



PCERII Funded Research

Progress Report

The Social Integration of Salvadoran Refugees in Regina

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1. Research Problem and Questions

This paper presents the findings of a qualitative study on social integration of Salvadoran Refugees in Regina. As a result of the violent 12 year civil war in El Salvador, 25% of the population were uprooted. Since 1979, nearly 37,000 Salvadorans have sought refuge in Canada. Many of those were victims of torture or persecution due to their alleged or actual participation with peasant groups, trade unions, human rights movements, and political parties.

2. Research Methodology

A snowball sample of 12 established refugees was obtained through the Open Door society in Regina. The graduate student researcher in locations suitable and comfortable to the participant conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews.

3. Progress to date

All of the interviews have been completed and data analysis using the computer program, Nudist, is currently underway. Progress has been successfully proceeding as initially planned.

4. Preliminary Findings

The study has revealed that the respondents had experienced many challenges in their adjustments and integration into prairie urban life. Many of them lost status in employment and income and found successful Canadian life difficult. Some members hold anger and frustration over the barriers they encountered. Their hopes rested heavily with their children in the dream that their children's adjustments would be easier and with grater success.

5. Policy Implications

The paper concludes with suggestions and recommendations for social policy makers, community workers and others who work collaboratively with new immigrants from disadvantaged backgrounds.

6. Staffing

A graduate student had been hired to participate in the conceptualization of the study and the development of appropriate methodology including securing ethics approval and preparing the interview guide. The student was fluent in Spanish and proceeded with the interviews. Under the principle researcher's supervision, she applied computer technology to analyze the qualitative data. She has learned valuable skills in research methodologies as it applies to diverse cultural populations.

The university as "benefits in kind" has provided secretarial support and some administrative services. The supervisor has provided research expertise and guidance throughout the endeavor as a "benefit in kind". These contributions have been identified and listed in the report from the University of Regina.

7. Dissemination Activities

The principle researcher and graduate student presented the study and its preliminary findings at the Vancouver conference, Third National Metropolis Conference, Jan. 14-16.99. Abstracts have been sent to two other appropriate conferences and further dissemination is expected as the final

report is completed. In addition, it is planned to develop an article from these presentations suitable for a referred journal.

8. Projected Dates of Completion

It is expected that in the next few months a final report (60 pages) will be ready with a summary report of about 20 pages by the end of the summer. It is planned to secure additional funding to assist in further dissemination of the findings.