



# **PCERII Funded Research**

## **Progress Report**

### **Immigrant Families and Community Services: Change and Policy**

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## **1. The Research Problem and Questions**

This research project will focus on the role of youth, women and friends in the process of immigrant family adjustment. What adaptive strategies contribute to integration of immigrants into Canadian society, and what conflicts do they experience? Is there a difference in strategies between the first and the second generation? What are government and NGO policies toward adaptation/integration, and can these be reformulated to respond more effectively to conflict. What is the nature of parent-youth relationships in facilitating family adjustment to a new culture? What is the impact of the mass media, school and peer groups on youth? How do teenagers in turn influence their parents? To what extent do adolescents serve as a link between immigrant and mainstream Canadian culture? What kinds of conflicts emerge in parent-youth relationships? This research attempts to examine these issues in light of theories of assimilation within the Canadian model of multiculturalism. The purpose of this study will be to address the scarcity of research dealing with first and second generation immigrant families, focusing on second generation youth in Canada.

## **2. The Research Methodology**

This exploratory research will be based on face-to-face interviews with first generation immigrants and their children (second generation) residing in the Greater Winnipeg area, using the interview schedule. Target immigrant groups will include those that have been the fastest growing in Manitoba in recent years, according to census data, and as expressed in our consultations with immigrant officials: Filipino, South Asian, Middle Eastern and Eastern European. We will include a sample of 200 households, selected randomly from lists obtained from ethnic organizations together with a "snowball" sampling, and other contacts from within these immigrant communities. Historical, Census/Statistics Canada and our survey research data analyses will be presented by using primarily qualitative research methodology. Our analysis will take account of age, sex, SES, ethnicity, length of stay and type of immigrant. A comparative analysis of the patterns of adjustment of family class, skilled workers, refugees, business class, and "other" types of immigrants will be provided.

## **3. Research Progress**

The interview schedule was pre-tested and revised during November- December 1998. Since January 1999, we have been able to complete more than eighty face-to-face interviews of South Asian, Filipino, Eastern European and Middle Eastern immigrants. Furthermore, we intend to gather data from several government and non- governmental organizations involved in the delivery of services to immigrants.

## **4. Policy Implications**

Questions regarding government and NGO policies related to immigration will form an important part of the research project. We will hold consultations with spokespersons from a wide range of government and non-government agencies and organizations providing services to immigrants, with regard to the services they provide, and any concerns, issues and problems they may have. We have already met with representatives of both government and non-government agencies and have identified some significant policy-related issues on the basis of these discussions. These include the following: (a) Long-term retention of immigrants: In a community like Winnipeg, the evidence from consultations with Citizenship and Immigration

Canada indicates that a substantial proportion of immigrants leave Winnipeg within the next few years. We will try to explore the factors which affect people's decisions to leave or remain, in the context of opportunities and services within Winnipeg. (b) Immigrants as a long-term investment: It was suggested to us, in our consultations with the representative of the International Centre (Winnipeg), that, given the tendency to see immigrants in economic terms, immigrants should be considered as a long-term investment. The real benefits of policies which facilitate adaptation and adjustment of immigrant groups emerge in the second generation of better educated, more integrated, and more productive members of Canadian society. We will examine the impact of immigrant adjustment programs on the children of immigrants.

Our research will address these policy issues as well as theoretical questions, having far reaching policy implications, regarding the integration of immigrant family and second generation youth in a multicultural Canadian society.

### **5. Staffing**

Our Department does not offer a graduate program. So, we have hired students from our Honours program.

### **6. Projected Date of Completion**

December 2000

N.B.: The Principal Investigator has received University support by way of a course release, secretarial assistance, printing and mailing.