ATTITUDES TOWARDS ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT: THE INFLUENCES OF KNOWLEDGE, AND CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

Marlene Wells  
Department of Psychology  
Queen's University  
Kingston, Ontario  
Canada, K7L 3N6

and

J.W. Berry  
Department of Psychology  
Queen's University  
Kingston, Ontario  
Canada, K7L 3N6

Abstract/Resume

The influences of knowledge, and cultural and economic security on attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government and changes in these attitudes were investigated. Cultural and economic security was found to be a predictor of attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal self-government, but not significantly predictive of attitude change towards Aboriginal self-government.

On a étudié les influences de la connaissance et de la sécurité culturelle et économique sur les attitudes envers l'autonomie des autochtones et les changements dans ces attitudes. On a trouvé que la sécurité culturelle et économique était un déterminant des attitudes envers l'autonomie autochtone et envers les autochtones mais elle n'était pas l'élément considérablement indicateur du changement d'attitude envers l'autonomie autochtone.
The Consensus Report on the Constitution (Canada, Federal Government, 1992) was an agreement on constitutional reform among the federal, provincial and territorial governments and representatives of Aboriginal peoples. This agreement was the product both of extensive negotiations between these groups and of comprehensive consultations with Canadian citizens which began with the Constitutional Proposals set out by the Prime Minister in September, 1991. One of the amendments to the Constitution, and the focus of this paper, is the recognition that Aboriginal peoples have an inherent right to self-government.

The present study is based upon the Constitutional Proposals of September 1991 and not the Consensus Report on the Constitution of August 1992. As such, the reader is certainly aware that since the time this study took place new developments have occurred with respect to Aboriginal self-government and constitutional reform. The Consensus Report on the Constitution is more specific, is descriptive, and incorporates some new material. For example, in the Consensus Report on the Constitution the issue of financing Aboriginal self-government is included as part of the amendment to the Constitution (Canada, Federal Government, 1992:29), although the subject was not mentioned in the initial Constitutional Proposals. Also, in the Constitutional Proposals the Federal Government suggested an amendment to the Constitution "to entrench a general justiciable right to Aboriginal self-government" (Canada, Federal Government, 1991). However, the Consensus Report on the Constitution suggests amending the Constitution to recognize Aboriginal peoples inherent right to self-government (Canada, Federal Government, 1992:24).

Some Canadians support the idea of Aboriginal self-government, but many oppose it (Angus Reid Group, 1990:36). Considering the generally disadvantaged situation of Aboriginal people, it would seem that Canada has nothing to lose and much to gain from the implementation of Aboriginal self-government. So, why do some Canadians oppose Aboriginal self-government? The purpose of the present study is to investigate this question and to determine some factors which might influence one's attitude toward Aboriginal self-government.

One reason why so many Canadians may oppose Aboriginal self-government may be due to the fact that they have misconceptions about what it involves. For example, most media coverage of Aboriginal self-government refers to it as only "Aboriginal self-government" or "Native self-government" and never specifically describes its actual meaning or contents. Second, without making an effort to understand the details of Aboriginal self-government many Canadians may adopt a negative attitude simply because it is Aboriginal peoples who are being dealt with. Canada has a history of being prejudiced towards (i.e., holding negative attitudes towards) Aboriginal peoples (Berry, Kalin and Taylor, 1977:106; Berry and Kalin, 1993).
Feelings of cultural and economic insecurity may be a third reason why some Canadians oppose Aboriginal self-government. If an individual feels secure with his or her cultural identity and economic status then he or she will be more willing to accept people of different ethnic backgrounds (Berry, Kalin and Taylor, 1977). Berry et al. (1977) termed this notion the "Multicultural Assumption." Two scales were developed, a cultural security scale and an economic security scale, to investigate the relationship between one's sense of security and one's acceptance of people of other ethnic groups (Berry et al., 1977). The results of their study support the idea that the more one feels that immigration and multiculturalism threatens one's ethnic identity and one's economic status, the less tolerant one will be. The Multicultural Assumption has also been supported by more recent studies (Bourcier, 1988; Cameron, 1989).

As previously mentioned, the knowledge one has may play a role in one's attitude towards Aboriginal self-government. By knowledge, we mean the overall amount and accuracy of information a person has with respect to a particular topic. Research by Jacobson (1983) has indicated that negative attitudes towards the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) of the American Constitution were based on misconceptions of that amendment. Jacobson (1983) found that when people were given information about the content of the ERA, but are not told what it is, they hold more positive attitudes towards it than those who responded to the term "ERA!" only, with no content description. In a second study Jacobson (1983) found that individuals held fewer misconceptions about, as well as more favourable attitudes towards, the ERA when they were given the actual content than when they were given the term "ERA!" only, with no text. Thus, it can be concluded that people with more knowledge about an attitude object may hold more favourable attitudes towards that object.

Another study which also includes knowledge and attitude variables was carried out by Wilson and Kraft (1989). Their study focused on how attitude change is associated with knowledge. They tapped into the cognitive component of attitudes by asking people to analyze their reasons for holding a particular attitude. Their results indicated that attitude change occurred only for those attitudes that were originally based on relatively little knowledge. However, the attitude change did not result in uniformly more positive or negative attitudes.

The present study investigates whether providing factual information about Aboriginal self-government will produce more favourable attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government. It also examines the relationship between cultural and economic security and both attitudes and attitude change. In addition to Aboriginal self-government attitudes, the study employs an Attitude Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale originally developed by Angus Reid (1990) in order to compare the results of the present study with the results of their study.

The present study also examines how cultural and economic security
and knowledge relate to attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government. The participants are randomly assigned to one of two groups. Those in the experimental (knowledge) group are given a passage to read providing them with factual information about Aboriginal self-government. The second group is a control group in which an irrelevant passage will be given to the participants to read.

It is predicted that after reading the passage, participants in the knowledge group would have more positive attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government than those in the control group. In addition, it was expected that those participants who feel culturally and economically secure would have a more positive attitude towards Aboriginal self-government, while those who feel insecure would have a more negative attitude. Also, of the participants who were in the knowledge group it was hypothesized that those who feel culturally and economically secure would exhibit a more positive attitude change after reading the factual passage than those participants who feel less secure. In addition, it was predicted that in both groups attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal issues would be positively correlated with cultural and economic security, and would be positively correlated with attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government.

Method

Participants were 133 students enrolled in a first year Psychology course at Queen's University. The mean age of the sample was 19.2 years. The participants were assigned to one of two groups, the experimental or knowledge group and the control group.

Two different questionnaires were used in this study, one for the experimental condition and one for the control condition. Various scales, and the order in which they appeared in the questionnaire, were as follows:

Demographic Information: All participants were asked to indicate their gender, age, ethnic origin, where they were born, and if they were not born in Canada at what age they came to live in Canada. These questions were asked in order to obtain a sample of non-Native Canadian participants only.

Cultural and Economic Security Scale: Participants were asked to indicate their concern about cultural and economic security. This eight-item scale was based on the Cultural and Economic Security scales of Berry and Kalin (1989). This scale appeared in each questionnaire.

Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Self-Government Scale: Two equivalent scales were developed to measure attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government. As this attitude was pre-tested and post-tested with parallel versions of the scale it was essential to create two scales that were equivalent. For the development of these scales, please see the pilot study below.
Knowledge Passage: This passage provided factual information about Aboriginal self-government based upon the Constitutional Proposal of September, 1991. This passage was developed with the intent of increasing an individual's knowledge about Aboriginal self-government. This passage was presented to the knowledge group only.

Irrelevant Passage: This passage provided factual information about Queen's University's Sesquicentennial celebration, an irrelevant topic. It was presented to the control group only.

Knowledge About Aboriginal Self-Government Scale: This scale measured the amount of knowledge participants had about Aboriginal self-government. It was developed specifically for the present study in order to assess the effect of the knowledge passage and appeared in each questionnaire.

Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale: This scale measured attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal issues. Items for this scale were taken from items used in the Angus Reid Survey (1990). This attitude scale appeared in each questionnaire.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was performed in order to create two equivalent scales for measuring attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government. The participants were 27 students enrolled in a first year psychology course at Queens University. All the participants were non-Native Canadian citizens.

Thirty statements measuring attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government were generated. The mean response for each item was calculated across participants and then each item was numerically ranked according to its mean. To be sure two equivalent scales were being created, items that were phrased in the same direction (positive/negative) and with the same or similar means were paired, and then distributed so that one item was placed in one attitude scale and the other item was placed in the other attitude scale. When doing this, items with similar content were not placed in the same scale. Ten items were omitted from the final two scales because their means could not be matched with another item. Thus, two scales were created, Form A (Cronbach alpha = .87) and Form B (with a Cronbach alpha = .86) with 10 items in each scale (five positive and five negative), and with equal means. Split-half reliability was performed on these two scales to further test for equivalence (r=.90). The two scales are shown in the Appendix.

The pilot study was also performed in order to test for the reliability of the Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale (Cronbach alpha=.69).
Known Group Validation Study

The Attitude Towards Aboriginal Self-Government Scale and the Attitude Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale were tested for validity. Twenty-four non-Native Canadian students at Queen's University participated in the study. All participants belonged to a group known to support Aboriginal peoples. Those participants who belonged to a known group responded significantly more positively to the scales than did participants in the main study indicating that the scales are valid.

Procedure

Participants were assigned to either the experimental group or the control group. At the beginning of class a package consisting of all the scales was distributed to the participants. The participants were instructed to complete the scales in the order that they appeared and to not look backward or forward in their booklet. Once the pre-test was completed the participants were instructed both verbally and in writing to set aside their questionnaire and to not look at them further. Ten minutes before the end of class the participants were instructed to complete the rest of the questionnaire, without looking back to the first part.

Pre-test

All participants were asked to provide demographic information. In addition, all participants responded to the Cultural and Economic Security Scale, and to one of the scales measuring attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government.

The two scales measuring attitude towards Aboriginal self-government were counterbalanced so that half of the participants received Form A during the pre-test and then Form B during the post-test. For the other half of the participants Form B was given during the pre-test and Form A was given during the post-test.

Manipulation

In the knowledge group, participants were asked to read an informative passage about Aboriginal self-government. In the control group, the participants were asked to read an irrelevant passage about the Queen's University's Sesquicentennial celebration.
Post-test

The participants in both conditions were asked to respond to the Knowledge about Aboriginal Self-Government Scale and to the Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Self-Government Scale. In addition, the participants responded to the Social Desirability Scale and to the Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale.

Results

There were 66 participants in the experimental group and 67 participants in the control group. There were no significant gender differences in attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government; thus male and female participants were combined for the data analysis. All scales were found to be reliable. Specifically, for the Attitude Towards Aboriginal Self-Government Scales the Cronbach alpha coefficients for Form A and Form B during pre-test were .77 and .88 respectively, and during post-test were .86 and .88 respectively.

For the pre-test, Form A ($M=3.45$) was not significantly different from Form B ($M=3.50$), $t(131) = -0.49$, $p = .62$. Also, for the post-test, Form A ($M=3.37$) was not significantly different from Form B ($M=3.53$), $t(131) = -1.45$, $p = .15$.

The knowledge of the experimental group ($M=3.89$) was significantly higher than the knowledge of the control group ($M=3.25$), $t(131) = p <<.001$.

A (2X2) mixed groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The ANOVA revealed a group main effect and an interaction, which is displayed in Figure 1.

Pre-test attitude towards Aboriginal self-government for the experimental group was not significantly different from pre-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government for the control group, $t(131) = 1.03$, $p = .30$. The two groups can thus be considered to have similar attitudes before the study began. For post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government there was a difference between the experimental group and the control group, $t(131) = 2.98$, $p <<.01$. However, there was no significant difference between pre-test and post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government for the experimental condition, $t(65) = -1.63$, $p = .11$; but there was a significant decrease in attitude towards Aboriginal self-government from pre-test to post-test for the control condition, $t(66) = 3.14$, $p <<.01$.

In order to assess cultural and economic security as a predictor of attitude change towards Aboriginal self-government, a hierarchical multiple regression was performed on the experimental group. Pre-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government were entered in the first step, and cultural and economic security were entered in the second step. Attitudes toward Aboriginal self-government were not predicted by cultural
Correlation matrices of all the variables for the experimental group and the control group are displayed in Table 1. For both the control group and the experimental group pre-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government were significantly correlated with post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government. The correlation for the control group was numerically higher than the correlation for the experimental group. Also, for both groups attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples were significantly correlated with attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government, pre-test and post-test. For the experimental group, the correlation between post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government and attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples was numerically higher than the correlation between pre-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government and attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples. However, for the control group the correlations for these same variables were similar. Knowledge about Aboriginal self-government was significantly correlated with post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government of the experimental group. However, knowledge about Aboriginal self-government was not significantly correlated with any of the other variables. For both groups, cultural and economic security was significantly correlated with pre-test and post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government, and with attitude towards Aboriginal peoples. However, cultural and economic security was not significantly correlated with knowledge about Aboriginal
The percentage of participants who agreed with each of the statements on the Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale is shown in Table 2. For comparison, the results of Angus Reid's study (1990) are also displayed for both the national and the Ontario samples. As indicated in Table 2, for two of the positive attitude statements (items one and five) the three samples were relatively similar in their responses. For the statement which refers to Aboriginal peoples as peaceful by nature (item two), approximately 60 percent of the present sample and the Ontario sample agreed while about 50 percent of the national sample agreed. For the negative attitude statements there were notable differences between the present study sample and Angus Reid's samples. In the present study less than 10 percent agreed that most of the problems of Aboriginal peoples are

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### Table 1: Correlation Matrices of All Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Test</td>
<td>Pre-Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Test</td>
<td>.76**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Test</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.64**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05  
** p < .01

**Legend**

Pre-Test = Pre-Test Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Self-Government  
Post-Test = Post-Test Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Self-Government  
Aboriginal = Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Peoples  
Knowledge = Knowledge About Aboriginal Self-Government  
Security = Cultural and Economic Security

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self-government.
Table 2: The Percentage of Participants who Agree with Each of the Items on the Attitude Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale for the Present Study and the Angus Reid Study (1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Content</th>
<th>Present Study</th>
<th>Angus Reid Study (1990)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ontario Sample</td>
<td>National Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hard-working</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>peaceful</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>land claims, demand more</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brought</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong culture</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too dependent on government</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

brought on themselves, while about 29 percent of the Ontario sample agreed and 33 percent of the national sample agreed. In addition, 32 percent of the present study sample agreed that Aboriginal peoples are too dependent upon the government, while 64 percent of the Ontario sample agreed and about 70 percent of the national sample agreed.

Discussion

To begin the discussion each of the hypotheses will be reviewed. Next, the reliability and validity of the scales will be considered, followed by a summary of problems that occurred. Finally, generalization of the results will be discussed, along with their implication for the attainment of Aboriginal self-government.

The results support the hypothesis that providing factual information about Aboriginal self-government would result in an attitude change towards favouring Aboriginal self-government. Support for this hypothesis comes directly from the difference in attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government between the experimental group and the control group during the post-test (see Figure 1). People who were provided with factual
information about Aboriginal self-government were more knowledgeable about and more favourable towards Aboriginal self-government than people who did not receive any information.

These findings support the results of Jacobson (1983). Many people have heard of Aboriginal self-government but are unfamiliar with the meaning. As a result, many people may hold inaccurate beliefs about it. The results of this study suggest that if people knew more about the meaning of Aboriginal self-government they would hold more positive attitudes towards it.

The attitude change that occurred as a result of providing information corresponds with the findings of Wilson and Kraft’s study (1989). As in their study the present study tapped into the cognitive component of attitude. However, instead of asking participants to analyze reasons for holding an attitude (as did Wilson and Kraft, 1989), the present study provided the participants with information. Prior to informing the participants in the experimental group about Aboriginal self-government they did have some knowledge about it. This is evident by the results of the knowledge test for the control group. However, their level of knowledge was significantly higher than the control group after they were provided with factual information. Thus, attitude change occurred for people who were initially not fully informed.

The results also support the hypotheses that attitudes towards both Aboriginal self-government and towards Aboriginal peoples would correlate with cultural and economic security. This is in accordance with the “Multicultural Assumption” that people whose cultural identity and economic status are not threatened by the presence and aspirations of various ethnic groups in a multicultural society are more tolerant of individuals with different ethnic backgrounds (Berry et al., 1977).

In the present study it was predicted that the change in attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government would be influenced by cultural and economic security. However, the results of the present study do not support this hypothesis. The regression analysis showed that security played some, but not a significant, role in predicting changes in attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government after reading the passage. While at the level of simple correlation in the experimental group (as presented in Table 1), cultural and economic security accounts for 18.5 percent ($r=0.43$) of the variance in post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government, the initial attitudes score (pre-test) accounts for 57.8 percent. Thus, feelings of security cannot be held to account for Aboriginal self-government attitude change over and above the contribution of the initial Aboriginal self-government attitude. A similar result was obtained in the control group, but with even a larger difference in prediction between the two variables (10.2 percent and 70.6 percent respectively).

Initial attitudes are more potent than security in accounting for the distribution of attitudes after knowledge about Aboriginal self-government
was provided. As indicated in Table 1, pre-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government shares a significant amount of variance with cultural and economic security. Therefore, it may be that when the pre-test attitude was entered into the regression equation first, most of the contributing variance from cultural and economic security was taken up.

The post-test difference in attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government between the experimental group and the control group is significant (see Figure 1). It is specifically this post-test difference between the experimental group and the control group which supports the hypothesis that providing information about Aboriginal self-government would result in a positive attitude change. However, further information is revealed when looking at each group separately.

People in the control group responded more negatively towards Aboriginal self-government during the post-test than during the pre-test. This could have occurred for a number of reasons. For example, the participants, having been sensitized to the type of questions being asked, may have been annoyed at having to answer what might seem to be the same questions again. It also may be some factor unrelated to the attitude object, such as wanting to leave the class or the room's temperature being too high. The key point is that the attitude change did not occur as a result of any factors that were controlled for in the study.

This same argument can be used to interpret the results of the experimental group. Attitude change occurred in a positive direction for this group; however, it was not a significant change. The participants of both groups were in the same room experiencing the same conditions. Therefore, the conditions that affected the control group, resulting in a negative change, must have affected the experimental group as well.

The post-test and pre-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government were more strongly correlated for the control group than for the experimental group. Since the experimental group received the manipulation it makes sense that there would be more flux in this group, and that pre- and post-attitudes would not be as strongly correlated as in the control group.

It seems that providing information about Aboriginal self-government influences Aboriginal self-government attitudes towards becoming more congruent with attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples. This is evident from the correlation in the experimental group between post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government and attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples, which is higher than this same correlation prior to manipulation. In contrast, the correlations for the control group were similar to each other on first and second measurement.

The significant correlation between knowledge about Aboriginal self-government and post-test attitude towards Aboriginal self-government in the experimental group provides further evidence that the manipulation did work and that the information provided influenced people's attitudes about
Aboriginal self-government.

The examination of the validity of the Attitude Towards Aboriginal Self-Government Scale and the Attitude Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale supports their use as measures of these two constructs. Moreover, all the scales used in the study were reliable, with adequate Cronbach alpha coefficients. Pre-test and post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government were significantly correlated, which represents a measure of split-half reliability.

Since the questions used for the Attitude Towards Aboriginal Peoples Scale were taken from the national study carried out by Angus Reid (1990) it is possible to compare the present results of this scale to those of Angus Reid. It seems that the sample in the present study have much more favourable attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples than the national sample and the Ontario sample of Angus Reid's study (1990). This may be because university students are more educated, and perhaps as a result are more tolerant and open minded. There may also be a "ceiling effect" for these attitudes because of the general high level of acceptance. Assuming that this is also true for attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government, the results of the present study cannot be generalized to a larger sample of Canadians. Future research should be concerned with obtaining a more representative sample of the Canadian population. One advantage of obtaining a more representative sample, in addition to increased generalization, would be to see whether greater attitude change is possible in a population where initial attitudes are less positive. In this way the external validity of these experimental findings could be examined.

Although there was no absolute change in attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government for the experimental group, there was relative change when compared with the control group. Future research may want to address this issue and determine the factors that could explain the results in the control group and consider whether these same factors were playing a role in the experimental group. In addition, it would be interesting for future research to carry out the study with a national sample, particularly now that the issue of Aboriginal self-government has to be pursued afresh.

If the findings of the experimental study are replicated in such a national study, there are a number of implications for the successful pursuit of Aboriginal self-government. First, it is clear that individuals who have more knowledge (more information and valid information) about Aboriginal self-government, tend to be more favourable toward the idea. This is evidenced by the difference in the post-test attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government between the experimental and control groups. It is also evident in the significant correlation between knowledge and attitudes; however, this significant correlation was present only in the experimental group. Thus, there seems to be a threshold of knowledge, a certain minimal level that needs to be obtained, before knowledge will have any
effect on attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government.

Second, it is possible that some people might be "turned off" by repeated messages. This is evidenced by the somewhat less positive post-test attitudes in the control group than their pre-test attitudes.

Third, although it was not intended to change attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples it is clear that this did not happen as a "spill over" from providing information about Aboriginal self-government. This is evidenced by the non-significant correlations between knowledge and attitudes towards Aboriginal people in both groups, and by the virtually identical means on attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples of the two groups (which was assessed in the post-text).

Taken together, the implications for changing attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government are clear: provide factual information about the attitude object; do it all at once; and make it specific to the attitude topic about which change is desired.

References

Angus Reid Group
1990 Canadians' Views and Attitudes Regarding Issues Associated With Aboriginal Peoples. Toronto: Angus Reid Group Inc.

Berry, J.W. and R. Kalin


Berry, J.W., R. Kalin and D. Taylor

Bourcier, D.

Cameron, J.E.

Canada, Federal Government
Appendix

Attitude Towards Aboriginal Self-Government Scales

The following are two equivalent Likert Summated Ratings scales measuring attitudes towards Aboriginal self-government. Participants responded to the attitude statements from one to five, where one equaled strongly disagree and five equaled strongly agree. For statistical purposes, statements which reflected a negative attitude were scored in the opposite direction so that five (strongly agree) became one (strongly disagree) and one became five (likewise for two and four). The scores for all the items were summed in order to obtain a total score for the scale. Thus, a high score indicated a positive attitude towards Aboriginal self-government while a low score indicated a negative attitude.
(Form A)

1. Native peoples’ rights must be protected by including in the Constitution a recognition of their right to Self-Government. (+)

   
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Disagree  Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

2. Aboriginal self-government would help increase Natives’ self-esteem and self-respect. (+)

   
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Disagree  Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

3. Native peoples are not responsible enough to exercise self-government. (-)

   
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Disagree  Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

4. Aboriginal peoples know their needs better than does the Federal Government and so should be governing themselves. (+)

   
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Disagree  Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree

5. Aboriginal self-government would give Native peoples the opportunity to begin correcting the historical injustices they have experienced. (+)

   
   1  2  3  4  5
   Strongly Disagree  Disagree Uncertain Agree Strongly Agree
6. If Aboriginal self-government is implemented, financial support to Native peoples by the Canadian Federal Government should be immediately cut off. (-)

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |

7. Aboriginal self-government is just a separatist movement in disguise. (-)

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |

8. Native peoples have an intrinsic right to self-government. (+)

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |

9. Aboriginal self-government would lead to an increase in prejudice and racism towards Native peoples. (-)

   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
   | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |

10. Native peoples would become more of a burden on society if Aboriginal self-government were implemented. (-)

    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
---|---|---|---|---|---|
    | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
(Form B)

1. Aboriginal self-government would eventually improve the image Canadians have of Native peoples. (+)

   1 Strongly Disagree  2 Disagree  3 Uncertain  4 Agree  5 Strongly Agree

2. Constitutional recognition of Aboriginal self-government would assist in building a stronger Canada. (+)

   1 Strongly Disagree  2 Disagree  3 Uncertain  4 Agree  5 Strongly Agree

3. Aboriginal peoples must be given the means to develop their communities so they can contribute as much as possible to the future of Canada. (+)

   1 Strongly Disagree  2 Disagree  3 Uncertain  4 Agree  5 Strongly Agree

4. Native peoples are able to participate in Canada’s social, economic and political life now, without the right to self-government. (-)

   1 Strongly Disagree  2 Disagree  3 Uncertain  4 Agree  5 Strongly Agree

5. Aboriginal self-government would give Native peoples the opportunity to spend money frivolously. (-)

   1 Strongly Disagree  2 Disagree  3 Uncertain  4 Agree  5 Strongly Agree

6. Aboriginal self-government is not fair to non-Native Canadians. (-)

   1 Strongly Disagree  2 Disagree  3 Uncertain  4 Agree  5 Strongly Agree
Attitudes Towards Aboriginal Self-Government

7. Aboriginal peoples, as the land’s original inhabitants, have the right to self-government. (+)

8. Aboriginal peoples have no more right to self-government than any other ethnic group in Canada. (-)

9. Native peoples are not capable of governing themselves. (-)

10. Recognizing Natives’ inherent right to self-government is a necessary step to correcting an historical injustice. (+)

Notes

(+ ) denotes a positive attitude statement
(- ) denotes a negative attitude statement