

EXAMINING BARRIERS TO MUNICIPAL UNDERREPRESENTATION
OF SOUTH ASIANS IN PEEL REGION

by

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A Major Research Paper
presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in the Program of
Immigration and Settlement Studies

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2016

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Examining Barriers to Municipal Underrepresentation of South Asians in Peel Region

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Master of Arts 2016
Immigration and Settlement Studies
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ABSTRACT

One's ability to represent the community with which they identify is often determined along racialized lines, where the political exclusion of certain groups causes underrepresentation of racialized minority groups in politics. This study will be examining the particular case of South Asians in Peel Region, where there is significant representation of South Asians at the federal and provincial level, but virtually none at the municipal level. This study will utilize a social inclusion framework to uncover the barriers in place restricting South Asian representation in politics at the municipal level and the steps that can be taken to mitigate these barriers to promote more diverse representation for all individuals in the political sphere.

Keywords: Political representation, South Asian, Underrepresentation, Racialized minorities, Immigration, Social inclusion

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Anver Saloojee who provided me with immense support throughout the entirety of this research project. Thank you for your guidance, your kindness, and your enriching ideas about the project.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Myer Siemiatycki, thank you for your valuable input and insights into my research.

To my family, thank you for always being there and for your unconditional love and acceptance. I am especially grateful to my sister Jessica Marshall, thank you for taking the time to review my paper and for being there for me.

Last, I want to thank my wonderful partner Sid Sadanand, for the countless hours you spent helping edit, for continuously supporting and encouraging me, and for keeping me going when all I wanted to do was give up. I could not have done it without you.

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I. Introduction

Toronto is often celebrated and praised by Canada's social institutions, government officials, and its citizens as having the status of a city welcoming of newcomers, and for its multiethnic and diverse identity, but in many cases this drastically overestimates the extent to which racialized minorities are included politically. The purpose of this MRP is to explore the underrepresentation of South Asians in Peel Region in politics. Specifically, this paper seeks to uncover the barriers that prevent racialized minorities from being included in political representation. This paper will also briefly examine the challenges that racialized minority women face in politics. This paper therefore, explores the barriers that prevents certain individuals from entering into and being represented in politics. Political representation is a marker of inclusion, a space where individuals have an outlet to voice their beliefs and have the capacity to create meaningful change within the community they represent. At a time when the number of immigrant and ethnoracial minority groups has never been higher in Canada, with both reaching over 20% of the total population, it is more important than ever for minority groups to be represented in politics (Statistics Canada, 2011). Despite this, racialized minorities¹ and immigrants continue to be significantly

¹ This paper will primarily use the term racialized minority rather than visible minority. The term visible minority does not address inequalities arising from processes of racialization and therefore does not address the socioeconomic barriers that ethnoracial groups face.

underrepresented at all three levels of government – the municipal, provincial and the federal levels.

The South Asian community has been one exception where in certain areas such as Peel Region, they have actually been able to reach proportional levels of representation within their community (Elections Canada 2015).

Proportional in this sense means racialized minorities reach proportional levels of political representation compared to the general population of the area in which they reside, in this case Peel Region. Specifically, South Asians have reached proportional representation in Toronto's suburban areas of Brampton and Mississauga, where 48.6% of Peel Region's residents' ethnic ancestry was from India, and where 9 out the 11 seats or 82% of the elected candidates at the federal level in the most recent election identified as South Asian (Region of Peel, 2013). Considering the case of Peel Region, South Asian's have a proportionality ratio of 1.7², meaning that they are indeed overrepresented at the federal level in Peel Region (Region of Peel, 2013 & Elections Canada, 2016).

² "The index of representative proportionality is, quite simply, the proportion of visible minorities (or women) within the House, divided by their proportion in the population" (Bird, 2007, p. 2)

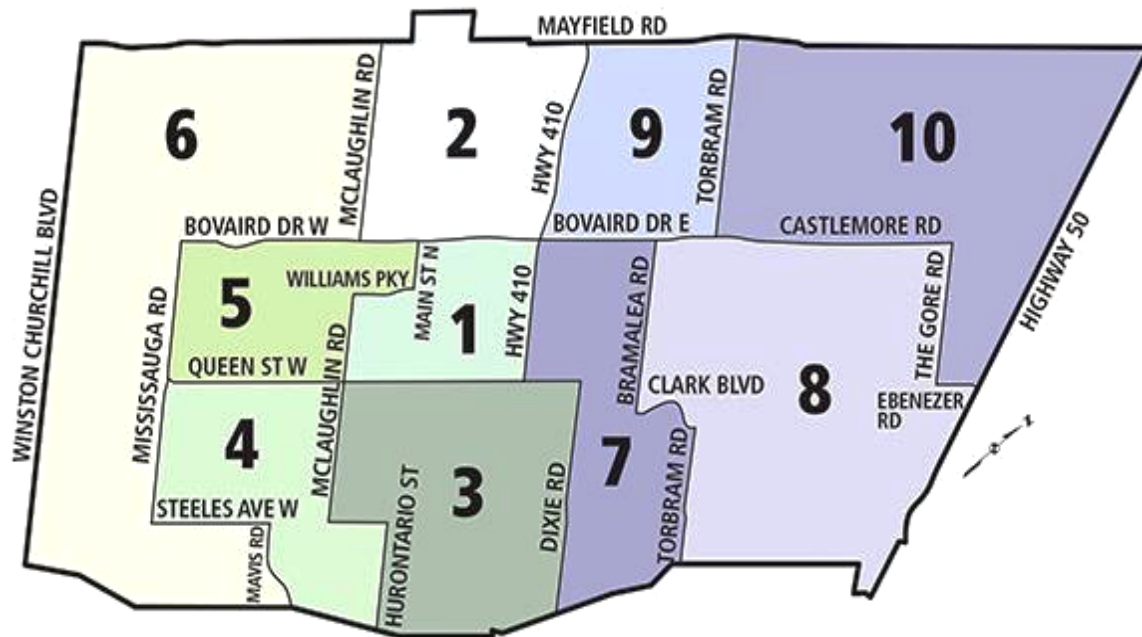


Figure 1: Map of Brampton Municipal Wards
Source: City of Brampton 2015

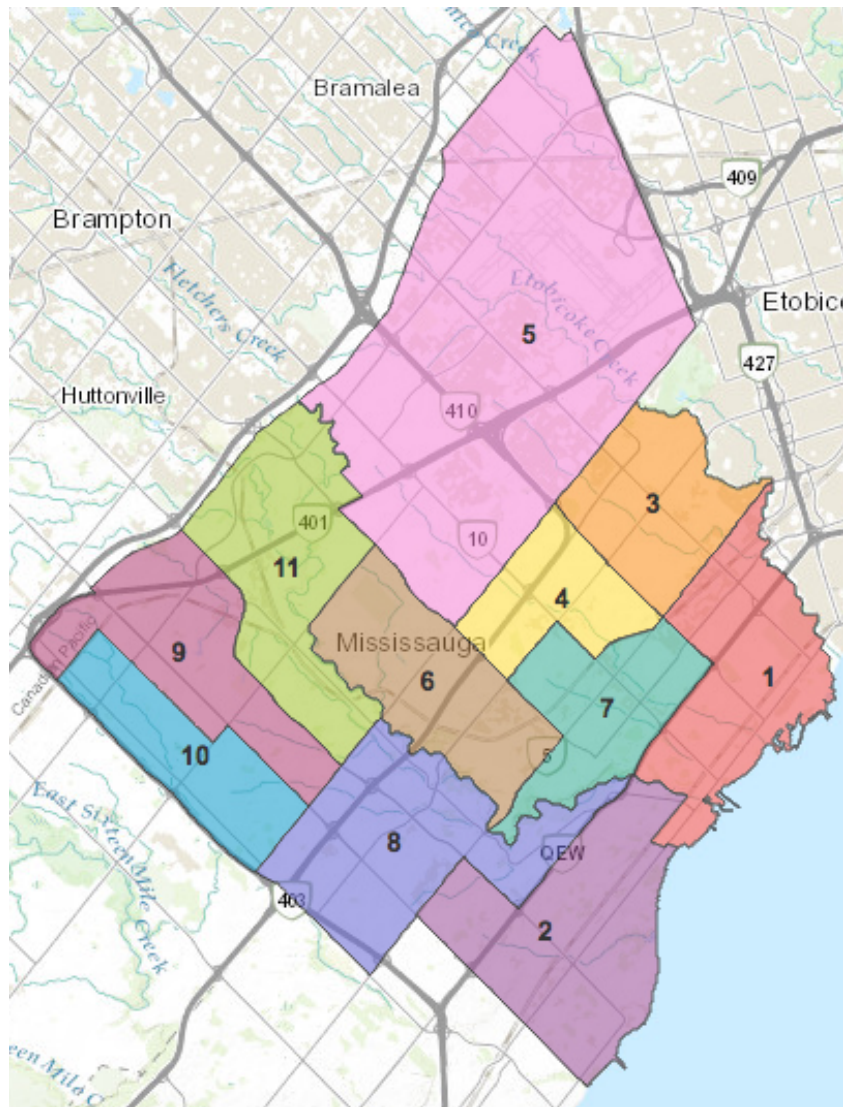


Figure 2: Map of Mississauga Municipal Wards
Source: City of Mississauga 2015

Matheson, (2005) who conducted a case study on South Asian political representation in Peel Region, notes that in Toronto there are a number of highly concentrated areas with racialized minorities, but with a number of different ethnic and racial minority groups. Although South Asians make up 48.6% of the population of Peel Region, they are still exceedingly underrepresented at the municipal level of governance, where South Asians secured only a single seat at the local level (Region of Peel, 2015). In the case of the South Asian community in Peel, immigration should also be considered as a factor, as immigration flows play a considerable role in political trends. If we take the case of Peel Region where in 2011, Brampton and Mississauga had immigrant populations of 263,670 and 374, 575, respectively (Demographic overview, City of Brampton)(NHS 2011)), where the immigrant population of Brampton is 50.6% and 52.9% in Mississauga (NHS, 2011). With such a large population, it should be expected that South Asians would be able to obtain political power through numbers alone, but this has not been the case at all levels of government, as there is a lack of representation at the municipal level.

Given the racial underrepresentation across the GTA, I will be examining how ethnoracial groups are being represented in politics and how this, in turn, impacts the daily lived experiences of immigrant populations. This paper will examine election results from 1993 to the most recent election in 2015, and a comparison will be made between the candidates that have run at all three levels

of government in contrast to the officials actually elected. As well, this paper will study how the South Asian community continues to be greatly underrepresented at the municipal level in the Peel region, notwithstanding their political successes at the federal and provincial level. The first section of this paper will address the research problem outlined in this paper, followed by a section identifying the significance of this research topic. The next section will focus on social inclusion as an analytical framework. Section three will investigate racialized minorities and political representation through conducting a comprehensive literature review of the limited work on the topic. Following the literature review, the methodological basis for research will be discussed – particularly based on data from the Elections Canada and Parliament of Canada websites. The fifth section will analyze the changing trends of ethnoracial political participation and identify potential outcomes for future representation of South Asian individuals in government in Peel Region. The final section will identify recommendations related to the elimination of barriers to political participation and representation presentation for racialized minorities.

Research Questions

This paper will attempt to answer the following questions: what is the relationship between immigration and racialized minority political representation? Why have Brampton and Mississauga had such success in becoming spaces for political inclusion for racialized minority groups, particularly for the South Asian

community? How are racialized minority women represented in the political sphere? Most centrally, what are the barriers to political representation that cause such stark underrepresentation of racialized minorities, in particular, South Asians at the municipal level of government in Canada?

Research Significance

This paper will examine the political underrepresentation of the South Asian community in the Peel Region at the municipal level. To clarify, for the purposes of the research conducted, the term South Asian will be used as defined by the census as anyone who self-identifies as South Asian³, or South Asian and White, giving some examples of Bangladeshi, Punjabi and Sri Lankan (Statistics Canada, 2015). At both federal and provincial levels of government in Canada, the representation of South Asian individuals elected into office is far greater than at the municipal level. Municipal and city levels of government are the most central to a person's day to day lived experience, as "municipal governments make daily decisions on a wide range of policy fields such as transportation, planning, policing, recreation, the environment, and public health that directly define their residents' wellbeing" (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002, p. 246). This topic is important to discuss, as there is a severe lack of proportionality of those in office at the municipal level of Peel Region, which does not represent the overall

³ South Asian will be used according to the census definition, for lack of a better word. Although the researcher understands how broad of a category this is and that many identities may be held within this category.

demographic of the area. The research focus of this paper will be on what barriers exist that preclude racialized minority groups from being represented at the local level of government.

II. Analytical Framework

As a way to uncover the structural and historical barriers facing racialized minorities in politics, a social inclusion framework will be utilized in this paper. Social inclusion “is not about change for the sake of change it is about research that would make for a better society, a better state of affairs than exclusion” (Saloojee, 2002, p. 1). Social exclusion was originally coined in the 1970’s in France in reference to persons who were unprotected by social insurances at that time, but the term was later redefined in the 1980’s to describe ideas of poverty, specifically with regards to “technological change and economic restructuring” (Gore, Figueiredo, and Rodgers, 1995, p. 1). Social exclusion was originally referred to with regards to poverty, but it has been adopted by many as being “primarily construed as labour market exclusion or lack of paid work, either at an individual or household level” (Levitas, 2006, p. 125). Saloojee contends that “the contemporary discourse on social exclusion is too narrowly focused on poverty and integration into the paid labour market, and it potentially obscures a bigger debate about the relationship between social exclusion and political participation” (Saloojee, 2002, p. 38). Within the social inclusion discourse, weak and strong forms of social inclusion must be differentiated, where weak versions focus on

primarily labour market integration and where strong forms focus on more of the substantial and systematic forms of being inclusive (Saloojee 2002). In other words, social inclusion can be best defined as a means of “engaging in social transformation” (Saloojee, 2002, p. 1) and as a way of “tackling recurring historical processes’ in society,” (Saloojee, 2002, p. 1) these being the oppressive, marginalizing, and discriminatory practices, rather than narrowly defined ideas of integrating the excluded, primarily in the labour market (Saloojee, 2002, p. 36).

Saloojee (2003) defines political exclusion as limiting a person's ability, whether it be consciously or unconsciously, to participate in political activities, such as voting, campaigning, canvassing or running in an election. Political inclusion can be seen through political representation and participation in institutions, political processes, and civic life (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002). Social inclusion as a framework can be used as a tool for analyzing how political exclusion works as another way to reinforce social exclusion, through consciously or unconsciously restricting individuals from the right to have access to political power and hence, social inclusion very closely relates to processes which prevent people from participating politically (Saloojee, 2002). Social inclusion in this sense delineates a path towards political inclusion through an ethnic minority's ability to access avenues of power and challenge marginalizing political structures. In other words, political inclusion can be achieved through the implementation of social inclusion within governmental institutions, through

various avenues, such as “active engagement with political parties, engaging with the policy process as part of the policy community; ensuring that all have a voice in political decision making; advocating for electoral equity” (Saloojee, 2002, p. 39). Political inclusion is an important step in the process of settlement, but often the importance of political representation in an immigrant population is overlooked as a feature of inclusion in society. Saloojee and van Heelsum (2002) explicitly state that a number of measures need to be taken in order to “truly democratize democracy” through political inclusion. These measures include: creating a profoundly different conception of citizenship and community, by striving to bring about increased representation of and participation by marginalized groups, by encouraging a space to evaluate and provide room for political policy changes, and lastly, by developing and encouraging the utilization of faculties and capacities of all individuals (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002). There is not a single conception of citizenship or democracy, but rather there are multiple spheres where minority groups establish their own ideas of social cohesion, to combat the constant exclusion and discrimination (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002). Without inclusionary practices and social cohesion being present, the process of integrating newcomers and racialized minorities into the political process cannot be achieved. Political integration and participation are often seen as markers of social inclusion, but it is only when one moves into “substantive political participation,” that meaningful social inclusion occurs,

“where the very institutions of democracy [are] democratized in response to the challenges to discrimination, exclusion and inequality” (Saloojee, 2002, p. 1).

This substantive participation and representation transcends simply being representative, but and moves towards how the acts of representing and participating impact and create meaningful change for racialized minorities and communities they represent. Substantive political participation means that elected officials are able to reflect the interests of their community without restrictions, that racialized minorities and newcomers are able to feel welcome and valued in the political process, and that social inclusionary practices are integrated within processes of political participation. Political integration cannot exist without social inclusion, where politically, inclusion occurs through equality of rights; the right to be free from discrimination or marginalization and to be equipped with the resources needed to engage in democratic citizenship (Saloojee, 2003). Social and political inclusion both, help to encourage equality of rights, opportunities, and status within society. Further, social and political inclusion is contingent on one another, where political inclusion leads to greater states of equality in society and vice versa. The embodiment of social inclusion practices within institutions and civil society should thus, be seen as a way to encourage a sense of social cohesion within social and political institutions. Social inclusion in this regard, can be viewed as a way to bring about more political inclusion and subsequently

allows for more representation of ethnic minorities representation within the political process.

III. Demographics

In 2011, according to the National Household Survey, 6,264,800 people identified as a racialized minority within Canada, representing 1 in every 5 persons of the total population. This surge in the population of racialized minority groups has largely been due to increasing rates of immigration to Canada over the past few decades, where it has particularly played an enormous role in shaping election outcomes. Newcomers help contribute to cities on a number of levels, not only through the enormous amount of energy and liveliness they bring but also through contributing to sociopolitical wellbeing and economic growth (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002). Ethnoburbs, which have originally been used to describe “suburban ethnic clusters of residential areas and business districts in large American metropolitan areas,” (Li, 1998, p. 479) can be applied in a Canadian context to suburban areas around the GTA. The ethnoburb, or ethnic suburb involves groups who generally have strong socioeconomic ties to the larger community, as well as the ability to influence political decisions through collective participation (Li, 1998). Areas such as Brampton can be considered an ethnoburb, where greater than 50% of the population is South Asian. Balasubramaniam (2012) states that ethnoburbs in the Greater Toronto Area have an important role to play and will continue to grow and expand as newcomers

settle within Canada. Large scale immigration of one group to a new country is generally followed by settlements, and these have always played a vital role in the growth of Canada (Black, 2011). “The large, ongoing, and markedly diverse flows of the past 15 or so years have clearly had a magnified impact on Canadian demography and politics” (Black, 2011, p. as 1162). As Black states, large flows of immigration should influence politics and should translate to more diverse representation in government at all three levels, but this trend is not occurring presently, as the discussion portion of this paper will indicate.

New immigrant groups generally face a number of additional and often overlooked challenges to political representation “including language, information, social adaptation, and credential and past employment recognition, which may impede their integration” (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002, p. 243). Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) believe these factors are all at play in the political underrepresentation of immigrant and minority communities in Toronto). Post-1960, there was an increase in global migration that encouraged development of many cities, which were recognized by their multiracial identities (Saloojee, 2003). This can be seen in some geographic areas outside of large cities presently in much more suburban areas such as that of Peel Region, where there is a significant lack of proportional representation at the municipal level.



Figure 3: Map of Greater Toronto Area

Ergo, there is a need for more investigation to be put forth into these aforementioned factors to uncover why Toronto's GTA areas are not following the trends identified by Black.

Table 1: Racial Minorities and South Asians in Canada 1996-2011

Year	# Racial Minorities in Canada	% Racial Minorities in Canada	# South Asians in Canada	% of South Asians in Canada (out of total population)
1996	3,197,480	11.2	670,590	2.4
2001	3,983,845	13.4	917,100	3.1
2006	5,068,090	16.2	1,262,900	3.9
2011	6,264,800	19.1	1,615,145	4.9

Source: Elections Canada 2015, Statistics Canada 2015

As can be seen in Table 1 above, 19.1% of the total population of Canada in 2011 identified as belonging to a minority group (Statistics Canada, 2015). This has increased drastically from 13.4% in 2001 and 11.2% in 1996 (Statistics Canada, 2006). From 2001-2006 the racialized minority population had increased 27.2% or five times faster than the 5.4% growth of the total population (Statistics Canada, 2008). The South Asian population of Canada is growing significantly at 1,262,900 and continuing to increase, with a growth rate of 37.7% in 2006 from 917,100 in 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2008). This enormous growth of South Asian individuals migrating to Canada and settling primarily around the GTA is important, as immigration can provide valuable information about demographic

trends, which can influence political outcomes. The Peel Region case similarly provides an opportunity to examine the impact that immigration has on translating this perceived influence into actual representation. Immigration should be considered throughout the examination of racialized minorities' participation and representation in government because of its role in the political process. The role of newcomers, who mainly settle in Canada's largest cities, have the power to change demographics, to contribute significantly both sociopolitically and economically (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002) and to make contributions politically through formal and non-formal means of participating. These multicultural cities are now the site of struggle for ethnoracial communities who strive to carve out their own identities amid the "dominant culture" (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002, p. 154). This struggle for the recognition of identities is one, which aims to redistribute resources and power and is a type of democracy that embodies values of "social inclusivity" (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002, p. 154). Immigrant and racial minority groups challenge dominant discourses through the assertion of political power and through the redefinition of dominant power structures defining political representation. It is through challenging these power structures within politics that minority groups are then able to find a space to be representative and contribute their ideas, insights, and abilities within the political sphere.

IV. Literature Review

Political Representation of Racialized Minorities

Before examining the case of Peel Region in more detail, literature examining racialized minority groups in political representation will be consulted to explore the relationship that ethnoracial identities have on power structures within the political sphere.

The number of racial minority politicians in the House of Commons has increased greatly “from 0 in 1965 to 21 in 2005” (Matheson, 2005, p. 20). This can be seen as a natural change, as it was only in 1967 that Canada’s immigration policies were restructured and it opened its borders more to non-European immigrants (Matheson, 2005), an increase which continued over the 10 years following, to 47 in 2015 (Elections Canada, 2016). In fact, from 2006 to 2011 racialized minorities represented close to “80% of all newcomers arriving in Canada” (Bird, 2005, p. 81 & Statistics Canada, 2015). This can be seen most prominently in metropolitan areas across Canada, namely the three largest metropolitan regions of Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal.

Geopolitically, Toronto faces uniquely dispersed electoral results, but in studies, Toronto is often still homogenized as one area. This homogenization leaves out the GTA suburban areas, formerly amalgamated in 1998, which now all contribute to various electoral results, dependent on the area’s demography (Government of Ontario, 2015). Black and Lakhani (2007) have argued that

examining elected official's ethnoracial profiles have the ability to indicate positions of power and equality of access within the political sphere. Further, ideas of power and equality also allow us to consider a "political system's responsiveness to the policy interests" of these racialized minority groups (Siemiatycki and Saloojee 2002, p. 242). Hence, in areas with very obvious underrepresentation of racialized minorities in government, such as Toronto and its surrounding suburbs, it is important to consider the ways in which power structures, socioeconomic barriers, and discriminatory and exclusionary political practices may be inhibiting or discouraging certain community members with racialized minority status from entering into the political arena.

In the case of Toronto, "the highest concentration of immigrants are not located in the traditional immigrant settlement area of the former city of Toronto, but in the post-World War II suburbs and edge-cities of the city region" (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997, p. 17). While these suburban areas continue to grow and increase their racialized minority populations, minimal research has been conducted on the political representation of racialized minorities in these suburban areas outside of the core of Toronto.

Examining the Importance of Political Representation

Siemiatycki (2011) outlines the reasons to strive for political representation; notably, the attributed diversity "draws on the widest talent pool for political leadership" (p. 20), it assures "lawmakers and policy makers" (p. 20)

are aware and receptive to a broad range of interests and experiences, it gives all candidates a sense of belonging, it decreases marginalization within communities, and finally, it promotes an all-encompassing Canadian identity and value system, which provides more diversity of voices at both the political and policy level. Black & Lakhani (2007) contend that political representatives may not have the ability to insert an ethnic perspective into public policy debates due to party discipline. This would be at the federal and provincial level, but not at the municipal level, as there is no formal political party structure. At the higher levels, there is less opportunity to provide ethno-specific services while at the municipal level there is more opportunity but presently, there is less representation there. Municipal level politics more inclusive of racialized minority groups would better meet the needs of these communities through political representation. To determine specific barriers to minority inclusion, first identity and representation must be carefully examined before municipal level representation of racialized minorities is analyzed.

Ethnoracial Identities, “Tokenism”, and Representation in Politics

Black and Lakhani (2007) further argue that MP’s and MPP’s often may avoid providing services for fear of being labeled as an “ethnic politician”(p. 4), arguing that ethnicity may also seem less important for some due to social factors “such as marked heterogeneity within an ethnic community or a Canadian first orientation held by many in the community” (p. 4). For example, Harinder Takhar

MPP for Mississauga-Erindale, states that he has never seen himself as a representative for the Indian community, but rather he sees himself as having two roles, one to the constituency that elected him, and one to the ethnic communities that expect him to represent what they believe are collective interests (Interview with Takhar cited in Andrew Matheson, 2005, p. 13). The ideas presented by Takhar are not unique to him; in fact, ethnic minority politicians are often placed in tough positions where they are expected to represent both the party to which they belong, as well as the ethnic community with which they identify. van Heelsum's (2002) study which explored the political participation and representation of migrant communities in the Netherlands found that a large majority of Turkish and Moroccan voters hold the opinion that having mosques in their town is a necessary requirement, while Dutch left-wing parties usually staunchly argue that "subsidies should not be spent on religious facilities" (van Heelsum, 2002. p. 189). Local representatives of ethnic minority identity are more and more called in to mediate conflicts on issues of ethnocultural diversity, such as in the case of the Netherlands described above (Simard, 2002), even if they do not necessarily agree or hold the same values as the community that they represent. This means that visible minority councillors often have to cope with contradictory requests, where they are asked to represent the views of the ethnic community and are simultaneously asked to adhere to the specific politics of the parties that they represent (van Heelsum, 2002). Ethnic identities are constructed

both by society and at the personal level and they often intersect and conflict with one another when one is made a political representative, and when they also belong to a racialized minority group. This process of determining whether an ethnoracial politician actually makes meaningful contributions to the ethnoracial community that they represent will be examined. This examination will consider the different types of representation that can occur -described in the following section -and the varying degrees of inclusion that these types of representation provide.

Evaluating Political Representation

Numerical and Substantive Representation

The following section will consider these types of representation through examining the differences between numerical and substantive representation. Numerical representation focuses on the necessity of increasing the numerical presence of a group in a legislative assembly, such that the assembly will better reflect the population proportionally (Bird, 2010). Therefore, an issue is seen as symbolic, because it is assumed that group members are elected into parliament, and thus will reflect (at least in some way) the interests and needs of the community to which they belong. (Bird, 2010). In contrast, substantive representation is more related to the relationship between a group's presence in politics as well as the "attention given to the group's interests, and to the institutional context that frames and influences the capacity of a descriptive

representative to act for group interests” (Bird, 2010, p. 212). Hence, numerical representation always assumes and perceives action, even if it is only through the very presence of racialized bodies in political representation. Though, substantively, studies show that racialized minority representatives usually do a substandard job of “reflecting their own community’s interests” (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002, p. 242). Substantive representation points more towards how representation within politics is used to elicit action and create change for the communities that those elected identify with and therefore, represent. Saloojee (2003) suggests that in order for any form of social inclusion to occur, there must be a shift from numerical representation over to substantial representation where individuals actively challenge social and political institutions, through the redefinition of positions in society and through the ability to build new identities. The inclusion of minority bodies within politics can help diminish minority groups’ “sense of marginalization” through descriptive representation (Dancygier, Lindgren & Vernby, 2015, p. 703). This descriptive, or substantial representation can reflect more of an inclusive political system, where minority voices are heard, welcomed and represented within the political system (Dancygier, Lindgren & Vernby, 2015).

Ultimately, substantive representation calls for more of an active role in the political sphere. Substantive representation calls for racialized minorities and marginalized communities to have the resources and the means to obtain a space

where they play a significant role in decision making processes in Canada, rather than acting as placeholders or markers of diversity, without having the power to actively participate in the change they wish to create.

Participation and Representation

Further, clarification must also be drawn between different ways of engaging in politics, namely through participation and representation. According to Verstichel (2000), participation of individuals belonging to racialized minorities involves persons “actually sitting in on parliament, taking up positions as civil servants or working for the police service, in order to contribute to the aim of combating under-representation and discrimination” (p. 79). Saloojee (2003) writes that non-formal participation can occur through democratic citizenship, rather than formal citizenship. The difference being that democratic citizens are entitled to rights simply as a result of their being a part of the polity and not as a result of the state to which they formally belong as citizens, refugees, or immigrants (Saloojee, 2003). In this manner, democratic citizenship ensures one the right to voice their opinion, and it should be measured through the inclusion of newcomers, women, and minorities “having positive and useful participatory experiences with the federal government through consultation processes” (Saloojee, 2003, p. 9). While measuring inclusion through participation, a minority member of parliament may be elected to meet intra-party quotas among a mainstream party, and this person may be involved in a whole number of

important issues, but may not be interested or able to work on the problems important to the identity of the minority group with which they self identify (Verstichel, 2000). Similar to the argument of defining substantial representation, a person can participate in elections and become a member of parliament, but can their presence in politics alone create enough change for the larger community which they represent?

Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002), who conducted a study on municipal politicians in Toronto, point out that racialized minority politicians are more likely to be critical of how the government is addressing the needs of minority communities. They assert that racialized minority politicians could be more in tune with the unique challenges faced by newcomers and immigrants and that they could be more self-critical, viewing their role as having to be a representative of the community with which they identify (Siemiatycki & Saloojee, 2002). On a substantive level, political representation can be understood as such, where the representative takes on the challenges faced by immigrants and racialized minorities, and in doing so, takes on the role of a leader.

Comparatively, numerical group representation has important symbolic value, “signaling to both dominant and marginalized groups that its perspectives matter and rightfully belong in public debate” (Bird, 2010, p. 3). Bird argues that the simple act of racialized minority MPs occupying space in the House of Commons also has important value. As Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) have addressed in

their study, the above is not generally the case. They found that the voting record of racialized minority representatives on social justice issues was less progressive than the council as a whole. “Thus whereas 38.2% of total council members opposed all six issues deemed critical by the Metro Network for Social Justice, fully 57.1% of racialized minorities opposed all six” (Siemiatycki & Saloojee, 2002, p. 266). Hence, racialized minority representation in politics does not always mean that political actors will have the ability or willingness to address the issues and needs of the community that they represent.

Barriers to Political Representation

Racialized minorities and newcomers in Canada face systemic barriers to exclusion including racial and discriminatory practices preventing them from actively participating in both formal and non-formal politics. Bauder (2012) states how the “diversity is our strength” motto of Toronto “hints at the presence of race but erases the histories of colonialism, race, and privilege that (re)construct white dominance” (p. 48). Diversity is described as being present within cities in Canada such as Toronto, but this motto acts as more of a symbolic testament, rather than any substantial claim to action. Instead, systemic racism is still prevalent in the political sphere and prevents racialized newcomers from participating and being representatives in politics. Racist practices cannot be challenged in the political sphere alone, rather racism must be challenged within every aspect of society, through an anti-racist discourse to promote political

inclusion through practices of social inclusion. Saloojee (2002) outlines how from an anti-racist perspective, an inclusive society is one which; promotes inclusive participation for racialized newcomers, is inclusive with its communities and organizations. An inclusive society is proactive in ensuring that individuals are not disadvantaged due to their “racial” identity. Further, an inclusive society is one, which actively tackles oppression and racial discrimination and promotes ethnoracial diversity; ensuring ethnoracial communities can be represented in social, economic and political spheres (Saloojee, 2002). Table 2 below displays the various barriers that racialized minorities and newcomers face in negotiating a space in the political sphere, including modes of systemic racism as a factor described above.

Table 2: Barriers to Political Representation and Participation

Barriers to Political Inclusion of Racialized Minorities	How these Barriers Contribute to Political Exclusion
Systemic racist and sexist practices within politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricts opportunity at every level of governance • Simply does not recognize or acknowledge racialized minorities as valuable contributions to the political process (Saloojee and van Heelsom, 2002) • Social inclusion and hence, political inclusion needed to break down these discriminatory practices and open a space through including all individuals in politics (Saloojee, 2002)
Lack of political party ties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without access to political party affiliation, newcomers and racialized minorities have no supports such as: • Financial resources (Bird, 2005) • Sociopolitical ties from elected community leaders (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002) • Party ties to create a basis of interests which voters can relate to drawing in participation
Socioeconomic barriers: Social and financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High campaign costs and a lack of resources to engage in politics restrict racialized minorities and newcomers from having the means to fully participate and be represented in politics (Bird, 2005) • Increased need for candidates to rely on community organizations and networks of power for financial resources and social ties in the absence to political party affiliation (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002)
Power Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The power held within politics is not representative of the demographic of Canada at the present moment • Racialized minority political representatives that are being elected are often only being symbolically representative and not substantially creating change within the community they belong to (Saloojee, 2002) • Smaller coalitions absent in communities where underrepresentation is occurring (Bieber, 2000) • These coalitions and small ethnoracial organizations are needed to provide more of a power distribution and to build more diverse political communities (Bieber, 2000)
Absence of community ties/networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of community organizing and engagement amongst ethnoracial groups prevents social coalitions and strong networks from being formed, therefore preventing a strong basis for political inclusion (Jacobs, Martiniello, & Rea, 2002) • Shortage of enthusiasm, diversity of voices, and engagement of racialized minorities at the municipal level in both representation and participation
Language proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of language skills upon arrival to Canada hinders one's ability to run as a candidate (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002) • Language barriers restrict racialized newcomers from actively engaging and participating in the political process (through voting, campaigning, political organizing etc.) (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002)
First generation immigrants and length of time spent in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited experience in politics and not having an entry into the political sphere • Many newcomers are faced with immediate challenges to settlement process and do not have the financial resources or time to run as candidates (Chui, Curtis, & Lambert, 1991, Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002, Black, 2001) • Inexperience with voting in Canada and not being familiar with political parties hinders participation, and often length of time spent in Canada increases familiarity with political party structures.
Settlement Trajectory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Densely concentrated areas of one ethnoracial group generally more likely to be successful as a group in political representation. This can be seen in the case of Peel Region, where South Asian's have been exceedingly successful at the Federal and Provincial levels • Voting in blocs, where groups vote for one party instead of another, is dependent on social networks as well as the presence of political parties. A lack of parties at the municipal level along with a lack of social organizations and networks creates less of an organized vote (Bird, 2005)

Politics of Identity

The question of why racialized minority elected representatives choose not to represent and address the needs and specific challenges of the community with which they identify is an issue, which needs to be addressed. Jedwab (2006) stipulates that using the “immigrant/non-immigrant dichotomy to express differences in voter participation ignores the diverse ethnoracial and ethnocultural experiences” (p. 36) of Canadians who have emigrated from another place. Jedwab (2006) argues that there are a whole host of underlying factors which influence newcomers’ decisions to participate in government or not, and often times it is much more than their status as immigrants and racialized minorities. These factors must be considered when understanding and analyzing political representation of racialized minority immigrants in politics.

On another note in 2002, “more Conservative than progressive voices were being elected from Toronto's racialized minority communities” (Siemiatycki & Saloojee, 2002, p. 266). Within the constraints of the Conservative platform, there may be little room for those elected into office to voice their support or move towards creating change for racialized minority groups, as it is not seen as a priority within the party. In 2002 racialized minority Conservatives were elected into office more often within all ethnoracial groups as the “Liberal democratic electoral systems privilege wealthier, higher status candidates” (Siemiatycki & Saloojee, 2002, p. 267), the opposite being the case at the present moment, where

significantly more racialized minorities have Liberal seats. The speaking points of Conservatives and Liberals have been relatively consistent, where it can be seen in the most recent election that Liberals have begun to welcome and open seats to more racialized minorities over the past 15 years. In the 2015 election, there were 47 racialized minority candidates elected, with 39 being Liberal and only 6 Conservative (Elections Canada, 2016). This points to a marked and significant shift in the Liberal party's mindset over the course of the decade. Research on the shift towards Liberal minority MPs should be examined to determine whether minorities have more power over political decisions and to voice their support for marginalized communities.

One aspect of political party structure that will be examined is that of partisan ties and the role of gatekeepers in politics. Both can be seen as indicators of political representation via the ability of racialized minorities to reflect the interests of the community they represent within the party they belong to. Dancygier, Lindgren, and Vernby (2015) conducted a comprehensive study of political representation of immigrants in Sweden over nearly 20 years, and found that in 1993 Swedish born individuals were 6.5 times more likely to obtain a seat in city council than immigrants who were from relatively poorer countries, but by 2010 this gap was down to a factor of 2.5 (Dancygier, Lindgren & Vernby, 2015). This means that both voters and gatekeepers, these latter being party elites with representational power, have begun to be more willing to welcome and provide

support for immigrant candidates (Dancygier, Lindgren & Vernby, 2015).

Gatekeepers in political parties can be useful in recruiting racialized minorities within parties to allow for more opportunity and to remove some of the discriminatory barriers preventing minorities from otherwise running as candidates in elections. Montreal and Vancouver both have political parties at the municipal level, which can increase participation and representation of minority groups, through awareness of party platforms, when community engagement is also present. As well, political parties can remove the financial barriers of running independently. Simard (2002) states that municipal parties create easier access for newcomers in politics, allowing involvement through substantive representation of racialized minorities, who can then create awareness around political issues faced by the community these minority representatives belong to. In effect, Simard (2002) argues that ethnic candidates who have the ability to lean on a community seat of power have a better chance of getting elected.

It is more than an issue of ethnoracial relations, rather it is also that of a whole range of factors, including socioeconomic, class based, politically charged debates, which determine how and in what ways elected officials respond to community issues and concerns.

Socioeconomic Barriers

Various barriers exist from a socioeconomic perspective for many individuals attempting to get elected, as campaign costs are often too high and

subsequently restrict many from accessing active representation in office. Verba et al. (1978) point out from their study that in all of the countries they surveyed, having a high economic status was always an advantage to citizens with regard to their ability to be elected in politics. Still, most politicians at the federal or provincial level have, more often than not, arisen from professional and more well-off social circumstances, and once one is in office they are restricted both by resources and finances. Amongst the many barriers that exist in the political process, Simard, (1991) who conducted interviews with underrepresented groups in politics, outlines how socioeconomic barriers impede many racialized immigrants from getting involved politically:

Canadian politics is bound up with getting electoral support, and the power of money and of white Anglo-Saxon protestant men. It is difficult for people without money to run for election, given the way election campaigns are financed...To be a candidate, you must belong to a political party; it is the law and you have no choice. But there are certain supporters that the political parties do not want (Simard et al., 1991, An interviewee of Vietnamese origin from Montreal, p. 234).

Socioeconomic barriers such as those described by the interviewee prove to be a significant problem; Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) in their study identified the high cost of running and political ties to the party one runs for often determines the outcome and the ability for one to express their own views and

ideas within government. All of these factors together hinder candidates and elected officials from securing a space and further using their position of power to assist communities that require aid. Therefore, running in elections becomes a process reserved for those with the means and the resources available to do so. In the end, elected officials are often unable to build the social ties and meet the community's needs that they are representing (Siemiatycki & Saloojee, 2002, p. 267). In examining the rates of racialized minority representation and participation in politics, these socioeconomic factors must always be investigated and considered.

"Power Sharing" in the Political Sphere

Representation of racialized minorities in politics also heavily relies on the concept of power sharing. This power to be representative, to have an impact and a voice in political debates and policy decisions is held by political elites. Further, this power also defines when and how minorities can be represented in government, according to those in power at that moment. When considering power sharing, we must also consider how much minority inclusion actually translates into power at the governmental level (Bieber, 2000). Sharing power in governmental systems entails ensuring inclusion amongst diverse groups, and with this power, it allows for minority representatives to substantially represent the community with which they identify. Canada, as a diverse and multiethnic country, needs to establish initiatives to promote representation from all (Beiber,

2000). This can be difficult to achieve though, when there are a large number of different ethnoracial groups in one area, such as in Canada. Beiber (2000) suggests how having smaller groups with temporary coalitions alongside formal political groups, can be a useful strategy to distribute power. This way, power does not always have to come from the top, but instead can be distributed over a number of groups and individuals. Instead of making a seat for every single group, there should be smaller coalitions that can work in solidarity with the government to contribute towards meaningful change for diverse communities. The Lund Recommendation on the Effective Participation of National Minorities in Public Life (1999) outlines the benefits of including racialized minorities in the political sphere, expressing how states should make sure opportunities are there for minorities, such that they are able to have a voice and a space in government, whether it be through formal or informal modes of participation. Accordingly, this concept of sharing power is vitally important in creating proportional representation within government. Representation is equally important in creating a more inclusive political system.

Simard et al. (1991) interviewed a number of racialized minorities on the concept of power sharing and found that with most of the interviews, racialized minorities in general, but especially the Indian population were not adequately represented in politics and that “their interests were not being protected” (Simard et al., 1991, p. 206). This study was conducted 25 years ago, but can be used as a

historical piece to compare how political representation has or has not changed today.

One participant of Chinese origin from Montreal stated, “there is no representation in politics. It is always the same people who have been there for years. It is always the same team” (Simard et al., 1991, p. 233). This has indeed changed at the federal and provincial levels, but still remains very true at the municipal level of government, particularly in suburban areas, where there is very little turnaround. The growing immigrant and racialized minority populations have certainly contributed to this increase in representation, as there has been a slowly progressing, but largely noticeable rise in more diverse voices over time. This points to some progress being made within the political systems. More research should be conducted on political representation through time and the role of social inclusion in this process.

Power within political institutions still continues to be concentrated within a small group of individuals, where out of 338 seats in parliament, there are still only 46 or 13.6% held by visible minorities (Parliament of Canada, 2015). More generally, power in politics is still drawn along racialized lines, where racialized newcomers face numerous barriers in establishing themselves within the political sphere. An interviewee of Syrian origin from Toronto expressed that the assumption of power by the “Anglo-Saxon establishment represents more or less the main obstacle to greater participation by ethnic groups in the Canadian

political system” (Simard et al., 1991, p. 234). This idea of a dominating “whiteness” and the power held by non-minority groups is one which has not been dismantled as of yet and still plays a large role in the political establishment today. Black and Hicks who conducted their study in 2006, stated that racialized minorities continue to have minimal real presence in “elite-level politics” (p. 17), further noting that minorities have been making progress in Parliament, but they still make up a much smaller percentage among their white counterparts (Black & Hicks, 2006). This exemplifies how we see little change over the course of altering the role that racialized minorities play in government and even in contemporary governance. Much more progress needs to be made towards achieving proportional representation of racialized minorities in politics at the present moment.

Importance of Community Ties, Networks, and Social Organizations

With respect to racialized minorities involving themselves in the political process, many authors concur that the most potential for political representation among immigrants is that of the second generation. This is primarily due to the fact that second generation immigrants are better established and often do not face the same, immediate challenges that first generation immigrants face, such as challenges of language, housing, employment and finding means towards integrating (Chui, Curtis, & Lambert, 1991, Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002 & Black, 2001). This is important to note, as for many more newly established

ethnoracial groups in Canada, there may be less ability or opportunity to enter the political sphere as they are stuck in the stage of establishing themselves within Canada. One way in which newcomers can become established in the political sphere is through participation in organizations and campaigns. Siemiatycki (2006) discusses in his work a need for “active neighbourhood-based campaigns through local libraries and community centers” (p. 7). As well, Siemiatycki (2006) suggests that “Toronto’s diverse communities should organize a “New Voices” assembly charged with establishing a policy platform addressing issues of particular concern to newcomers and racialized minorities in Toronto” (p. 7). This sort of action is needed to bring about a voice and a space for those who are not currently represented in the political arena. van Heelsum (2002) argues that migrants have created organizations where they are able “to construct collective good for their particular group such as ethnic sports organizations, mosques, cultural organizations, political organizations, and interest groups (Lindo, van Heelsum, & Penninx, 1998, as cited in van Heelsum, 2002, p. 181). When these organizations work towards a common goal, then a mutual social trust is developed and with this social trust comes greater contacts, spreading to a greater part of the ethnic group in the process (van Heelsum, 2002). Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea (2002) examine the impact that including non-EU members in the voting process had on the outcome of the 2000 election in Brussels. The authors suggest that the success of the minority groups have been based upon the networks that

they have developed, creating a sense of social cohesion within the community (Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea, 2002). As well, the study pointed to the fact that “11 elected councillors of non-EU origin [were] appointed aldermen in the weeks” following the election (Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea, 2002, p. 219). An alderman – a member of the municipal assembly – has enormous amounts of power within local levels of politics, and this is important as they have the ability to implement and reform local policies and have a say in many social service matters within the community (Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea, 2002). Here, Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea (2002) are arguing that aldermen have the ability to create networks of power where minority candidates have an accessible avenue to create meaningful change within politics. As a final point, the authors suggest that migrant politicians can use these avenues of power, primarily when coalitions are built alongside this symbolic representation within government (Jacobs, Martiniello, and Rea, 2002). Thus, the role of community networks and social ties should be underscored as an immensely important and essential method of creating a political system that is substantially representative and addresses the needs and concerns of the community that those elected represent.

Defining Racial and Ethnic Identities

This paper will utilize both racial and ethnic identity, which will help to discern an objective understanding of not only one’s ethnic identity – which may include country of origin, language, religion etc. – but also racial identity.

Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) explain that “in the census, it asks which of 10 identities – some racially, regionally, or nationally defined (e.g., White, Black, Latin American, Filipino) – the respondent belongs to,” (p. 248) and thus, their racial identification is categorized through these means. It is important to separate these two definitions in the research methods, as often times racial identity or ethnic attributes are not the only markers upon which individuals base their identity. While a person may, for example, fit objectively in the category of South Asian as a racial identity, there are a number of ethnic identity markers that may differentiate them from a similarly South Asian person, these may be religious, language and geographical differences. For these reasons, and to avoid issues, Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) stated in their study that ethnic identity would simply be “to name the ethnic group(s) to which their maternal and paternal ancestors belonged” (p. 248). Although self-identification will not be possible in this particular study, the premise will remain – that of defining ethnic origin through paternal and maternal ancestors. By examining both of these components and undertaking a biographical and photographic analysis which will be explained in greater detail in the methodology that follows, a more comprehensive basis for analysis is established and this ultimately helps shape the ethnoracial profile for the officials selected.

V. Methodology

Mode of Data Collection

Utilizing social inclusion as an analytical framework, the purpose of this paper is to determine the proportion of South Asian representation in Peel region at all three levels of government. A collection of data examining South Asian representation in federal, provincial and municipal government was taken from the Elections Canada website, as well as the Parliament of Canada website. This data was analyzed through biographical and photographic modes of determining the selected officials' racial identity, ethnic identity, and country of origin.

Biographic and photographic analysis were completed through internet searches, finding information on elected representatives in Peel Region. At the higher levels of governance, primarily at the federal level, the country of origin was clearly stated, making it easier to identify these individuals. For politicians at the provincial and municipal level, these biographic analyses were conducted to attempt to find information already available on the ethnoracial identity, both the country of origin and racial identities. When the biographical data was missing, then photographic measures were utilized to identify the politicians' racial identity. Although the researcher understands the problematic nature of identifying the ethnoracial identity of individuals based on solely visual aids, it was used solely as a last resort when no other information was available. This being said, the researcher did their best not to assume any ethnoracial identities and based politicians' identities on country of origin as much as possible. Racial

identity, ethnic identity, and country of origin were important to consider in determining the rate of representation for ethnoracial candidates in government. As well, this data helps uncover the percentage of South Asians currently elected in Peel region.

Survey Techniques

The methodology will contain inductive approaches to research, meaning that this research will be based on conceptual thinking, which intends to uncover more of a generalization, relationship, or theory through analyzing data (Khan, 2014). A meta-analysis will also be conducted, synthesizing existing findings on the topic into one or a few overall results. Moreover, the researcher will be looking at existing statistical research, documents and conducting a secondary analysis, to examine survey data. The research will analyze the reasons for underrepresentation of South Asian community members and subsequently study the meanings, motives, and themes that arise from the secondary research and statistics. This research aims to uncover what impact this ethnoracial identity has on political representation, as well as, the barriers that racialized minorities face in political representation. Therefore, I will be drawing resources from prior Canadian elections from 1993 to 2015, at the federal, provincial and municipal level, looking at the Elections Canada website and archives, to analyze elected candidates throughout current and previous elections. As well, an analysis of the 11 federal, 8 provincial and 23 municipal political representatives in Peel Region

will be looked at to determine which of these seats, were taken from racialized minorities.

It is important to note that a decision was made not to include Caledon in the research analysis for Peel region. Although Caledon is technically a part of Peel region, it makes up only a small portion of the total population, at 21% of the total population of Peel. More importantly, the racialized minority population of Caledon is only 9% and therefore, is not representative of the racialized minority population comprising Peel region in the slightest, where the majority of residents live in the areas of Brampton and Mississauga (Statistics Canada, 2006). As well, I will be looking at the Parliament of Canada website, to further synthesize and analyze trends and data collected from these sources.

Analysis of Data

Through the combination of record collection, as well as reviews of literature, the methodology will focus on drawing links and connections between secondary data collection and primary data collection techniques. The focus of this research will be to uncover trends in political representation of South Asians in Peel region over the course of close to 25 years. An examination of election results from 1993 to 2015 will be made between the candidates that have run at all three levels of government, compared to the actual elected officials. Moreover, Peel region's current election results for federal, provincial and municipal elected officials will be comprehensively analyzed to determine any change in trends of

South Asian political representation. Finally, recommendations will be made for the future to address political underrepresentation in Peel region and other suburban areas facing the same challenges.

I foresee no risks to safety or wellbeing during the process or upon completion of my research. The limitations of this study are that in conducting research objectively, there is an inability to accurately and fully give autonomy for the chosen elected representatives' self-identification, this is due to the nature of the research and time constraints limiting a wider array of research techniques.

VI. Discussion

Racialized Minorities in Peel Region

It is imperative at this point to recognize the importance of the newcomers' experience when settling in Canada and the challenges that are presented along the way. Among these challenges are those of finding a space where they feel comfortable, safe and welcome. For many, this space is strengthened through the assertion of political tactics such as participating in elections, and for some, striving to be a representative. Immigrants have played a significant role in the process of political representation over time and continue to shape political systems in Canada today. This is achieved through their participation and increasing representation within government. The existence of minority groups being represented in parliament has positive effects, notably to familiarize elected officials with the numerous barriers that minority groups face,

such as systemic discrimination, socioeconomic factors, and prejudice within the population in general (Simard, 2002).

The following section will utilize the thematic connections made through analyzing literature as well as, examining data from elections since 1993 to revisit the question of racialized minority representation in Peel Region and the barriers that restrict access to politics at the municipal level. The section begins by looking in more detail at the racialized minority representation of MP's in both Canada as a whole and in Peel Region.

Table 3: Racialized Minority MP's in Canada and Peel Region 1993-2015

Year	Number VM Elected in Canada	Percentage of VM Elected out of Total in Canada	Number of VM Elected in Peel Region	Percentage of VM Elected in Peel Region
1993	13	4.4	1/5	20
1997	19	6.3	2/7	28.5
2000	17	5.6	2/7	28.5
2004	22	7.1	4/8	50
2006	24	7.8	5/8	62.5
2008	21	6.8	3/8	37.5
2011	28	9.1	2/8	25
2015	43	12.7	9/11	82

Source: Black, 2011 & Election Canada, 2015

Table 3 shows the racialized minority representation since 1993, providing a clearer picture of the transformation of political representation that has taken place over time. In the 2006 election there were 24/308 racialized minorities represented in the House of Commons and among these, there were 11 South Asian, 5 Chinese, 4 Black, 3 Arab, and 1 Japanese Canadian individual (Bird, 2005). This means that South Asians made up 46% of the total racialized minority representation in politics. The 2015 election brought about even more representation as there were 22 South Asians elected into office making up 51% of the total racialized minority population elected into government (Elections

Canada, 2015). One factor contributing to the increase in visible minority representation in Canada is the concentration of suburban communities surrounding the Greater Toronto Area, where one, in particular, Peel region has had a lot of South Asian growth and settlement. This growth has continued into the most recent election, where in 2015, there were 9 visible minorities elected in Peel Region, comprising 22.6% of the total representation (Elections Canada, 2015). In Peel Region, it can be seen that the increase in racialized minority population over the past 25 years has translated into a higher number of racialized minority representation in politics. This increase in the South Asian population and settlement patterns of those living in Peel Region can therefore be studied to uncover the role of demographics in the process of political representation.

Bird (2005) argues spatial location is, in fact, a component that corresponds with electoral boundaries, “if there is a powerful social network present that can be assembled to vote as one bloc, and if these boundaries are in a space where constituencies are competitive and where one vote can be given to a party at the price of another” (p. 80). If we take the example of Peel Region, its spatial location can be viewed as enormously important, given the large population of South Asians who then have the capacity to vote all together for a South Asian candidate, that is, if they desired. At the municipal level, where a lack of South Asians are present in council, more ethnic related organizations should work together alongside South Asian candidates at this level to secure

more votes through these measures (Siemiatycki, 2006, van Heelsun, 2002).

Encouraging political participation at the local level is important to ensure political representation for more South Asians at the municipal level and will be described further in the sections that follow.

As Siemiatycki (2006) argues organizations such as the “New Voices” campaign can act as a way for racialized newcomers to share power across many different platforms where ethnic organizations can act as social networks, which can greatly contribute to representation of racialized minorities in politics.

Table 4: racialized Minorities Elected for Peel Region

	2006 % Racialized Minority (RM) elected (absolute #)	2008% RM elected (absolute #)	2011% RM elected (absolute #)	2015% RM elected (absolute #)
Federal	63% (5)	38% (3)	25% (2)	82% (9)
Provincial	38% (3)	50% (4)	63% (5)	75% (6)
Municipal	4% (1)	4% (1)	4% (1)	4% (1)

Source: Election Canada, 2015

Table 4 provides a summary of the number of racialized minorities elected into office at all three levels of government over the course of 10 years. It is clear from this data that the number of racialized minorities in government has grown overall at the federal and provincial levels, but it can be seen that this is not the case for the municipal level. The rate has remained the same over the past 10

years and shows no sign of increasing in the near future. Although, some scholars argue that this is not the case for many of the larger urban centers in Canada, the City of Toronto faces a similar problem overall with municipal representation as in 2011, just “7% of 253 municipal council members in the GTA are racialized minorities” (Siemiatycki, 2011, p. i). Similarly, in the most recent election only 10% of the municipal councils in 5 municipalities - Toronto, and the outlying suburbs of Brampton, Mississauga, Richmond Hill and Markham, identify as racialized minorities (TRIEC, 2016). Moreover, Siemiatycki and Matheson (2005) who collected data on the 5 municipalities described above, found that none of the municipalities had a success rate at municipal elections as great as their combined federal and provincial rate. This trend of underrepresentation at the municipal level has continued in the 2015 election where representation at the provincially is more than double than that of the municipal level, at 23% (TRIEC, 2016). There is an imminent need to reconsider the lack of municipal city level representation in government in Canada and all of the factors that may inhibit racialized minorities from accessing politics. As well, one must consider the impact that power and processes of social exclusion continue to have on political representation and the constant challenges that racialized minorities face as a result.

Racialized newcomers, who often lack the resources and social supports to open the doors to the political arena, face additional barriers in finding ways to

participate and become elected. This is not to say that racialized immigrants cannot find a space in the political sphere. Rather, racialized newcomers have a large and immensely important role to play in Canada's political system. Over the past 25 years, minority groups have fought to create a space of inclusion for themselves in many institutions, including politics. More prospectively an interviewee of Egyptian origin from Montreal stated:

I see a large role [for ethnic groups] especially if one considers that in the next 20 years immigrants will represent a considerable proportion of the total Canadian population. They [is] their new home. They must not be ignored. (Simard et al., 1991, p. 240).

The words expressed by the interviewee are important. Racialized immigrants in Canada make up a significant portion of the population and hence need to have a space, where they can be represented and have the opportunity to have a voice and make a contribution in an inclusive environment. Minority groups today within government have made considerable strides and the number of racialized minorities represented in politics has continued to grow over the past 25 years, where both the federal MP's and provincial MPP's in the most recent election have doubled the number of racialized minority groups represented over the 10 years, as can be seen in Table 4 above. Research on this topic is immensely valuable to study. It provides us with data to analyze trends in minority representation over time to determine what barriers are still in place preventing

certain minority groups from being able to fully participate and act as representatives in politics. One group in particular, that is extremely under researched and should be focused in in more detail in future, is that of racialized minority women in politics.

Racialized Minority Women and Political Representation

The discussion that follows will focus on racialized minority women in the political sphere. There has been considerably more research done on minorities in general, but women are never in the forefront of research, and instead are often simply added in as a side note without any real relevance of significance. Black and Hicks conducted research in 2006 on this topic and report that greater minority representation in politics according to selected Conservative candidates, was not perceived as a large problem, where only 20% indicated that the lack of racialized minorities was a problem, a level of concern that was even lower than the representation of women at 25%. Even more significant is the responses by Liberals interviewed, where a lack of women was seen to be a significant problem, with 57% believing there needs to be more women. Liberals recognized a problem with the lack of women in politics. Even more striking than the response of the conservatives was that a majority of Liberals, over 56% thought that the lack of racialized minorities was not a fairly significant problem (Black and Hicks, 2006). Although Black and Hicks consider the issues of racialized minorities and women as distinct categories, they do not in this research, consider

the multiple identities of women who are racialized minorities, which will be investigated further in this section. As Table 5 shows racialized women have also been making considerable strides in representation in government.

Table 5: Racialized Minority Women in Toronto, Brampton, and Mississauga at all Three Levels of Government in 2015 Election

	# Racialized Minority Women Elected	Total # Seats	% racialized Minority Women Elected
Federal	7	36	19.4%
Provincial	5	36	13.8%
Municipal	1	68	1.5%

Source: Elections Canada, 2015

Racialized minority women make up close to 20% of the total number of elected candidates at the federal level. Similar, to racialized minorities in general, racialized women are underrepresented at the municipal level and this may be due to similar barriers that other minority groups face, such as lack of access to resources, discrimination within the political system and exclusionary practices that occur as a result, discouraging racialized women from entering into politics as a whole.

Moreover, Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) point out from their study that women are better represented at the municipal level, where women hold 31% seats, compared to 26% at the federal level and 23% at the provincial level in Toronto. In 2008 Toronto had more women on city council (14) than sitting on federal and provincial combined (11) (Siemiatycki, 2008). This continues to be

the case today, where there are more women on municipal council than at the higher levels of governance, but this is not the case for racialized minority women, where there are less at the municipal level (Elections Canada, 2015). This is interesting to note from the 2008 election, where municipal levels of women representation was rather high (Siemiatycki, 2008). At the municipal level in the 2015 election, it is noteworthy that only one racialized minority woman at the municipal level had been elected in all of Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton named Kristyn Wong-Tam (Elections Canada, 2015).

This shifting trend towards underrepresentation of racialized minority women at the municipal level of politics at the present time points to a much larger issue of representation of minorities in general at the local level of governance, where minority groups are being excluded at the municipal level. The entrance that women have made in the past, specifically the 2008 election is important to consider, though, as it clearly exemplifies that progress can be made and that barriers can be broken down preventing racialized women from entering politics, primarily at the local level. Wong-Tam is a clear case of a racialized minority woman challenging these barriers and exclusionary practices preventing more racialized women from running in municipal elections in Toronto.

The term “racialized minority women” is not a homogeneous term that should be used to conflate all women as having the same issues and concerns, but some patterns can be discerned through analyzing how ethnoracial women

approach problems in politics. Rather, looking through an intersectionality lens we can see the “complex and sometimes contradictory intersections of gender, class, race, and nationality” (Arat-Koç, 2006, p. 199) that women with multiple identities face. Bird (2010) conducted an analysis of substantive topic differences in parliamentary debates and found that racialized minority women were the most likely to address both ethnic and women related issues in parliament. Bird (2010) notes that by comparison, At the higher levels of governance, non-minority women speak about women’s issues just once in every six times they speak. Even more significant is the gap between racialized minority women and men, where racialized minority men make virtually no efforts to address these issues in speeches in parliament (Bird, 2010). By comparison, racialized minority women mention women related issues more than any other group, speaking on the topic at least one in every five times that they speak in parliament and mention ethnic related issues 22% of the time versus racialized minority men that mention it 18% of the time (Bird, 2010). This is vital to consider as it signifies the importance of the inclusion of racialized minority women as political representatives and the valuable input they have the potential to provide.

Last, in considering racialized minority women in Brampton and Mississauga in the 2015 election, there is significant representation of South Asian women at the federal and provincial levels, where South Asian women hold 4/8 or 50% of the seats at the federal level and 3/8 or 38% of the seats at the

provincial level (Elections Canada, 2015). However, they hold none at the municipal level, which continues to follow the trend of general underrepresentation at the municipal level (Elections Canada, 2015). At the higher levels of governance though, racialized minority women are close to being proportionally represented in Peel region. South Asian women have made considerable strides in political representation in these suburban areas.

More research needs to be conducted on the impact that this could have on the community, if as Bird's 2010 study concludes racialized minority women pay more attention to the issues and needs of women in general, as well as ethnic related issues. South Asian women being represented in the House of Commons is significant and calls towards more research to be conducted as to why they are succeeding so much more than other minority groups who do not have the same amount of representation in politics, such as that of the Chinese community. Chinese community members have virtually no representation in the Brampton and Mississauga region and very little in Toronto where in the most recent election there were six (6) Chinese members of parliament at the federal level, making up 24% of the total seats (Elections Canada, 2015). This comparison makes it clear that South Asian women have achieved a high proportion of seats in parliament and further studies should be conducted to see why this is the case. Specifically, the case of South Asians in general in political representation, which will be analyzed in the next section, is a point of research, which should be

evaluated in more detail to consider the strides that they have made and also the barriers that still prevent municipal level representation.

Electoral Underrepresentation of South Asian Community: Demography and Geography Factors

Arguments have been made that the South Asian community has made considerable strides in electoral representation at the federal and provincial level. Siemiatycki and Matheson (2005) consider why this is the case. They compare the South Asian community to the Chinese community where, among the 13 racialized minority candidates in 2005 in federally and provincially, 9 were South Asian and 1 was Chinese (Siemiatycki and Matheson, 2005). This was considering the South Asian population at 442,805 was only slightly larger than the Chinese population of 392,225 (Siemiatycki and Matheson, 2005). Arguments for why this is the case are that South Asians often come from countries where there are “multiple political parties and regular elections” (Siemiatycki and Matheson, 2005, p. 71). As well, South Asians are more likely to arrive in Canada with higher fluency in English (Siemiatycki and Matheson, 2005). Language then can be considered an important variable contributing to political inclusion, where newcomers with increased fluency will most likely have an easier time entering in politics than someone without these skills. There is also the matter of numbers, where in Brampton and Mississauga, South Asians are the largest racialized minority group, totalling far more than the Chinese number of members in

Markham and Richmond Hill, where the largest number of Chinese individuals live (Siemiatycki and Matheson, 2005). This concentration of South Asian community members plays a large role in the composition of South Asians in government, as the population increases have correlated to representation, although not at remotely proportional levels. As Bird (2005) suggests, there need to be two conditions in order for proportional racialized minority representation to occur, these being; spatial concentration and high levels of racialized minority political engagement. These two factors alone do not produce minority candidacy, but rather, alongside these, there must be an open candidate selection procedure, low incumbency rate, language proficiency, access to financial resources, a network of community and social ties, and inclusivity by political parties (Bird, 2005, & Saloojee, 2016). It is imperative that inclusionary selection criteria be outlined to introduce the opportunity for minorities to become elected. As well, it is vital that with these inclusionary measures, the turn around rate for municipal level governments be altered so that there is more room for new candidates to get elected. It becomes more challenging for first and even second-generation immigrants to secure a place in municipal government, as the turn around rate is so time limited and more, the candidate selection process is often “whitewashed”. This meaning that priority is given white Canadians who already have the power and the social mobility to enter in and remain in office at the municipal level.

Impacts of Municipal Incumbency

Racialized minority groups are at a severe disadvantage when trying to enter the political office at all three levels, especially and most prominently at the municipal level. In Peel Region, where there is a lack of municipal representation, Punjabi is the most common language spoken and Sikh is the most common religion, even outpacing Catholicism which is the most popular religion to date. Although the Punjabi-Sikh ethnoracial population is highest in Peel Region and as a group, they are considered relatively affluent, have language skills and have the possible experience of campaigning many times in their home country, there are still challenges specific to this community faced in the political sphere (Matheson, 2005). This sense of social mobility would, in theory, make them more likely to be able to afford the high cost of campaigning (Matheson, 2005). As knowledge of the English language upon entry to Canada is generally high for the Punjabi-Sikh ethnic community, it should make it easier to enter into and navigate the political systems (Matheson, 2005). Therefore, in every instance, the South Asian community in Peel Region should have the socioeconomic mobility to move into municipal council, but this is not occurring, as they are still severely underrepresented. Matheson (2005) argues that this is primarily due to municipal incumbency. As a result, the municipal level of government is an avenue that South Asian minority groups are unable to access at the present moment as inclusion is limited to a select group of individuals who hold a monopoly over the

rest of the population. As well, “in the absence of political parties in local elections, name recognition and council experience becomes a major determinant of electoral success” (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002, p. 258). For new immigrants, lacking experience and a history of being engaged in the political arena for a long period of time in Canada, it makes it extremely difficult for racialized minority immigrants to enter into politics, especially at the municipal level. This, among other restrictions and barriers, may explain in part why there is the gap or this idea of a “municipal lag” (Siemiatycki and Matheson, 2005) in Peel, as there is more accessibility at the higher levels of governance. This heightened accessibility at the federal and provincial levels is primarily due to a decrease in the barriers described above in the literature review. At the municipal level, socioeconomic obstacles such as financial constraints and a lack of resources often cause restrictions to political inclusion, which can be reduced through political party affiliation. As well, party ties present at the federal and provincial levels increase voter turnout through political parties interests being clearly stated, which does not occur when candidates run independently in municipal elections. Political parties can draw in voters who hold similar interests to that of the party being represented. The lack of political parties at the municipal level in Peel Region acts as a barrier, where candidates running as councillors are unable to draw in as much interest and individuals are dissuaded from voting at the municipal level as a result. This is not to say that racialized minority groups

are completely cut off from the municipal level of governance. Gurpreet Dhillon, a South Asian councillor in Brampton is currently the only racialized minority member in Peel region elected. Despite there being 47 racialized minorities running as municipal candidates in the latest election, only one got elected. Therefore, this paper argues that there are still significant barriers that need to be addressed; barriers that are precluding racialized minorities from getting elected at the municipal level in both suburban and urban areas in Canada.

Matheson (2005), Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) conclude that the slow progression towards representation of racialized minorities at the municipal level in governance is primarily due to incumbency factors, causing slow turnaround of elected candidates and municipal lag. Municipal election in Canada happen every four years, thus there is less opportunity for racialized minority candidates to make it in, simply because elections run less frequently and because of the sheer number of candidates. In the most recent election this can also be seen, where Ward 5 in Mississauga had six South Asian candidates all running for the same position. Further, it can be seen that Wards 2 & 6, 7 & 8 all had over six candidates running for council. In Wards 9 & 10 where notably the only South Asian in municipal government in Peel, Gurpreet Dhillon won the candidacy, there were three South Asian and only one Anglo-Canadian Allison Brown running against the other two candidates Vicky Dhillon and Sunny Jarnail Singh. Matheson (2005) further states that the sheer number of candidates should turn

into votes, but this has not happened over the 10 year period since his study, as can be seen in Table 6 below. It seems as if the only possibility for South Asian community members being elected into municipal government any time in the near future will actually depend on a high number of South Asian candidates to make inclusion more likely. Increasing the number of candidates alone is not a solution, but rather a reformation of practices needs to occur. These reformations must be inclusive of all individuals at the municipal level occurs through the creation of term limits on municipal office positions and where the value of South Asians as substantial representatives is considered.

Table 6: South Asian Candidates and Elected Officials in Peel Region in 2015

	Elected Officials	Candidates
Federal	9/11	22/51
Provincial	6/8	18/48
Municipal	1/23	47/157

Source Elections Canada, 2015

Analyzing the Influence of Political Parties and Partisan Ties

Table 6 shows the number of South Asian candidates who ran for parliament in the most recent election, compared to those who got elected. It is clear from the data that the South Asian community has done relatively well at the federal and provincial levels, where a significant proportion of the candidates that ran got elected. At the federal level 41% that ran got elected and at the provincial

level 33% of those that ran got elected. Comparing this to the case of municipal governance where 47 South Asians ran as candidates, but only one made it into office, the stark contrasts of representation can be seen. This municipal level underrepresentation, however, is not exclusive to Peel Region. In Toronto, currently there are only 6 racialized minority councillors out of 44 seats, making up 13.4%, where Toronto has a total racialized minority population of 47% in the most recent census in 2011 (Statcan, 2015). The municipal representation of Peel region and Toronto can be compared to that of Vancouver, where 2 out of 11 councillors or 18% of the councillors identified as racialized minorities and where racialized minorities make up 45.2% of the total population (Statcan, 2015). So, what accounts for Vancouver's increase in representation of racialized minorities at the municipal level? Vancouver, as well as Montreal both, have municipal parties, unlike Toronto and its surrounding suburbs. These political party affiliations can increase representation of racialized minorities in politics as gatekeepers within parties can actually act as gateways for racialized minorities entering into politics, helping them break into politics through supportive networks and aiding in providing resources. As well, having political parties at the municipal level can help increase voter turnout for the GTA, as community members are more likely to support and vote for candidates that are easily recognizable and can be distinguished through the ideas, policies and political mentalities of the party they represent. In Brampton, the 2015 election results

showed that of the total eligible voters, only 28.2% voted for council members at the municipal level (Elections Canada, 2016 & City of Brampton, 2015). With just slightly more than a quarter of Brampton residents voting in the municipal election, this lack of participation points to a need to address the reasons why this is the case and consider the role and benefits of implementing political parties in the municipal level of politics in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area.

Recommendations

This paper has discussed a number of potential explanations for racialized minority political underrepresentation and will end by providing some recommendations to work towards a higher degree of political representation for racialized minorities at the municipal in Canada. Simply put “minority rights should not only be implemented for but also by minorities themselves” (Bieber, 2000, p. 417-418). Therefore, minority groups in Canada should have access to political representation and participation without facing discrimination or marginalization. A social inclusion framework that analyzes the various challenges that discriminated individuals face must be examined to bring about the ability to be inclusive and to sustainably represent racialized minorities in politics.

To begin, more research on racialized minority women in Canadian politics should be undertaken to determine the impact that underrepresentation of women has had on racialized minority communities. The need to uncover the

specific experiences of racialized minority women in Canada is of vital importance and is a greatly underrepresented area of research (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003). Racialized minority women experience intersecting oppressions of both racist and sexist systemic practices preventing them from entering into politics. South Asian women in Peel region, in particular, have made considerable strides in achieving political representation. Further research consisting of conducting a case study on this population, as well as, similar studies would be beneficial to substantiate the research already conducted in this study. This case study should utilize an inclusionary framework, which considers the barriers faced by racialized minority women. Social inclusionary practices are needed which value women in politics and their contributions and input in political discussions. Similar, to racial barriers to inclusion, women must not act as placeholders in politics, without holding any substantial power or influence to make a meaningful contribution. As Bird (2005) has found, racialized minority women are the most likely to address ethnic related issues, than any other individual in the political sphere. The impact that racialized minority women have on politics is an extremely valuable topic of study, which should be researched in more depth in future literature.

In an area such as Peel region with such a dense concentration of South Asian community members, it is of vital importance that the community is substantially represented and that political power is distributed evenly and

proportionally across the region. As discussed, South Asians are becoming more and more prominent in Peel region at the federal and provincial levels and have achieved proportional representation, making up over 75% of the population elected into both levels of government (Elections Canada, 2015). On the other hand, South Asians at the municipal level have not made the same progress and are still extremely underrepresented at the local level of governance. This calls into question the role that historical oppressions continue to play in society restricting minority groups through racist and discriminatory practices (Saloojee, 2002). The value and the contributions of racialized minorities in politics must be considered and social inclusionary practices must be utilized to open a space where all individuals have access to the political sphere. The South Asian community represents a large portion of Peel Region and therefore, measures must be taken to ensure that they are appropriately represented in politics. More research must be conducted on why this underrepresentation is occurring. As well, research should examine methods to bring about higher proportionality of representation for South Asians at the municipal level of government so that the community has representatives who not only reside in but also feel a part of and identify with those who represent and lead them. A number of recommendations will be made in following section to help bring about a society more inclusive to all in politics.

The provincial government should consider inaugurating political parties at the municipal level in Toronto and the GTA. This would be extremely beneficial in not only bringing about more representation in politics, but also in increasing political participation of racialized minorities. Gatekeepers and elite politicians who have access to power and policy making decisions, can be used as a means towards breaking in racialized minority newcomers who may otherwise not have the political experience or resources to do so. The introduction of political parties at the municipal level can also be useful in increasing the number of ethnoracial votes within a community, as electors are more likely to vote if they firstly, have an idea of the political stances and values of the candidate and therefore the party in question. Secondly, information can be disseminated through party affiliations much more effectively, than one individual running as a candidate can do. Information sharing is a useful tool brought about by the inclusion of parties in municipal politics. Information on candidates must be made available to all individuals and all groups must have a space to make an informed vote through the strategies described above, in order to achieve more inclusive political participation and representation structure at the municipal level.

Decreasing municipal incumbency is also vitally important, especially in the case of suburban areas in the GTA, where research has shown very low rates of racialized minority representation for these regions. The municipal turnaround rate, which is currently over five years, and where there is no limit on the number

of terms that incumbents may run, largely restricts racialized newcomers from having the ability to enter into and have a fair chance of being elected in municipal politics. Mandatory term limits of two terms should be introduced for incumbents to allow for more varied representation and opportunities for newcomers to enter the political sphere at the local level. Further, councillors should be rotated to ensure that racialized minorities and newcomers have a fair chance of being elected through these term rotations. Incumbency factors, as well as a lack of political party affiliation for municipal level politics, both work to restrict access to racialized minorities and newcomers from entering into politics. All of these factors together impose barriers to sharing power within the political sphere, where unrestricted term limits, in particular, provide little room for opportunities for new faces to enter into politics. Therefore, the provincial government should construct strategies directed at enhancing the inclusion of racialized immigrants through the implementation of term limits and political party affiliation at the municipal level of governance in Canada is of vital importance and more research should be conducted on this topic.

Pelletier (1991) makes recommendations on helping to eliminate language barriers within the political sphere, including “enumerators being appointed who are able to speak the language of the target ethnic electorate” (p. 147). Enumerators who speak the language of the elector, where individuals have the ability to effectively communicate and fully comprehend the issues and party

platforms without there being a language barrier is immensely important. If the enumerator does not speak the language of the elector, then if possible, an interpreter should come in to address the needs and questions of that particular constituent to enable voters to have the power and knowledge to make an informed vote. The question in applying this potential solution to contemporary politics, would be, is it still reasonable to assume that accommodation can feasibly be made for all ethnoracial minority groups? With the steady growth in immigration rates over the last 25 years, there has been a significant increase in ethno specific groups speaking a whole range of dialects and languages. Therefore, for today it would be safe to say it would be extremely challenging to find and finance enumerators who speak every language. More generally, though, in populations where there are large groups of similar ethnoracial groups, such as that of Brampton where a large majority of individuals speak Punjabi, enumerators should be hired by federal governments for this reason to help bring about more informed voting for those who do not hold strong English language skills at that moment.

Further, Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2002) state that creating a “council of representatives” (p. 271) who are given the power and the ability to represent certain communities would also be extremely beneficial. Similar to Pelletier's arguments of including ethnic organizations within political training programs, creating a formal council of representatives establishes a space for ethnic minority

groups to discuss issues within the community. The creation of councils also helps reduce the barrier of a lack of community organizations and networks within a particular group. As well, the creation of a formal council would help to distribute power, allowing community members to have more of a voice in the political sphere. As Siemiatycki and Saloojee's (2002) study found, just because an individual who falls into a specific ethnoracial minority group gets elected, does not mean that they will be willing or able to create any real or meaningful change towards the community that they self identify with. Instead of relying on those elected, this council of representatives should have access and the power to share responsibilities. This council can only be created through individuals and the community taking the initiative and investing the time and resources to sustain it. Introducing such a system is important though, as there would be more room for the specific needs and services of a particular ethnoracial minority community to be met. This would also ensure that ethnic related issues at higher levels of governance are placed more in the foreground and have a greater chance of being addressed.

Pelletier (1991) further recommends that political training programs be run jointly by ethnic organizations as well as by Elections Canada. By including ethnic organizations more involvement is integrated and held by the community and people that those elected represent. This would involve political training programs, with the aim of including racialized minority groups and striving to get

them to become politically involved. The process of these programs could be geared specifically towards municipal politics to help support those racialized minority candidates that have applied in the past and have been unsuccessful. In introducing political training programs, it would help reduce the socioeconomic barriers, such as a lack of finances and resources that prevent racialized newcomers from being included in politics.

Last, granting permanent residents the ability to vote at the municipal level (Diehl and Blohm, 2001, p. 407 & Siemiatycki, 2006) is essential to create a more equitable and inclusionary political system. For newcomers granting easier access to citizenship by decreasing the wait for citizenship, (which is currently a wait time of three years), is vital to full participation and inclusion in politics (Diehl and Blohm, 2001). New immigrants should not be restricted from participating in politics, as they are citizens in the non formal sense and contribute to the economy in a number of ways, through contributing through employment, purchasing commodities and paying taxes. Federal governments should decrease the wait time for citizenship for recent immigrants and permanent residents to bring about a fairer participation and representation process. Racialized newcomers would be less restricted by the social upheavals they face as new immigrants without the constraints of not having citizenship status, thereby reducing the barrier that first generation immigrants face and decreasing the importance of length of time in Canada as a barrier to political inclusion. This

makes the possibility of running for elections much more feasible and also allows for more social inclusion of newcomers and racialized minorities in politics.

Conclusion

This study is focused on investigating the barriers that exist with regards to South Asian political representation in GTA's suburban cities of Mississauga and Brampton. In the past, Toronto has had consistently high levels of racialized minority representation at the municipal level and a smaller percentage at the federal and provincial levels. In the most recent election, at the federal and provincial level, South Asians have had remarkable success in Peel region at being representative in politics, but this has not been the case for municipal levels of government. Although South Asians have made considerable strides in political representation in Peel region, it is important to consider that there is still a long way to go before proportional representation for racialized minorities is achieved at all three levels of government.

Furthermore, this paper has discussed immigration in relation to topics of political representation. Immigrants are not given enough attention in research on political participation and representation and instead their experiences are often ignored in literature on these topics. This is extremely problematic as immigrants play a continued and significant role in political representation in governments and therefore, should be studied in greater detail and included in research on political representation. The majority of immigrants who enter Canada today are

identified as racialized minorities, where one particular group, (the South Asian population) has made significant progress in Canadian politics at the federal and provincial levels in Peel Region, as described in this paper.

Even as racialized minority officials continue to grow in number in office, many argue that the representation is not substantive and instead is merely symbolic of being truly representative, through only numerical representation (Bird, 2005 & Saloojee, 2002). This means that racialized minority politicians are present in governments, but their presence is not translating into any true form of change or meaningful contribution to the minority group that they identify with. Therefore, this paper seeks to uncover how we can go about creating substantive representation in government, particularly with regards to racialized minorities as well as, racialized minority women.

Racialized minority women and political representation have not had the space that they deserve in recent literature on these subjects. Racialized women are the most likely to bring up ethnic related issues in parliament (Bird 2010) and yet, are still very underrepresented in politics and are not given the credit they deserve in research to date. In Peel Region at the higher levels of governance, racialized minority women, particularly South Asian women have been especially successful in achieving candidacy in office (Elections Canada, 2015). This research points to a gap in the current literature on the subject of electoral representation in government and calls for a need to conduct more analysis on the

impact of racialized minority women in parliament, the important roles they play, and the contributions they make in Canadian politics.

It is clear that action needs to be taken to encourage political representation of racialized minorities in governance, as can be seen in the case of Peel region, where there is a significant South Asian population, but a lack of adequate representation of community members who are able to obtain the power and leadership as representatives within the community. Canada, despite adopting the first “official” multiculturalism policy in 1971, has not lived up to its expectation as a diverse and inclusive country that the policy promotes. Ethnoracial communities are still being left out and underrepresented in the political sphere and until proportional representation for all occurs, Canada cannot call itself a multicultural society.

Appendix

Brampton- Federal Election Results

Name of MP	Gender	Race	Country of Origin	Riding
Ramesh Sangha	Male	South Asian	India	Brampton Centre
Raj Grewal	Male	South Asian	Canada	Brampton East
Ruby Sahota	Female	South Asian	Canada	Brampton North
Sonia Sidhu	Female	South Asian	India	Brampton South
Kamal Khera	Female	South Asian	India	Brampton West

Mississauga- Federal Election Results

Name of MP	Gender	Race	Country of Origin	Riding
Omar Alghabra	Male	Arab	Saudia Arabia	Mississauga Centre
Peter Fonseca	Male	Caucasian	Portugal	Mississauga East- Cooksville
Iqra Khalid	Female	South Asian	Pakistan	Mississauga- Erin Mills
Sven Spengemann	Male	Caucasian	Germany	Mississauga- Lakeshore
Navdeep Bains	Male	South Asian	Canada	Mississauga- Malton
Gagan Sikand	Male	South Asian	Canada	Mississauga- Streetsville

Brampton- Provincial Election Results

Name of MPP	Gender	Race	Country of Origin	Riding
Vic Dhillon	Male	South Asian	India	Brampton West
Harinder Malhi	Female		Canada	Brampton Springdale
Amrit Magnat	Female	South Asian	India	Mississauga- Brampton South
Jagmeet Singh	Male		Canada	Bramalea- Gore- Malton

Mississauga- Provincial Election Results

Name of MPP	Gender	Race	Country of Origin	Riding
Dipika Damerla	Female	South Asian	India	Mississauga-East Cooksville
Bob Delaney	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Mississauga-Streetsville
Charles Sousa	Male		Canada	Mississauga South
Harinder Takhar	Male		India	Mississauga-Erindale

Brampton- Municipal Election Results

Name of Councillor	Gender	Race	Country of Origin	Ward
Linda Jeffrey	Female	Caucasian	Ireland	Mayor
Grant Gibson	Male	Caucasian	Canada	City Councillor- Wards 1 & 5
Elaine Moore	Female	Caucasian	Canada	Region Councillor- Wards 1 & 5
Doug Whillans	Male	Caucasian	Canada	City Councillor- Wards 2 & 6
Michael Palleschi	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Regional Councillor- Wards 2 & 6
Jeff Bowman	Male	Caucasian	Canada	City Councillor- Wards 3 & 4
Martin Medeiros	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Regional Councillor- Wards 3 & 4
Pat Fortini	Male	Caucasian	Italy	City Councillor- Wards 7 & 8
Gael Miles	Female	Caucasian	Canada	Regional Councillor- Wards 7 & 8
Gurpreet Dhillon	Male	South Asian	Canada	City Councillor- Wards 9 & 10
John Sprovieri	Male	Caucasian	Italy	Regional Councillor- Wards 9 & 10

Mississauga- Municipal Election Results

Name of Councillor	Gender	Race	Country of Origin	Ward
Bonnie Crombie	Female	Caucasian	Canada	Mayor
Jim Tovey	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 1
Karen Ras	Female	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 2
Chris Fonesca	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 3
Frank Dale	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 4
Carolyn Parrish	Female	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 5
Ron Starr	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 6
Nando Iannicca	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 7
Matt Mohoney	Male	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 8
Pat Saito	Female	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 9
Sue McFadden	Female	Caucasian	Canada	Ward 10

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