



PCERII Funded Research

Progress Report

Voices of Immigrant Youth in Canadian Schools

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1. Research Focus

This research addresses how well the education system responds to the needs of immigrant children and youth by focussing on the perceptions and experiences of the students themselves. Further, the research focuses on how the experiences of these young immigrants affect their feelings of well-being and their sense of integration into the new society. And, of course, their success and satisfaction with their education experience has a direct impact on their economic, social, and psychological success as adults. The overall aim of this research is to develop an understanding of student life experience by examining attitudes and behaviours in school in relation to family, peer, and cultural expectations and practices outside the school setting.

2. Methods/Procedures

This research on immigrant children and youth draws on -the cooperation of the schools who have Education as a Second Language programs in Regina and Saskatoon to access immigrant students who live in inner city and suburban community settings. Face to face interviews have been conducted with children of immigrants in both Public and Separate school jurisdictions in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and we are In the process of accessing children from the Public School System in Edmonton.

The interview schedule consists of approximately 60 questions and we have coded 143 variables from these questions. The interview schedule for the elementary and high school students address the general issues specified earlier in this report and includes both closed and open-ended questions. Different interview schedules are used for elementary and high school youth. As per the submissions with this proposal. the high school interview schedule is somewhat more complex in its information and wording. The elementary schedule includes more room for explanation and flexibility of answers..

The overall foci are student accounts of in-school experiences with respect to gender, socio-economic background, educational and work aspirations. involvement in peer activities, and perceptions of family/community support for their education. The interviews to take approximately 35 minutes.

3. Progress

Currently, we have coded 105 interviews onto the University of Saskatchewan mainframe. The qualitative responses have been transcribed in both narrative format and, where possible, aggregate format. The research assistants have, in addition to the school-based research. created an ongoing annotated bibliography of literature and research related to immigrant children and youth in education contexts.

4. Expected Applications

As mentioned previously, there are 143 variables contained in the data set along with substantial narrative data. The data sets are rich in information and will be shared with participating school divisions and community groups.

5. Policy Implications

The participating schools have requested that we share our data with them in aggregate format and in report format and we have consented to do so. The Interested community groups have asked that we do presentations on our research and we, as well, have consented.

6. Staffing

- a) Half-time graduate student support for a student who is basing her thesis on the data collected
- b) Full-time research assistant (undergraduate) who has been admitted into our graduate program for September, 1999.

7. Dissemination

- 1) Data and discussions will be incorporated in A JUST WORLD FOR KIDS: ENFRANCHISING CHILDREN IN AN ADULT WORLD Scarborough. ON: Prentice-Hall (forthcoming, with Wendy Schissel).
- 2) Data are still being collected so most dissemination is yet to come.

8. Completion date

For interviews in Edmonton Public School system, May 31, 1999.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Complementary Funding

a) University of Saskatchewan Summer Student Employment Grant, (USTEP) 2 grants in the summer of 1998 and 1 grant awarded for the summer 1999. These are additional monies to \$3.50 per hour to hire summer students. The matching funds were from the Prairie Centre grant and from my SSHRC grant # 41-095-1532, b) SSHRC grant # 41-095-1532 added to PCERII grant to advance research project.

2) MA students

- a) Keith, Trisha THE IMPACT OF VICIMIZATION ON STUDENT WFL-Being INSIDE AND OUTSIDE SCHOOL: AN ANALYSIS OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AND YOUTH.
- b) Whittmire, Alison, admitted to the Masters program, Department of Sociology, University of Saskatchewan