), nationality and gender ($F_{(1,237)} = 1.32$, $p = .25$), or nationality and PKSC ($F_{(1,240)} = 2.69$, $p = .10$). Though gender had a significant effect ($F_{(1,237)} = 5.41$, $p = .02$) on the employment scale with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .02$). Those that identified as women ($M = 1.08$) had more positive attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than men ($M = .86$). Furthermore, PKSC had a significant effect ($F_{(1,240)} = 9.7$, $p < .01$) on the employment scale, with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .04$). Those that reported they did not PKSC ($M = .67$) had less positive attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than those who did PKSC ($M = 1.09$). This means that both gender and PKSC impacted how participants responded to the employment scale questions.

3.6 Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants on the Culture Scale

Political beliefs, as demonstrated in Table 5, had a significant effect on the culture scale ($p < .01$) with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .07$) when conducting an ANCOVA test. Nationality ($p = .02$) also had a significant effect on the culture scale, with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .02$). There was no significant interaction between nationality and political beliefs ($p = .42$). Age also had no significant connection to the culture scale ($F_{(1,240)} = 2.83$, $p = .09$). The culture scale findings from the ANCOVA test should be treated with some caution as the homogeneity condition was not met for this test.

The factorial ANOVA results pertaining to the culture scale are demonstrated in Table 6, showing that nationality and gender ($p = .83$) as well as nationality and PKSC ($p = .39$) had no significant interaction. On its own, gender ($p < .01$) had a significant effect on how participants responded to the culture questions, with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .05$). Here, nationality was significant ($p = .02$) with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .02$). Participants who identified as women ($M = .49$) had more positive attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than men ($M = .15$) regardless of their nationality.

Table 6

Interaction Effects using Factorial ANOVA test on the Culture Scale. Measuring Canadian and Finnish Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants.

Source	SS	df	MS	F	$p \leq$	$\eta^2 \leq$
Nationality & Education						
Nationality	0.79	1	0.79	2.00	*ns.*	.01
Education	0.08	1	0.08	0.21	*ns.*	.01
Nationality * Education	1.86	1	1.86	4.70	.03	.02
Error	93.39	236	0.40			
Nationality & Gender						
Nationality	2.13	1	2.13	5.64	.02	.02
Gender	4.21	1	4.21	11.14	.01	.05
Nationality * Gender	0.02	1	0.02	0.05	*ns.*	.01
Error	89.66	237	0.38			
Nationality & Personally Knowing Someone Chinese (PKSC)						
Nationality	1.16	1	1.16	2.95	*ns.*	.01
PKSC	1.31	1	1.31	3.33	*ns.*	.01
Nationality * PKSC	0.29	1	0.29	0.75	*ns.*	.01
Error	94.33	240	0.39			

Also shown in Table 6 is the interaction between nationality and education on the culture scale. This interaction was significant ($p = .03$) with a small sample size ($\eta^2 = .02$). The main effects of nationality and education on their own regarding positive attitudes toward Chinese culture were not significant, but their interaction was significant. These findings should be treated with some caution as the

homogeneity condition was not met for the factorial ANOVA test. Nevertheless, as seen in Figure 1, Canadian participants with higher education ($M = .47$) had more positive attitudes about Chinese culture and Chinese immigrants' cultural integration into the host country. Thus, Finns with a high level of education ($M = .11$) had less positive attitudes than Canadians with a high level of education. Finnish participants without a high level of education ($M = .38$) had more positive attitudes than both Finns with a high level of education and Canadians without a high level of education ($M = .30$).

Figure 1

Estimated Marginal Means on the Culture Scale Measuring Positive Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants. Level of Education and Nationality.
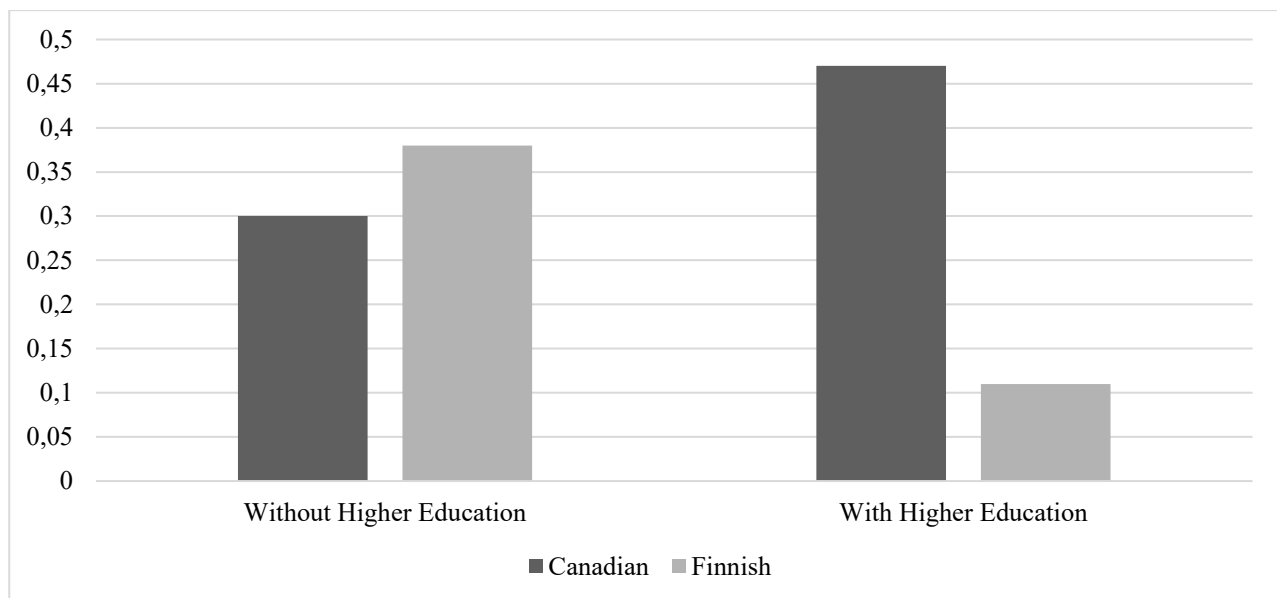

3.7 Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants on the Safety Scale

The safety scale had no significant results regarding the interaction of nationality and education ($F_{(1,236)} = 2.23$, $p = .14$), nationality and gender ($F_{(1,237)} = .01$, $p = .92$), or nationality and PKSC ($F_{(1,240)} = 2.16$, $p = .14$) in the factorial ANOVA test. Yet gender had a significant effect ($F_{(1,237)} = 10.33$, $p < .01$) with a small effect size ($\eta^2 = .04$) regardless of a respondents' nationality. Those that identified as men ($M = .92$) had significantly more negative attitudes than women ($M = 1.38$). Additionally, as demonstrated in Figure 2, PKSC had a significant effect ($F_{(1,240)} = 16.77$, $p < .01$) on the safety scale with a medium effect size ($\eta^2 = .07$). Participants who reported they did not PKSC ($M = .63$) had more negative attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than those that reported they did PKSC ($M = 1.38$). This means that both gender and PKSC had impacts on how participants responded to the safety scale questions.

Figure 2

Estimated Marginal Means on the Safety Scale Measuring Positive Attitudes toward Chinese Immigrants. Personally Knowing Someone Chinese and Nationality.
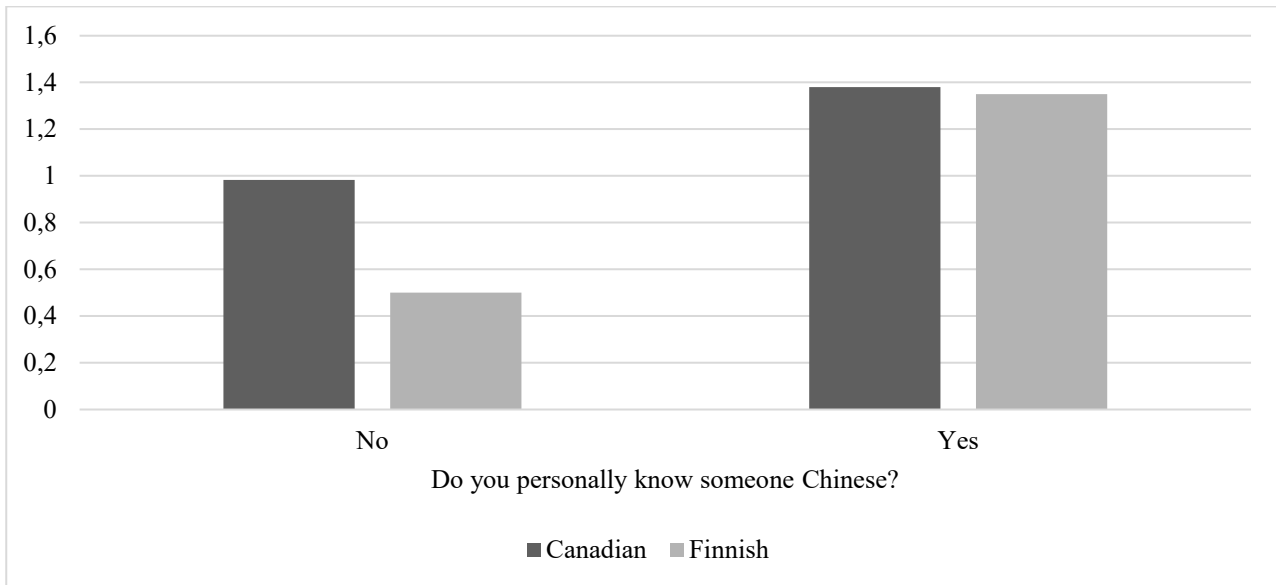
4. Discussion

4.1 Summary of Findings

There were five research questions which prompted the creation of this study. The first was: (1) are Canadians or Finns more prejudiced toward Chinese immigrants? Results found that Finns ($M = 3.6$) are more prejudiced than Canadians ($M = 4.26$) when measuring attitudes using the Bogardus Social Distance Scale. With the highest possible response being 5 and the lowest being 0, this result also demonstrated that both Finns and Canadians tend to have attitudes which are somewhat positive in nature toward Chinese immigrants. Through the use of the Bogardus Social Distance Scale, this signified that both Canadians and Finns are fairly comfortable interacting with Chinese immigrants, though Canadians self-report results are higher.

While there is no specific comparison for these results in the Finnish context, this result is somewhat surprising regarding Canada. This surprise emerges as, for instance, Lou et al. (2021) reported that two-thirds of their 874 study participants had experienced discrimination and prejudice, along with one-third having experienced intimidation or threats due to their ethnicity during the COVID-19 pandemic in Canada. One possibility for this is that as the perceived threat of the virus that many associated with Chinese individuals (e.g., Dionne & Turkmen, 2020) is, more recently, less prevalent in the everyday lives of Canadians. Another possibility is that study participants responded in a more socially desirable manner, essentially meaning that participants are more likely to respond to questions in what they feel is a more socially acceptable manner for their respective groups (Börger, 2012; Kite & Whitley, 2016). Or, it is also possible that participants did not engage in prejudiced actions during the pandemic.

The second research question was: (2) are Canadian and Finnish attitudes toward Chinese immigrants similar or different? Results revealed that Finns ($M = .47$) and Canadians ($M = .4$) have similar general attitudes toward Chinese immigrants. Both, still have their averages quite close to what would be considered neutral (0) and thus they are not overly positive. Comparing these results with the aforementioned Bogardus scale is also quite interesting as it leads to the assumption that social desirability heavily impacted the Bogardus question much more than those regarding general attitudes. Understanding this relationship and why this occurred is an avenue for future scholarship, as investigating the level at which social desirability came into play here is unknown.

The third research question prompting this study was: (3) are Chinese immigrants perceived as more of a benefit and/or a threat to the Finnish workforce than to the Canadian workforce? This study found that Canadians ($M = 1.03$) held more positive attitudes regarding Chinese immigrants and employment opportunities and the economy than Finns ($M = .94$). With this response, it signified that

Canadians and Finns both see Chinese immigrants as more of a benefit or, at least, not much of a threat to the workforce or economy of their respective countries. The economic conditions of a country has been noted within scholarship (e.g., Barni et al., 2020; Esses et al., 1998) to have an impact upon the attitudes that host citizens have on immigrant or other minority groups. As such, this study found that Chinese immigrants are perceived to be quite hardworking and that they generally would not hinder any Canadian or Finn from obtaining work.

When the economic situation was more uncertain at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and many lockdowns were occurring internationally (Dunford et al., 2020), the global economic situation was precarious and the future was unclear (e.g., Muis & Reeskens, 2022). This could have had an impact on the high levels of global prejudice toward Chinese individuals. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development ([OECD] 2022) recently reported that international unemployment rates skyrocketed during the pandemic, but that many countries have fallen below their pre-pandemic levels of unemployment. If the economic situations of Canada or Finland were worse, literature (e.g., Barni et al., 2020; Esses et al., 1998) would suggest that these attitudes would likely be more negative.

The fourth research question was: (4) do Canadians perceive Chinese immigrants as more of a benefit and/or a threat to their host culture than Finns? Results demonstrate that Canadians (M = .44) had significantly more positive attitudes toward Chinese immigrants regarding culture than Finns (M = .2). Though, both results are quite close to being neutral and thus they are not very positive overall. The culture scale measured integration and how much of a benefit and/or threat Chinese culture is perceived to have regarding the host culture. Thus, these results revealed that Chinese culture is not widely perceived as a current threat in either Canada or Finland, based on the study's results.

Interestingly, the highest level of education obtained by respondents was found to have a significant impact upon the results. Canadians, for instance, showed that with higher education (M = .47) their attitudes became more positive toward Chinese immigrants (without higher education M = .3). This supports other findings within literature where those with higher education tend to be less prejudiced toward outgroups (e.g., Erhart, 2016; Koskela, 2016). Yet, it was revealed that Finns with higher education (M = .11) actually have more prejudiced attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than those without higher education (M = .38). This finding is not widely supported by other studies and scholarship and thus it is an area that requires further investigation to better understand why this trend occurred within the Finnish sample of the present study.

The final research question which prompted this study was: (5) do Finns feel that Chinese immigrants are more of a benefit and/or threat to their safety and security than Canadians? Though study participants from both countries were found to have relatively positive attitudes, Finns (M = .92) demonstrated significantly more negative attitudes toward Chinese immigrants regarding the

safety and security of host nation citizens than Canadians (M = 1.35). Thus, Chinese immigrants in both countries are generally not perceived as threats to the safety and security of host nation citizens at the moment. However, as was demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, this perception and attitude can easily shift when something major occurs that is perceived to pose a threat to them or their ingroup (e.g., Muis & Reeskens, 2022).

There were also some additional findings from this study that were not directly connected to the explorative research questions nor to the nationality of the study participants. First, was that PKSC was found to have impacted study participants throughout most aspects of the questionnaire. Those who did PKSC demonstrated lower levels of prejudice and more positive attitudes in the measured Bogardus, employment, culture, and safety scales. This echoes aforementioned theories and results that intergroup contact can reduce levels of prejudice (e.g., Allport, 1979; Curşeu et al., 2007).

Similarly, gender was also found to have an effect on the employment, culture, and safety scales. As is supported within scholarship (e.g., Kudrnáč, 2017; McDonald, Navarrete, & Sidanius, 2011) men are found to be more prejudiced than women, though it does vary according to the theme or topic being measured in relation to the in- and outgroups. As there were slight differences that signified women were a bit more positive in their attitudes toward Chinese immigrants than men, it was not a finding that nationality had an impact on – it was relatively consistent across the respondent pool.

Furthermore, political beliefs also impacted the way that study participants responded to the questionnaire. This was especially significant for attitudes measured in the general, employment, and culture scales. Literature suggests that those with more conservative political beliefs are also more likely to have negative attitude towards outgroups, though there are certain circumstances which show that less conservative political beliefs can also bring about prejudice and more negative attitudes depending on how the situation is framed or contextualized (e.g., Bratt, 2005; Choma & Hodson, 2008; Erhart, 2016). While both Canadians (M = .59) and Finns (M = .69) reported fairly similar political beliefs when asked how conservative they felt they were, the political beliefs of study participants were found to have an impact on the results regardless of nationality.

4.2 Limitations of the Study

There were some limitations to this study which must be highlighted. First was the external validity as it was a self-reporting questionnaire. As such, respondents may have felt an urge to respond in what they felt was a more socially desirable manner despite the anonymity provided by the format of this questionnaire (Kite & Whitley, 2016). This is particularly important to consider when measuring attitudes (Brochu et al., 2008).

Second is that the results must be treated with caution due to the small number of participants. Furthermore, the sample was a convenience sample and not a representative one of the respective Canadian and Finnish populations. A third limitation is that both versions of the questionnaire were entirely in English. While English was stated to be the native language of most Canadian respondents, it was not the native language to all, especially Finns, and therefore the language barrier could have prevented others from answering either version of the questionnaire.

Connected to language is also the limited access the author has to Finnish materials, both academic and non-academic sources. This is the fourth limitation because the author does not have adequate levels of comprehension in Finnish or Swedish (the two national languages of Finland) to properly utilize published materials regarding the topic of this study in those languages. As such, Chinese immigrants in Finland and/or attitudes of this group could be discussed in either of these languages and the author would only have limited access to these resources. Other relevant findings and discussions could also be present in Finnish literature that the author would also be unaware of due to the language barrier. While there are some sources that are available via translation, and keyword searches in both Finnish and Swedish were conducted during the research process, the entire field and all materials have not been translated and thus it has impacted the possibility of what this study's results could mean, reflect, or possibly challenge in the Finnish context.

The fifth limitation is that group sample sizes were not equal. There were many more Canadians than Finns who participated in the study. Moreover, there were many more women respondents than men or those who identify with other terminology. Finally, the sixth limitation was the online nature of this questionnaire. While many have access to and are generally comfortable with using online technology, by having both questionnaires distributed online could have potentially reduced the respondent pool, thereby potentially excluding those without access or technological knowledge.

4.3 Implications of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research

This study was explorative and as such, there are some questions that the results have raised regarding future research. First, is that the level of social desirability amongst study participants could be more closely evaluated to properly gage the reliability of results. While there is always the possibility for social desirability responses to occur, understanding the level at which study participants would allow it to effect their responses is worth further investigation amongst both Canadians and Finns.

Second, is to explore in more depth why Finns with high levels of education had significantly more negative attitudes than Canadians with high levels of education. Furthermore, it is also worth investigating why Finns without high levels of education held more positive attitudes in this study.

Additional exploration is required here to understand if this is the case for all of Finland or if it is only the small sample gathered in this study which answered this way. It is also worth considering if high levels of education is responsible for this result, or if it is simply a correlation between the respondents that participated in this study. Once this is known, the results from the present study will be much clearer and can be weighed appropriately within the field.

A third avenue for future research is to also delve into the aforementioned theories of RWA or SDO, to evaluate if any study participants belong to either category. As these theories are known to correlate prejudice and negative attitudes with outgroups (Cohrs & Stelzl, 2010; Esses et al., 2008), it would be worthwhile to investigate if these traits are present within both Canada and Finland, and/or amongst participants. This information could potentially offer a new meaning to this study's results.

This study provided insight on attitudes toward Chinese immigrants amongst Canadian and Finnish samples, as well as the comparison of results from these two groups. The study was conducted with a limited sample size and various other limitations, though it has indicated current levels attitudes toward Chinese immigrants amongst Finns and Canadians. The comparison of Finnish and Canadian attitudes both supports and contradicts existing literature, prompting further investigation into this field of study. As this study was quite small it does not properly reflect national attitudes but it does open the door for additional analysis to understand exactly the role these results have in current scholarship.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaires

The questionnaire consisted of 23 total questions. Questions followed by * are those which were recoded as positive to obtain higher reliability. Those followed by ** had spelling or grammatical errors that were not noticed until data collection had ended. This is the questionnaire that was distributed in Finland. The one that was distributed to Canadians simply changed all mentions of Finns and Finland to Canadians and Canada.

Please answer the questions by selecting the alternative that comes closest to your opinion.

1. The number of Chinese individuals Finland allows to immigrate into the country should be increased.

2. I feel safe when I am around Chinese individuals.

3. Finland is too discriminatory against Chinese immigrants. *

4. Chinese immigrants are good for the workforce.

5. Chinese individuals should be encouraged to immigrate to Finland.

6. Chinese culture, values, and beliefs are very different to those of Finland.

7. Chinese immigrants to not integrate into Finnish society enough. *

8. I believe Chinese individuals are hardworking and dedicated.

9. Chinese immigrants with similar values and beliefs to Finns should be more highly ranked as suitable for immigration than those with values and beliefs which are dissimilar to those of Finns. *

10. Chinese immigrants often take advantage of Finns. *

11. Chinese immigrants limit the chances Finns have at obtaining gainful employment. *

12. Chinese immigrants coming to Finland should be able to choose how much they integrate into and adopt Finnish culture with regards to their own culture.

13. Chinese immigrants post a safety risk to Finns and Finnish culture. *

14. Finland needs Chinese immigrants that are hardworking.

15. Chinese immigrants often bring illness and other diseases into Finland. *

16. My political beliefs tend to be conservative in nature. *

17. Please select the option that best describes your attitude towards Chinese individuals based on the following statements:
    - I am willing to have a Chinese individual as a spouse or close family relative.
    - I am willing to have a Chinese individual as a close personal friend.

- I am willing to have a Chinese individual as a neighbour.
- I am willing to have Chinese individuals become citizens of Finland.
- I am willing to have Chinese individuals visit Finland as a non-citizen.
- I am willing to have Chinese individuals be excluded from associating with Finland in any way.

18. Please select the option which best describes you:
    - Man
    - Woman
    - Other *(with option for respondents to submit their own response)*

19. Are you a Finnish citizen?
    - Yes
    - No

20. Do you personally know someone who is Chinese?
    - Yes
    - No

21. Please select the option that best corresponds to the highest level of education you have obtained:
    - None
    - Primary school
    - Secondary School
    - Bachelor's of technical college (post-secondary) **
    - Master's degree
    - Doctorate
    - Other

22. Please enter your age in numbers: (short answer response)
23. What is your native language? (short answer response)

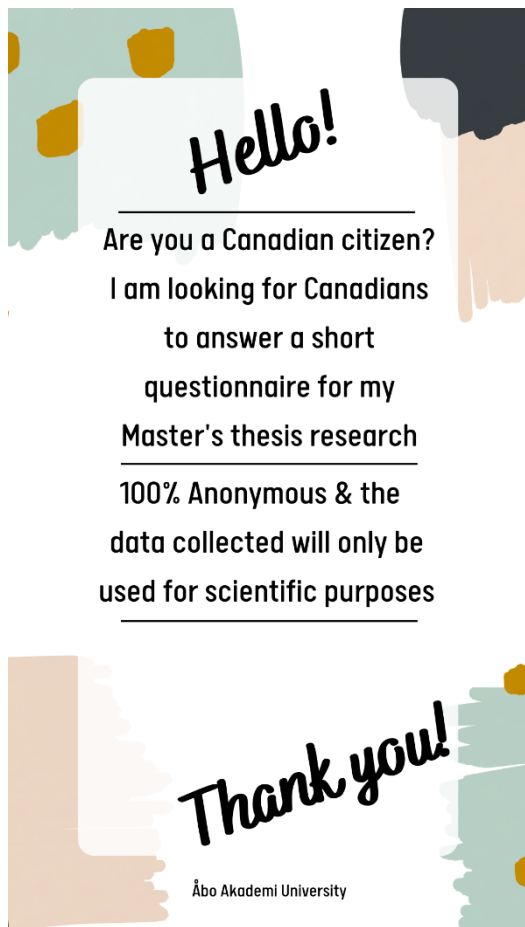## Appendix B: Images of Social Media Posts and Paper Flyers

Hello!

Are you a Canadian citizen?
I am looking for Canadians
to answer a short
questionnaire for my
Master's thesis research

100% Anonymous & the
data collected will only be
used for scientific purposes

Thank you!

Åbo Akademi University

Image 1 (left) *Photo used on the author's Instagram story during the data collection period. A hyperlink to the Canadian version of the survey would be placed at the bottom. The author's name, once posted, would also be on the top, right-hand corner of the image.*

Image 2 (below) *Screenshot of a general Facebook post by the author. This was not made in any group, but was a public post created for the author's friends on the social media platform to view and share. There were only two of these general posts made.*

Andrea Dunkerley
February 10 at 11:47 PM · ◉

Hello all! I am posting this again because I am still looking for your help!

I am a Master's degree student at Åbo Akademi University in Vaasa, Finland. For my thesis research I am conducting a study to compare Canadian and Finnish attitudes toward Chinese immigrants. I would greatly appreciate it if you take a few minutes to answer this short, anonymous survey on this topic.

The study is completely confidential, and I ask that you not enter your name or contact information anywhere in the questionnaire. The data collected will only be used for scientific purposes. I would also like to ask if you can share this short questionnaire with other Canadian and/or Finnish citizens.

Here is the Canadian version of the survey: https://forms.gle/cqujfXqynyvT5Gtm6
Here is the Finnish version of the survey: https://forms.gle/v6DfGJEhuRNfbfu96
Thank you!
- Andrea 😄