

Ethno-cultural Diversity and Blood Donation: A Socio-Anthropological Framework for a Comprehensive and Practical Approach

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Presentation Outline

- Research Chair on Blood Donation
- Situation Analysis
- The Blood Donation Situation in Quebec
- A Socio-Anthropological Framework for the Study of Ethnic Diversity & Blood Donation
- From the Theory to the Multi-Step Training Program
- The Multi-Step Training Program
- Conclusion

Research Chair on Social Aspects of Blood Donation

- Creation: 2009
- Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS)
- Funded by Héma-Québec, INRS, Héma-Québec Foundation, SSHRC
- 5-year program & 10 research projects for:

A better understanding of the social dynamics surrounding blood donation

- One research project on:

Blood donation among ethno-cultural communities in Montreal

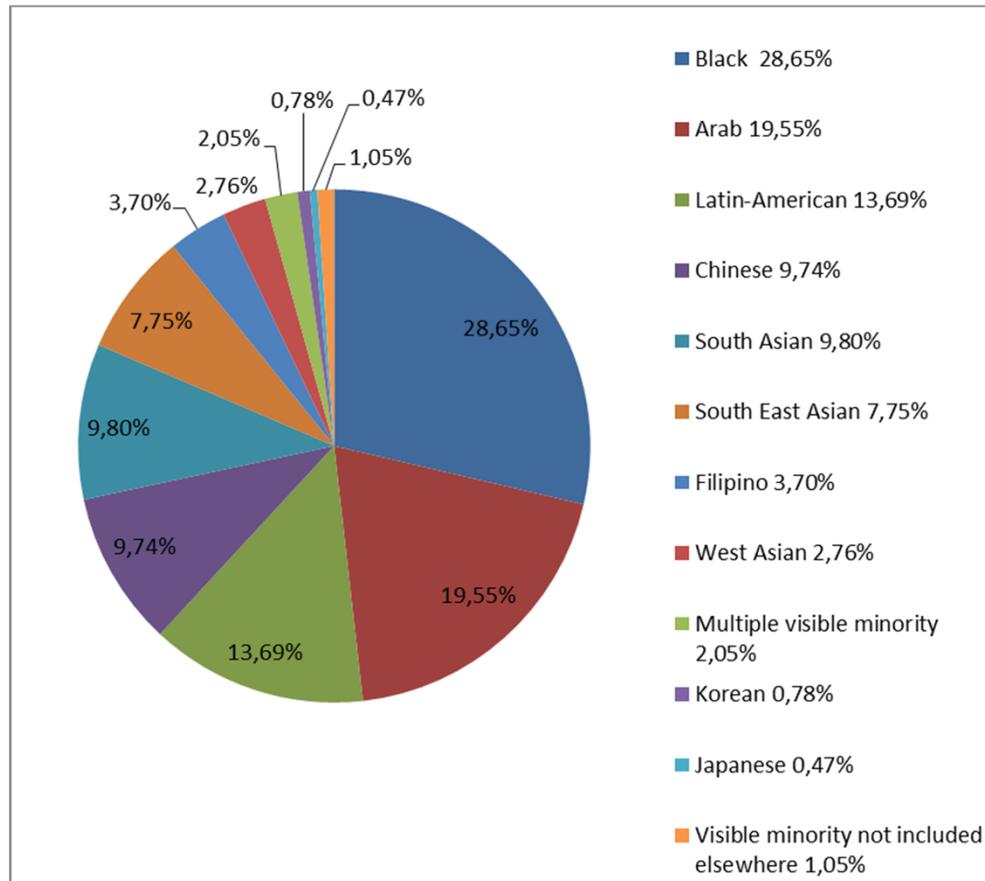
Situation Analysis

- A increasingly large proportion of the population in Western countries is foreign-born

Australia	26.8%	France	8.6%
Canada	20.6%	Russia	8.2%
Germany	13%	Italy	8%
USA	12.9%	Japan	1%
United Kingdom	11.5%		G8 countries + Australia 2010

- Migration in Quebec is more diversified than in the rest of Canada
- The majority of foreign-born populations live in large urban areas (Montreal = 22.6%)

Situation Analysis (Cont.)



Distribution of visible minorities according to their group of origin, people 15 years old and above, Quebec 2011

Situation Analysis (Cont.)

- The first findings from American research: ***ethnic minorities donate proportionally less blood***
 - Higher exclusion rates
 - Lack of information about systems, rules, procedures
 - Difficulty mastering the specialized vocabulary
 - Transmission of memory of conflictual relations between Black communities and the healthcare system (medical profession, biomedical researchers, hospitals)
 - Lack of direct solicitation (characteristic of the volunteer system)
 - Unsatisfactory experiences (relations with employees)
 - Lack of satisfactory forms of recognition in volunteer system
 - Problems of economic and social integration
 - Cultural referents that do not promote giving to strangers
 - Cultural or religious taboos associated with the symbolic meaning of blood

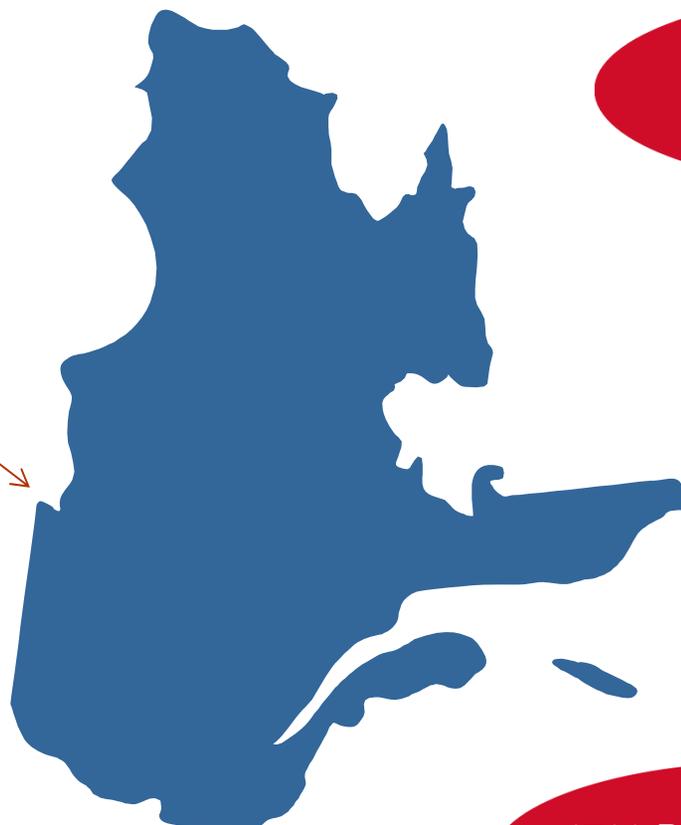
Situation Analysis (Cont.)

Need for constant renewal of the population giving blood:

- Need to increase the number of donations in **urban** areas (proportionally lower rates + better efficiency)
- Importance of targeting groups with **low participation** in blood donation
- *Targeting ethnic minorities or immigrants is consistent with the objective of renewing and diversifying the blood donor population*

- In the case of certain diseases, using blood from donors belonging to the same population as the recipient reduces the risks associated with alloimmunization.
- Sickle cell anemia is a case in point:
 - It is especially prevalent in populations whose origins lie in sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, India, the Middle East or the Mediterranean
- *Targeting ethnic minorities or immigrants from these regions of the world is consistent with the objective of ensuring better access to rare phenotypes*

The Blood Donation Situation in Quebec



*More than 500 000 products
delivered to hospitals*

*83% mobile blood drives
13% permanent Globule centres (3)
4% mobile units*

1,000 donations/day

*1700 Partners committees
16000 Volunteers*

More than 300 000 registered donors

Héma-Québec Initiatives with Black Communities

Necessity of meeting the needs of people with sickle cell anemia

Numerous “public awareness” activities since the beginning of 2011 (53):

- Information booths, participation in and sponsorship of cultural and community events, targeted presentations with different publics, discussion groups, forums with leaders, radio interviews, targeted marketing, organized tours of laboratories, new blood drives

Results

- Number of registered donors before December 2009: 170, in August 2012: 1,582
- 832 new Fy(a-b-) donors as of July 2012; 22 rare blood donors (U-: 1 Black/100)
- Numerous exclusions:
 - Collected donations that were refused: Men = 26% of the total (40% new donors); Women = 56% (64% new donors)
- Retention rate for new donors: fairly low

Partnership Blood Drives

- In Quebec: 80% of blood collected comes from mobile blood drives organized in collaboration with local partners (Canada: mainly permanent sites)
- Blood drives *initiated* by ethnic/religious associations (35 in 2012-2013)
 - Mainly: national (Lebanese, Iranian, Haitian) and/or religiously affiliated: Muslim, Jewish Tamil, Hindu, Seventh Day Adventist – a single multi-ethnic association
 - Motivations:
 - To commemorate a political or religious event with the community
 - To fight discrimination against their group by showing that their members willingly participate in a socially useful and valued activity

Some New Challenges: Employees' Point of View

Meetings and focus groups with employees in 2009, 2012 and 2013 indicated that:

- More donation refusals need to be “managed”;
- Low number of donors = low employee averages (quotas);
- More pressure for evening and weekend sessions;
- Employees feel that **there are many religious, cultural and social restrictions in line with blood donation**;
 - and that they must change many of their usual practices to be consistent with the associations' expectations;
 - Certain employees have admitted that they sometimes go “beyond” the stated expectations.

Some New Challenges: Employees' Point of View (Cont.)

- They want clear guidelines from their managers
- They are not familiar with such communities, associations and leaders
- They wonder about the agency's motives for recruiting these donors:
 - Insufficient supply? Particular medical needs?
 - Reasons for recruiting donors from different ethnic groups: much less clear than for black populations
- They want more information:
 - To better welcome donors
 - To understand their questions and references
- They need diminish uneasiness and prejudices, as well as **boost their confidence**
 - They are always afraid of committing a faux-pas

A Socio-Anthropological Framework for the Study of Ethnic Diversity & Blood Donation

- Sociology: social interactions & processes, and the way social systems work
- Cultural anthropology: social phenomena that include cultural dimensions among their explanatory factors
- When studying blood donation:
 - A focus on the relationships that Blood Collection Organizations entertain with donors, social groups, and local associations
 - An invitation to adapt strategies depending on:
 - The social characteristics of potential donors;
 - Their constraints arising from everyday life;
 - Their symbolic representations of blood and blood donation;
 - The potential social impact they may experience as a result of decisions made by these Organizations.
- **Methods**:
 - Qualitative survey methods (interview-based surveys)
 - Mixed methods combining also questionnaire surveys, archival research, spatial analysis, case studies...

A Socio-Anthropological Framework for the Study of Ethnic Diversity & Blood Donation (Cont.)

Theoretical Frameworks	Useful for the study of:
Gift exchange and gift-giving in society	Social representations of blood donation
Life course analysis	Donor career
Identity construction	Donor identity
Primary and secondary socialization	Blood donation socialization and transmission
Social networks and social capital	community values' influence on blood donation practices
Institutional systems	influence on blood donation motivations and practices, relationships of trust
Anthropological framework	Symbolic representations of blood
Social constructivism approach on ethnicity	Considering Ethnic groups from a dynamic point of view

The Social Constructivism Perspective on Ethnicity

Weber:

- Differences between groups: socialization and acquired lifestyles
- Groups themselves change over time

Ethnic groups:

- Belief in a community is subjective
- Process of self-attribution and attribution by others
- Numerous distinguishing criteria: language, lifestyles, religion, etc.
- Migrants: between the country of origin and the adaptation to a new society

Importance of Majority/Minority relations:

- The Majority = universality; imposes its standards through laws and institutions
- Minorities: the “Others,” those who are different

Three levels

- Macrosocial: institutions (laws, policies, economic and social constraints)
- Meso-social: groups (transmission, migration, community history, criteria)
- Microsocial: individuals (identity process)

Ethnicity and Blood Donation: The Macrosocial Level (Institutions)

- Blood product supply organizations = institutions that represent the Majority
- Institutions that represent the medical system and the scientific community of biomedical research
- Health Canada establishes:
 - Reference standards
 - Donor qualification criteria (temporary and permanent exclusions)
 - Collection modes (non-remunerated, voluntary and anonymous donation)
 - *To protect the donor's health and ensure the recipient's safety*

Ethnicity and Blood Donation: The Mesosocial Level (Groups)

- Need to:
 - Define priority targets among ethnic groups for new donor recruitment
 - Define the best suited strategies for each group
 - Be familiar with groups to be able to establish potential collaborative efforts
- Many criteria are relevant:
 - Dynamics of migratory waves: groups that are on the rise
 - “Seniority” of migratory waves: 2nd and 3rd generations, the youngest individuals and those socialized for blood donation in Quebec
 - Social and economic integration:
 - Access to higher education for blood drives in places of learning
 - Identification of economic niches for blood drives in businesses
 - Volume of members in a group: sufficient number of donors for a partnership blood drive
 - Proficiency in the official languages: condition to fill out a donor file
 - Link between ethnicity/religion (associated with charitable acts)
 - Cultural representations related to blood donation
 - Residential concentration: to facilitate the organization of neighbourhood blood drives
 - Association’ dynamics and interest in the cause (partnership blood drives)
 - Majority/minority relations: social issues that can raise obstacles
 - Importance of the question of race

Ethnicity and Blood Donation: The Microsocial Level (Individuals)

Blood donation remains an individual decision

- What are the references of potential donors?
 - Blood collection system in the country of origin for recent immigrants
 - Importance of the cause in one's integration process
 - Sense of belonging to a group or not:
 - Involvement in an ethnic association
 - Active religious practice
 - Sense of belonging to the host society:
 - Experiences of discrimination
 - Relationships with the medical system
 - Influence of symbolic representations
 - Frequency of trips to the "homeland" (exclusion risks)
 - Blood donation practices among friends and family
- What are the characteristics of current ethnic donors?
 - Age, sex, self-identification with a group
 - Blood drive attendance habits

From the Theory to a Multi-Step Training Program: Useful Data

- International studies on social aspects of blood donation:
 - Anthropological analysis on blood donation in immigrants' countries of origin
 - Multidisciplinary empirical studies on minority blood donor recruitment in Western countries
- Census statistics on socio-demographical characteristics of minority populations in Quebec:
 - Principal countries of origin, scope of migratory waves, immigration statuses
 - Mother tongue and fluency in official languages
 - Academic achievement, economic integration
 - Religious practices
 - Residential concentrations
- Sociological case studies on ethnic communities in Montreal:
 - Community life, internal social dynamics, sense of belonging and identity
- Study on blood donation and ethnic minorities in Quebec (2009-2012)
- Results of consultations with Héma-Québec staff
- Statistical data on blood donors:
 - Make it possible to conduct analysis based on self-reporting of a minority identity

From the Theory to a Multi-Step Training Program (Cont.)

Proposal for a comprehensive organizational training approach:

- A six-step approach: from theory to practice
- Use of all available information
- An approach tailored to departmental needs
- Training under way in fall of 2013

The Multi-Step Training Program

Objectives	Targeted Departments	Training Topics
1. To share the same vocabulary and increase the level of confidence	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary of ethnicity • Immigration policies in Canada and Quebec
2. To use medical expertise to establish priorities	Management Planning Others: Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for blood of specific phenotypes • Geography of temporary and permanent exclusions
3. To use expertise on ethnic issues to determine groups to be targeted	Management Planning Others: Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration dynamics • Sociodemographic profiles • Social life of communities • Social/Cultural Issues
4. To use expertise on ethnic issues to establish general guidelines	Management Others: Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which messages to use for recruiting? • Which compromises with associations? • Which customer service adjustments?

The Multi-Step Training Program (Cont.)

Objectives	Targeted Departments	Training Topics
<p>5. To use expertise on each group to establish a tailored, exhaustive, and rigorous approach</p>	<p>Planning Other: Outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on previous steps taken + • Motivations and behaviours of blood donors belonging to ethnic communities in Quebec • Geography of Quebec's ethnic communities • Assessments and strategies used in other countries
<p>6. To use expertise on each community to understand references of those who attend the drives</p>	<p>Customer Service Héma-Québec Volunteers Donor Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on previous steps taken + • Supply systems and motivations for blood donation in countries of origin

The Multi-Step Training Program: Three Approaches

Approach	Target	Characteristics
<p>Standard individualistic approach: Ethnic diversity in urban areas</p>	<p>Immigrants who arrived as children + 2nd generation + foreign students (similar system in country of origin) + adults working for major corporations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same general guidelines as for majority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, altruistic, anonymous donation • No compromises on religious or cultural issues • Targeted groups: institutions of higher education and major international corporations
<p>Intermediate Approach: Ethnic concentration in neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Multiethnic neighbourhoods with a growing immigrant population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective target, individualized strategies • Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal, altruistic, anonymous donation • No compromises on religious or cultural issues • Targeted groups: neutral communal spaces in multiethnic neighbourhoods (schools, shopping centres)
<p>Collective Approach collective (partnership): Medical priorities with groups most reluctant about blood donation</p>	<p>Associational partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective target and strategies • Guidelines: Compromises to be established • “Mono-ethnic” strategies that demand precise analysis of associational dynamics

Conclusions

- What lessons can we draw from this experience?
 - The objective of taking into account the ethno-cultural diversity of major Western cities in order to recruit new blood donors is dependent on:
 - The specificity of the ethnic and cultural diversity situation in each country
 - The availability of empirical data on minorities in the country
 - The clearly expressed will of the administration in blood product supply agencies
 - Between the major principles expressed by the administration and the practical realities of the employees involved in this issue, there are fundamental questions to be addressed:
 - *In the zone between cultures and the complex social realities produced by international migratory movements.*
 - In this matter, a sociological and anthropological framework may be very useful:
 - To develop a comprehensive, systematic and targeted approach
 - To define a tailored training program for Blood Collection Organizations

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