

**Abstract for section n**

“Methodological issues and theoretical inquiries in the study of public policy.”

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**Title:**

“Essentialism versus Intersectionality and their Impact on Public Policy:  
Methodologies and Ethnic and Racialized Groups in Canada.”

Essentialism infuses much of the ontological and epistemological traditions of still dominant conceptualizations of ethnic and racialized groups in Canada, either by government institutions (e.g., Statistics Canada; Canadian Heritage; Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) or by most of academia. Such groups are treated as homogeneous, monolithic entities; as “flat” social groups.

Alternatively, intersectionalist ontologies and epistemologies, following the footsteps of the critical political economy tradition and conflict theories, tend to examine the heterogeneity within groups, emphasizing their class, gender, nativity and other social composition elements.

This paper examines the public policy implications for educational attainment, increased labour market participation and upward social mobility for Canada’s Indigenous and ethnicized and visible minority groups from a critical realist perspective.