

MAURITIAN CREOLE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND INFLUENCES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Investigating the influence of the Roman Catholic Church on the racial/ethnic identity development of Mauritian Creole peoples was the broad goal of the present study, which was framed by multidimensional approaches to human development, identity development models, and principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST). Data were collected from 25 participants, all of whom were Creole Catholics who participated in key informant interviews and/or a focus group. The research design was informed by a number of methodological approaches, including ethnography, phenomenology, participatory action research, and feminist/critical inquiry. The findings point to the historical migration of the Church's attitude from a discriminatory "colonial spirit" that had stifled Creole identity development to more improved relationship with the Creole community.