

DETERMINANTS OF ETHNIC PRIDE AMONG NEW ZEALAND'S POLISH IMMIGRANTS

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Abstract:

The survey research and respondent interviews described in this article were conducted in late 2019/early 2020 to assess the determinants of Polish identity among first and second-generation New Zealand born individuals of Polish descendant -- the generation first born in New Zealand whose parent(s) was/were born in Poland -or- the second generation born in New Zealand whose grandparent(s) was/were born in Poland and whose parent(s) was/were born in New Zealand. Many of these individuals were related to the Polish child refugees that came to New Zealand in 1944. The article begins with a brief literature review on the subject. This is followed by a description of the research methods used, findings that pertain to a target audience, and a strategy for promoting Polish identity with this target audience. This strategy should prove useful to Polish cultural organizations in New Zealand (and perhaps elsewhere) in their efforts to develop programming that successfully promotes Polish identity with their audiences.

Key words: *Promoting Polish Culture, Polish Cultural Organizations, Survey Research, New Zealand.*

INTRODUCTION

The study reported here was conducted in late 2019/early 2020 to assess the determinants of Polish identity among first and second-generation New Zealand born individuals of Polish descendants -- the generation first born in New Zealand whose parent(s) was/were born in Poland -or- the second generation born in New Zealand whose grandparent(s) was/were born in Poland and whose parent(s) was/were born in New Zealand. Of particular interest are the responses from individuals related to the Polish child refugees that came to New Zealand in 1944. The article begins with a brief literature review on the subject followed by a description of the research methods used, results that contrast findings of all respondents with a target audience, and a strategy for promoting Polish identity with this target audience. This strategy should prove useful to Polish cultural organizations in New Zealand (and perhaps elsewhere) in their efforts to develop programming that successfully promotes Polish identity with their audiences.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Polish Immigration to New Zealand

Poland is a country with a rich culture and long history of migration. The Polish diaspora, referred to as "Polonia", is found throughout the world in great numbers. According to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (2012), up to 20 million Poles and their descendants live abroad. A turbulent history in Europe, particularly in Poland, resulted in many powerful political and economic factors causing extensive immigration. The first Poles (estimated between 500 and 1,000) arrived in New Zealand in the 1840s to escape unstable political conditions in a divided Poland. In the early 1870s more Poles arrived under a scheme funded by the government of Julius Vogel (New Zealand's Prime Minister from 1873 to 1875). They formed small Polish enclaves on both the North and South Islands [Sawicka, 2012]. Yet, the most important event in Polish-New Zealand history is probably the arrival of the Polish refugee children in 1944. Their unusual and moving story and later successful integration into New Zealand society has had a lasting effect on the way Poles are perceived in New Zealand. In 1944, 732 Polish children plus 102 caregivers, survivors of the forced resettlement of Poles to Siberia by the Russians, were temporarily resettled at a refugee camp in New Zealand, which was located in Pahiatua on the North Island. In the camp, the children and their caregivers maintained their language and culture. It was originally planned for them to return to Poland after World War II ended, but they were eventually allowed to stay in New Zealand because of the onset of the Cold War.

In 1945 when the war ended as a result of the Yalta agreement, Poland was put under the control of Soviet Russia. Many of the children no longer had parents or close family alive. Around this time, there was an attempt made by the Polish Communist Government to bring the children back to Poland. The government of New Zealand ruled that the refugees could stay permanently if they wanted. Very few decided to

return to Poland. Out of the original, 732 children that had come to New Zealand, 642 remained [Skwarko, 1974].

It was the perspective of the New Zealand government that the children who decided to stay in New Zealand would benefit most by adopting and identifying with the dominant New Zealand culture. However, these children were refugees who always thought that they would go back to their families in Poland. Consequently, their assimilation into the New Zealand culture took longer than expected. In 1949, the New Zealand government closed the camp and the children and their caregivers prepared themselves to fully embrace New Zealand society.

Over 700 additional displaced persons arrived between 1949 and 1951. Many had been in labor or concentration camps during the Second World War. Many of them were related to the children or caregivers from the Pahiatua camp.

About that same time, Polish immigrants in New Zealand formed the Polish Association in New Zealand. Many of the children and their caregivers joined. The association was instrumental in helping members maintain and celebrate their cultural ties and cultivate a sense of Polish post-war community. Over the next few decades other Polish organizations were established in both the North and South islands.

Today, the original refugee children are elderly. Their children are now having children. On one end of the spectrum are those that assimilated into the New Zealand culture quickly, maintained little contact with Polish people and culture over the years, and have little Polish identity left. On the other end of the spectrum are those that have remained strongly attached to their Polish identity. They have engaged in the activities of various local Polish organizations (e.g., ladies circles, choirs, dance groups, and various social and sports clubs), attended Polish Catholic Mass, and are members of the Polish Association in New Zealand and other Polish organizations.

Those most closely aligned with their Polish roots, have made an effort to teach their children the Polish language and about Polish culture. In 2006, a survey of the children of the original refugee children was conducted. Findings showed that about half of them grew up speaking Polish in the home, celebrating holidays in traditional Polish ways, often consuming typical Polish foods. Weekends were most likely spent at local Polish cultural centers and they regularly attended the Polish Saturday School where they learned about Polish history and culture. These children were very aware of their parents' tragic past and felt a sense of duty to honor their parents [Manterys, 2006].

Today, many of these first generation New Zealand born Poles have children of their own; these are the second generation born in New Zealand. Anecdotal reports suggest that some of them do not understand the Polish language well, do not actively practice Polish customs, nor do they participate much in the activities of Polish ethnic organizations. Some do. However, it is thought that many are interested in learning more about Poland especially about the place their refugee grandparents came from. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that the first and second generations born in New

Zealand are much more apt than the original Pahiataua camp children to identify as New Zealanders rather than Poles. As a result, Polish organizations that flourished 50 years ago in New Zealand are now dealing with low membership and waning interest on the part of younger generations.

1.2. Determinants of Ethnic Identities

Moving to a foreign country generally necessitates some level of acculturation that inevitably alters a person's original cultural identity [Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010]. Glinka and Brzozowska (2015) describe changes in cultural identity as "the process through which immigrants define their place and role in a host society, make sense of themselves and their actions" (p. 53-54). Ellis and Chen (2013) suggest that an immigrant's identity negotiation is influenced by their level of interaction with the new community, their age at the time of immigration, feelings of fitting in, and the difference between their native cultural values and the values of the new community [Ellis & Chen, 2013].

Parents of the first generation New Zealand born children made sure they appreciated their Polish heritage, history and culture. For many, preserving their "Polishness" allowed them to maintain their sense of self. They did assimilate into New Zealand society and become active contributing members of their communities, but many did this while maintaining a strong sense of Polish pride. This is called "acculturation" - the need for exiles and refugees to maintain their own cultural identity while adapting to the new cultural environment they have adopted [Manterys, 2004].

Rokicki's (2000) found that among Polish immigrants, the "family home is a crucial factor that shapes an individual's cultural identity. Home is a place where traditions, ceremonies, symbols, and values are assimilated through intentional or accidental learning and imitation of behaviors" [Lewandowska, 2008: 214]. Women are particularly important in this regard. "Immigrant women in general are considered the guardians of ethnicity and religion within families and the main transmitters of ethnic culture to young generations" [Jaroszynska-Kirchmann, 2011: 104].

The process of maintaining one's cultural identity is affected by a) the level of importance an immigrant assigns to preserving their native identity and b) the extent they adopt aspects of the host culture [Gone, Miller and Rappaport, 1999]. It is a blend of these two competing processes that will help create an immigrant's cultural self-image going forward. The issue today may not be preservation of one's cultural identity in a pure sense. The objective may be to find ways to help cultivate what Herbert Gans (1979) referred to as "symbolic ethnicity" reflected by "practices involving nostalgic and simplified representation of the ethnic past; selective celebration of certain rituals of passage or ethnic holidays; consumption of ethnic foods, support for ethnic politicians, and interest in support of the old country [Jaroszynska-Kirchmann, 2015: 198].

The level of importance a Polish immigrant assigns to preserving their native cultural

identity can be influenced by Polish cultural organizations in operation today. Helping these organizations to develop programming that successfully promotes Polish identity with their audiences is important. Understanding who their primary target audience is, what programming will best match their audience's interests, what persuasive messages will best resonate with this audience, who might be considered the most credible sources of information with this audience, and how best to deliver information to them are key components necessary for developing an effective promotional strategy [Tyson, 2018].

2. RESEARCH METHODS AND LIMITATIONS

2.1. Survey

Participants were first and second-generation New Zealand born individuals of Polish descent. The survey was administered online. An email notice about the survey was sent to members/associates of the Polish Association in New Zealand, The Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Polish Heritage of Otago and Southland Charitable Trust, Polish Heritage Trust Museum, Polish Association in Christchurch, Polish Community Trust - Bay of Plenty, and Auckland Polish Association-Polonia Auckland. A notice about the survey was also posted on their websites and Facebook pages. In all instances, recipients were instructed to share the link to the survey with other first and second New Zealand born individuals of Polish descent living in New Zealand. Recipients were instructed to click on a web address that took them immediately to the survey questionnaire. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete. The survey was posted for two months in late 2019. Completed surveys numbered 159.

2.2. Interviews

Twenty interviews were conducted either in-person or over the telephone during January/February, 2020. The objective of these interviews was to provide added nuance to survey findings for descendants of the Polish child refugees that came to New Zealand in 1944. Participants consisted of a convenience sample of people identified by the Polish Association of New Zealand and the Polish Embassy in New Zealand. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. Discussions were written and audio recorded and analyzed for key themes.

2.3. Limitations

The fact that 69.3% of survey respondents are female indicates there may be bias in the sample. The specific gender breakdown of the Polish cultural organizations used to distribute the survey is unknown but it is thought to reflect a similar trend. Nevertheless, as subsequent analyses show, the target audience (those who identify with their Polish heritage at least "a lot" and put at least "a lot" of emphasis on the importance of their Polish heritage with children they have/raise), consists of 61.4% women. Not surprisingly, in terms of gender it seems that the most effective audience

to target is somewhat similar to those that responded to the survey and perhaps similar to those most apt to join Polish cultural organizations.

3. THE TARGET AUDIENCE

An effective promotional strategy nearly always begins by defining the target audience. Once the primary target audiences are identified, programming that best matches their interests, persuasive messages that best resonate with their thinking, sources of communication they consider most credible, and methods for delivering information they most prefer can be identified. The overall promotional strategy is much more apt to achieve its objectives when it is uniquely tailored to a specific audience segment. It follows that the more narrowly defined the audience segment, the more targeted a promotional strategy can be and the more likely that strategy is to achieve its objectives. Yet fewer people are reached as the focus narrows. The challenge is to seek a large enough group so there will be a significant impact, yet with a narrow enough focus so that you will realize results [Tyson, 2018].

The target audience described in the following analyses of survey data was defined a priori as a) those who identify with their Polish heritage at least “a lot” and b) put at least “a lot” of emphasis on the importance of their Polish heritage with children they have/raise. It was thought that these individuals would be more apt to respond most positively to promotional messages and importantly, that they would help diffuse the information they received to others that did not fall within the target audience; i.e., they would serve as opinion leaders mobilizing those around them. The segment that met these criteria included 44 individuals (28% of all survey respondents); 61.4% are women and their average age is 45.67. More than two thirds (70.46%) are first generation New Zealand born people of Polish descent (their parent(s) was/were born in Poland.

4. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE TARGET AUDIENCE AND ALL SURVEY RESPONDENTS

All statistics listed below are displayed in the order Target Audience versus All Respondents (respectively). As can be seen, there are differences across a vast number of factors between these two groups.

- The target audience consists of slightly less women (61.4% vs 69.3%).
- A greater number of target audience respondents had all four grandparents born in Poland (61.1% vs 46.8%).
- Fewer target audience respondents had mothers born in Poland (40.9% vs 65.0%).
- A greater number of target audience respondents had fathers born in Poland (61.4% vs 52.2%).
- More target audience respondents are first generation New Zealand born people of Polish descent (70.6% vs 67.3%); i.e., less are second generation New Zealand born.

- Fewer target audience respondents are related to the original child refugees (68.2% vs 73.3%).
- A greater number of target audience respondents have relatives in Poland (86.4% vs 75.0%) and a greater of target audience respondents feel they are at least moderately familiar with them (75.0% vs 51.4%).
- Target audience respondents have a slightly higher socio-economic status based on occupation and education.
- A greater number of target audience respondents come from Catholic families (grandparents and parents) (average 81.2% vs 76.4%) and are Catholic themselves (64.1% vs 56.7%).
- A greater number of target audience respondents come from conservative families (grandparents and parents) (average 41.6% vs 35.6%) and are conservative themselves (15.9% vs 12.2%).
- Target audience respondents come from families (grandparents and parents) that read/wrote/spoke slightly more Polish at home (average mean value 2.35 vs 2.53, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all) and read/write/speak slightly more Polish themselves at home (mean value 3.52 vs 3.86, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
- Slightly more mothers of target audience respondents were raised in Polish neighborhoods (47.7% vs 43.3%). Slightly fewer fathers of target audience respondents were raised in Polish neighborhoods (50.0% vs 54.9%).
- Target audience respondents come from families (grandparents and parents) that interacted more with people of Polish descent (average mean value 1.47 vs 1.75, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all) and interact more with people of Polish descent themselves (mean value 2.70 vs 3.44 on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
- Target audience respondents come families (grandparents and parents) that consider themselves Polish almost with equally frequency as all respondents (average 52.9% vs 53.5%); but are slightly more apt to consider themselves Polish (6.8% vs 2.5%).
- A greater number of target audience respondents consider themselves either Polish or Polish-New Zealander and less consider themselves New Zealanders (6.8%% vs 2.5%, 81.8% vs 68.4%, 9.1% vs 23.4%, respectively).
- Target audience respondents come from families (grandparents and parents) that embrace their Polish heritage slightly more (average mean value 1.31 vs 1.46, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all) and do so themselves much more (mean value 1.36 vs 2.44, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
- Target audience respondents come from families (grandparents and parents) that express their ethnicity by celebrating slightly more holiday traditions (average mean value 1.63 vs 1.83, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all) and do so themselves much more (mean value 2.43 vs 3.30, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
- Target audience respondents come from families (grandparents and parents) that

- express their ethnicity through slightly more consumption of Polish foods (average mean value 1.68 vs 1.88, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all) and do so themselves more often (mean value 2.41 vs 3.14, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
- Target audience respondents come from families (grandparents and parents) that express their ethnicity by attending slightly more commemorative events (average mean value 2.10 vs 2.24, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all) and do so themselves more often (mean value 3.11 vs 3.84, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
 - Target audience respondents come from families (grandparents and parents) that express their ethnicity through slightly more membership in Polish cultural organizations (average mean value 2.36 vs 2.48, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all) and do so themselves much more (mean value 3.49 vs 4.14, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
 - Target audience respondents know more about Pre-WWII Polish history, WWII Polish history, Post-WWII Polish history, and Contemporary Polish history (mean values 2.48 vs 2.96, 1.93 vs 2.29, 2.41 vs 2.83, 3.00 vs 3.55, respectively, on 1-5 scale a great deal to not at all).
 - As can be seen from the table below, target audience respondents are more interested in learning about Polish language, history and culture (mean values that are reported were assessed on 1-5 scale, a great deal to not at all).

Table 1. Interest in Program Topics

Interested in establishing...	Target audience	All respondents
...scholarly contact with people in New Zealand about Polish language, history, culture	2.72	3.11
...scholarly contact with people in Poland about Polish language, history, culture	2.95	3.37
...contact with organizations in New Zealand that offer workshops or publications about Polish language, history, culture	2.53	2.96
...contact with organizations in Poland that offer workshops or publications about Polish language, history, culture	2.98	3.43
...contact with business/industry organizations in Poland that might have similar interests	3.53	3.85
...contact with organizations in New Zealand that can assist you with genealogy research about you Polish ancestors	2.28	2.66
...contact with organizations in Poland that can assist you with genealogy research about you Polish ancestors	2.26	2.44

5. INTERVIEWS WITH IMMIGRANTS RELATED TO THE PAHIATUA CHILDREN

Twenty interviews were conducted with descendants of the Pahiatua camp children. A summary of the findings is presented below. Thirteen were with first generation individuals born in New Zealand and seven were with second generation individuals (their parent(s) were born in New Zealand). Both parents (mother and father) of eleven of the first generation respondents were children who came to the Pahiatua camp in 1944. Two had only one parent at the camp. For the second generation respondents, six had one complete set of grandparents (either maternal or paternal) who were at the camp. The seventh only had one paternal grandfather at the camp.

5.1. First Generation Respondents

First generation respondents were thoroughly immersed in Polish traditions and culture growing up. “We spoke, we ate, we breathed all things Polish” said one respondent. Polish language was spoken in all households. Christmas Eve and Easter were celebrated in typical Polish ways. All attended Mass in a Polish Catholic church. And the vast majority went to Polish House for various celebrations (e.g., Independence Day, Constitution Day, dance performances, or after Mass). Name days were regularly celebrated by approximately 10 of the 13 families when children were younger. Polish books and films were not used much because access was limited in New Zealand. Nearly all (11 of the 13) of the first generation respondents attended Polish language school where they made friends with other Polish children. Six of the 13 also participated in Polish school summer camps. Today, they speak English at home and only speak Polish occasionally with their parents. “I wish I spoke more Polish, but I was away for six years and forgot a lot of what I learned at home and in Polish school” said one respondent.

Of the 11, most of the girls and some boys were also members of dance groups when they were younger and performed at Polish language school and Polish House events. Two of the 13 were much less engaged in these types of activities. All thirteen respondents are familiar with Polish national events and remember engaging in May 3rd Constitution Day and November 11 Independence Day celebrations. All respondents have good knowledge of Polish food and how it is prepared.

Today, half of the first generation respondents have Kiwi partners and have thus had to modify their traditional Polish celebrations. However, all said that their partners are supportive of keeping Polish traditions alive. “My partner is 6th generation Kiwi but she is supportive of Polish traditions and even helps in Polish school” stated one respondent.

Nine of the first generation respondents have sent their children to Polish language school and have made serious effort to keep aspects of Polish traditions alive. They have exposed them to Polish traditions and culture, participated in Pahiatua children reunions, and have taken them on trips to Poland. One respondent said, “my daughter was named Sofia but when she turned 18 she made a decision to change

her name to Zofia.” Another added, “my son’s name is Casimir and after we went to Poland he only wanted to be called Kazimierz.”

Four first generation respondents are interested in Polish genealogy and Polish history and further investigating their family history. These individuals have been to Poland and came back with heightened interest in learning more about their family history. One responded said, “I have started a journey to discovery of my family history.”

When asked who in their family is most responsible for keeping the Polish traditions alive, half of the first generation respondents said it was the responsibility of both parents, the other half said it was their mothers.

All first generation respondents stated that they would like to keep the Polish traditions alive in the future. Those who have children seem to have a stronger attachment to their Polish heritage. Close proximity to Polish organizations, schools, dance groups, and churches seems to positively impact their desire to keep their Polish heritage alive. It is clear that traveling to Poland, learning about Polish history, and meeting family members in Poland all contribute to increased interest in Polish heritage.

There is a sense of time passing and changing because the Pahiatua camp generation is dying off and new generations, which do embrace some aspects of their Polish heritage, also orient strongly to their Kiwi heritage. There is little doubt that Polish foods and some anniversary celebrations related to Pahiatua children will be maintained by future generations. One respondent said, “I suspect that Polish Christmas Eve and Easter celebrations will persist into the future... the foods will also carry on... but many other activities/traditions have already started to wane in my life time.”

When asked what factors positively or negatively affect a person’s efforts to keep their Polish traditions alive, first generation respondents thought positive elements would include: a) close connections with family, b) close proximity of Polish community and organizations, c) good memories of childhood, d) being able to communicate with and visit family members in Poland, and e) having Kiwi partners and friends interested in Polish culture and traditions. They thought the following worked against maintaining Polish traditions: a) not being able to speak Polish, b) negative experiences associated with being forced to learn Polish language in childhood, c) dominance of the Kiwi culture, and d) geographic distance between family members and/or Polish community.

When asked to what degree they thought being related to the Pahiatua children has affected their family’s narrative, first generation respondents all felt that this had a tremendous influence. They are well aware of the suffering their parents endured as children before they came to New Zealand. A common comment of first generation respondents was about the tremendous pride they had in being Polish and their interest in Polish history and traditions. They believe that holding to these traditions gives them the strength to survive hardships, gives them a sense of identity, and gives the

next generation a reason to be proud of their ethnicity.

For some of the original children, memories of the war and loss of parents and/or siblings was something terrible that they just wanted to forget. Some rarely mentioned their stories and avoided contact with the Polish community. With time, and a more stable family life, some of the memories were shared. The story of the Pahiatua children in New Zealand is now considered a very positive event in New Zealand history. Children born to parent(s) who were at the Pahiatua camp use their stories for school projects and participate with their parents in various anniversary events. They have learned a lot about the events that shaped the lives of their parents and appreciate the importance of their family history.

5.2. Second Generation Respondents

Second generation respondents are all aware of their Polish heritage. They were exposed to Polish language when they were children to varying degrees mainly through their grandparents and, to a more minor degree, their parents. Four of the seven respondents do not speak the language, they only know certain phrases. Two are somewhat fluent. Yet, the Polish language is not spoken at home for any of the respondents, just a few words. Though the majority say they would like to learn Polish and wish they were taught Polish language as kids, all of the respondents indicated that the language is hard for them to learn.

All but one respondent celebrated Polish holidays in their home growing up. Five of the seven joined their parents and/or grandparents for the anniversary reunion celebrations in Pahiatua. Three respondents remember celebrating Name Days and singing traditional “Sto Lat” (may you live a hundred years). One respondent said, “mine was a Polish home with modifications.” All respondents stated that they want to keep some aspect of Polish traditions alive especially having to do with Christmas and Easter, preparation of some foods, and at least some aspect of the Polish language. Attendance at events conducted by Polish organizations was important to their parents, so some of the second generation respondents went with them as children. Going now is a problem because of the language barrier. Members of the older generation speak Polish primarily and for second generation English speaking respondents, it is hard to mix in. One respondent said, “I went to the Polish Home and I felt out of place.”

For the majority of second generation respondents, visits to Poland have had a fundamental influence and have allowed them to get to know their extended family. This has increased their interest in Polish history. The majority of respondents participated in the 70th and/or 75th anniversary of the Pahiatua children reunion and went because of their grandparent’s historical tie. “I participated in the 75th reunion and my aunt was very involved in organizing committee. I was asked to speak as a representative of the second generation of New Zealand born decedents and what it means to have grandparents from Pahiatua. I identify with Polish culture a lot.”

When asked who in their family is most responsible for keeping the Polish traditions alive, second generation respondents agreed that it is the grandparents and/or the mothers. All respondents mentioned that after their grandparents' passing, the traditions were primarily kept going by the mothers or aunts and uncles. They also said that these traditions have not been kept as strongly as when their grandparents were alive.

Four of the second generation respondents said that they want to instill in their children a sense of Polish identity and continue to use some Polish phrases and cook Polish dishes in the household. Most respondents said they want to keep some Polish traditions alive because they value the story of their grandparents and want to honor them. One respondent said, "when I have children I want to take them to Poland where they can learn about their heritage." Involving their children in dance groups and other Polish focused social activities is a way that they help them stay in touch with the Polish traditions. Being in close physical proximity to Polish groups and organizations makes it easier to maintain interest in Polish traditions.

Yet, respondents are well aware that time will no doubt erode the practicing of many of traditions. Most of second generation respondents have at least one parent who is Kiwi and a partner who is Kiwi. Hence, though respondents say their Kiwi partners are interested in helping them maintain Polish traditions, Kiwi traditions compete strongly. In addition, one respondent cautioned, "the hardest part is that there is not enough people to keep traditions alive. Current immigrants are not eager to maintain our heritage, they are modern and look to the future."

When asked what factors positively or negatively affect a person's efforts to keep their Polish traditions alive, second generation respondents thought positive elements would include: a) positive influence/encouragement of family and friends, b) special events that bring folks together, c) discovering Poland and Polish relatives, and d) the work of Polish organizations in bringing folks together. They thought the following worked against maintaining Polish traditions: a) the passing of the older generation (grandparents), b) geographic distance between Polish communities, c) busy contemporary lifestyles, d) lack of knowledge of Polish language, and e) dominance of the Kiwi culture.

When asked to what degree do you think being related to the Pahiatua children has affected your family's narrative, second generation respondents stated that it has had a very deep impact on them and their families. All respondents are aware of their family history as relates to the Pahiatua children. The depth of this awareness depends on how close they are/were with their grandparents, parents, other family members, and their engagement with other people related to the Pahiatua children. Respondents and their families have learned about their grandparents' journey through family stories, school projects when they had to interview them, and through participating in Pahiatua children's reunions. All respondents said they are interested in learning more about their heritage in the context of their grandparents' story

and New Zealand history. They consider themselves New Zealanders, but their Polish heritage is very important to them.

6. A STRATEGY FOR PROMOTING POLISH IDENTITY IN NEW ZEALAND

Based on the review of literature and the survey and interview findings that are presented in this report, the following recommendations are offered for promoting Polish identity in New Zealand. These recommendations may help Polish cultural organizations in New Zealand (and perhaps elsewhere in the world) better develop and disseminate programs that successfully promote Polish identity. Noted is the fact that many Polish immigrants have mixed smoothly into New Zealand society, but they also tend to maintain strong social and political attachments to Poland. This bodes well for cultivating at least a sustained sense of “symbolic ethnicity” involving basic and nostalgic views of their ethnic heritage, celebration of certain holiday and religious rituals, consumption of ethnic foods, and interest in the history and culture in support of Poland.

An effective promotional strategy nearly always begins by defining the target audience. Once the primary target audience is identified, programming that best matches their interests, persuasive messages that best resonate with their thinking, sources of communication they consider most credible, and methods for delivering information they most prefer can be identified.

6.1. The Target Audience

The primary target audience includes influential individuals that are most apt to respond positively to promotional messages delivered by Polish cultural organizations; i.e., those most apt to appreciate and retain aspects of their native Polish culture and share the importance of this with future generations. The assumptions are a) that this group will benefit from interactions with Polish cultural organizations by cultivating a greater appreciation for their Polish heritage and b) influence their family members, friends and colleagues of Polish descent to benefit from the same appreciation of Polish culture. Prioritizing this group as the target audience does not mean that the strategy is “singing to the choir.” It more likely means that you are trying to influence those most apt to be sympathetic to your messages. This allows you to use limited resources most wisely by targeting the “low hanging fruit” -- that most easily secured. The objective is to get members of the target audience to follow through with their inclinations, help them cultivate a stronger appreciation of their Polish heritage, and to help them share this with others.

Based on survey findings, the target audience group comprised 28% of all respondents to the survey. They are defined by a) the fact that they identify with their Polish heritage “a lot” and b) put at least “a lot” of emphasis on the importance of their Polish heritage when raising children. Approximately 70% are first generation New Zealand born people of Polish descent (their parents were born Poland); approximately 30%

are second generation New Zealand born. It should be noted that, when compared with all respondents to the survey, members of the target audience are slightly more likely to be the first generation born in New Zealand.

As might be expected based on the literature, survey findings show that they come from families that read/wrote/spoke the Polish language at home between a lot and a moderate amount; yet they themselves use the Polish language between a moderate and a little amount (albeit more than non-target audience members). And not surprising, based on both the literature and interview findings, survey findings show that the group tends to be female and middle age. The majority (61.4%) of them are women and their average age is 45.67.

As supported by the literature and interview findings, survey findings show that they are also more apt to have relatives in Poland that they are at least moderately familiar with. The literature suggests that the widespread use of internet-based communication and ease of travel facilitates this. And again, not surprising based on the literature and interview findings, survey findings show that the target audience is more apt to come from families that interacted a lot with fellow Poles. They themselves tend to interact more often with people of Polish descent too. As might be expected, they are more apt to consider themselves Polish and especially, Polish-New Zealanders. In addition, as stated in the literature and interview findings, survey findings show that they tend to celebrate holidays in the Polish tradition, consume Polish foods, attend Polish commemorative events, and join Polish cultural organizations more often. In essence, they are more closely connected to their Polish heritage than respondents who are not in the target audience.

In terms of demographics, as supported by the literature and interview findings, survey findings show that the vast majority of the target audience come from Catholic families and consider themselves Catholic. When compared with all respondents to the survey, they are more apt to come from “conservative” families (albeit only 41.6% stated their families were conservative) and are slightly more apt to consider themselves conservative (albeit only 15.9% stated they were conservative – the rest being moderate to liberal).

In terms of occupation and formal education, survey findings show that the target audience tends to include slightly more “professionals” possessing slightly more graduate-level degrees. They also tend to be better educated concerning Pre-WWII Polish history, WWII Polish history, and Post-WWII Polish; but not concerning Contemporary Polish history.

In addition to the target audience strategy described above based on survey findings, when interview respondents were asked to suggest who the target audience might be, they stated that all age groups needed to be represented including those with minimal Polish heritage, but that special efforts needed to be exerted to recruit members of younger generations, families (especially mothers with young children), and newer Polish immigrants.

6.2. Suggested Program Themes

In order of most to least interest, assessed on 1-5 scale, a great deal of interest to not at all interested, survey findings show that the primary target audience consider the following topics of greatest interest.

Table 2: Priority Program Topics

Interest in establishing...	Target audience
...contact with organizations in Poland that can assist you with genealogy research about you Polish ancestors	2.26
...contact with organizations in New Zealand. that can assist you with genealogy research about you Polish ancestors	2.28
...contact with organizations in New Zealand that offer workshops or publications about Polish language, history, culture	2.53
...scholarly contact with people in New Zealand about Polish language, history, culture	2.72
...scholarly contact with people in Poland about Polish language, history, culture	2.95
...contact with organizations in Poland that offer workshops or publications about Polish language, history, culture	2.98

Polish cultural organizations may want to prioritize their programming based on these findings. Especially popular in this age of inexpensive DNA-based ethnicity testing is genealogical research which these organizations could help facilitate. It should be noted that the target audience gave “contact with business/industry organizations in Poland that might have similar interests” an average rating of only 3.53 meaning it is of less than moderate interest.

In addition to these survey findings, interview participants suggested the following programs should be of interest: Polish market days, Polish language classes, programs about Polish foods, Polish dancing classes, presentations by people from Poland about Polish history, programs addressing Polish family heritage and genealogical research, and Polish cultural events (e.g., inviting performing artists (both cultural and modern), screening current films, and introducing new authors perhaps to do readings). Interview participants cautioned that money will need to be invested in the meeting venues to make the places modern and appealing to younger generations and to new immigrants.

6.3. Messages to be Communicated

Promotional messages to the target audience need to be designed in a way that appeals to a middle age, female, first generation New Zealand born audience who tend to be moderate to liberal politically. About two-thirds are members of the Catholic

church. Based on survey findings, messages that address family history, the celebration of holidays in the Polish tradition, and the preparation and consumption of favorite Polish foods should resonate effectively with this audience. Messages about Polish commemorative events and interactions with Polish cultural organizations will be met with only moderate enthusiasm. Messages should recognize that the audience identifies strongly with their Polish heritage. Survey findings show that over 80% consider themselves Polish-New Zealanders and three quarter have relatives in Poland that they are at least moderately familiar with. Because the target audience tends to have better than moderate knowledge and interest in Pre-WWII Polish history, WWII Polish history, and Post-WWII Polish history, messages that address these issues should peak their interest. Their knowledge of Contemporary Polish history is rated only moderate which may indicate that there may be a thirst for more information in this regard.

Once the audience's attention and interest has been secured, the objective changes to helping them perform the role of opinion leaders in the community; i.e., the role of influencing others to have greater appreciation for their Polish identity. Closely associated with this is helping them form positive attitudes about the organization. Messages describing the history of the organization, its present mission, its structure, and opportunities for involvement need to be communicated clearly. Messages that promote the benefits of involvement and alleviate any concerns about involvement will help the audience form intentions to become involved. Once intentions to becoming involved have been formed, it will be the organization's responsibility to minimize any potential barriers that might block a person from following through with their intentions (e.g., minimize membership fees, structure meetings and activities at convenient times in convenient locations, design programs at a comfortable level of sophistication, provide opinion leader training, coordinate and facilitate their activities in the community).

In addition to the message strategies described above based on survey findings, when interview respondents were asked to suggest promotional messages that might resonate well with the target audience, respondents cautioned that messages would need to focus on fun first followed by education if they expected to attract younger generations. Some older respondents thought that "socializing" should be a key message; i.e., sharing a drink and stories with like-minded people. Others thought that another important message would promote travel to Poland and how interesting it is to discover stories about your family's past. Several respondents indicated that messages should not only address past traditions and celebrations, but also the strengths and contributions of contemporary

6.5. Preferred Communication Channels

In order of preference, based on survey findings, the target audience considers the following communication channels to be the most effective (all five were considered

better than moderately effective)

1. Social media posts by Polish cultural organizations
2. Polish culture social events/fairs/parades
3. General social media networking
4. Websites of Polish cultural organizations
5. Blogs about Polish history/culture

These communication channels should be considered priority choices for transmitting messages to the target audience. It needs to be noted that Polish language television, Polish language radio, Polish language newspapers, were considered to be the least effective. Use of these channels as a means of communicating with the target audience should be employed with some skepticism.

In addition to the channel strategies described above based on survey findings, when interview respondents were asked to suggest effective channels of communication, respondents indicated that some form of electronic communication would be best. Social media driven communication was suggested much more often than traditional email or mailings, especially for younger generations. Facebook, specifically, was mentioned by several respondents. Yet, “snail-mail” is still thought to be necessary for older folks.

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