

New Canadian Children and Youth Study (NCCYS)

Progress Report

Submitted By

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The planning, development and coordination of the New Canadian Children and Youth Survey (NCCYS) has been underway since January 1999. The research team's efforts have focused on: a) the planning of the NCCYS study; b) an examination of the appropriateness of Statistics Canada's existing NLSCY survey items for use with various ethnocultural immigrant and refugee populations; and c) the development of concepts and measures dealing with resettlement stress, coping and support. A total of \$163,000 in "start-up" funding has facilitated the development and testing of the NCCYS questionnaire through research workshops, focus group sessions and pilot studies in each of five urban sites. This progress report details work accomplished to-date.

I. PCERII Research Team

Linda Ogilvie – Nursing, University of Alberta (Principal Investigator)

John Anchan – Education, University of Winnipeg

Nancy Arthur – Educational Psychology, University of Calgary

Esther Blum – Social Work, University of Manitoba

David Este – Social Work, University of Calgary

James Frideres – Sociology, University of Calgary

Shiva Halli – Sociology, University of Manitoba

Chuck Humphrey – Data Librarian, University of Alberta

Frank Trovato- Sociology, University of Alberta

II. Planning the NCCYS Study

Formation of Advisory Committees

- Advisory Committees are in place at the Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton sites and will, with the recent inclusion of Vancouver in the study, now need to be developed in Vancouver as well. The composition of these advisory committees are reflective of the unique resettlement experience/structures in each region and includes researchers, immigrant/refugee community representatives, various social service providers, governmental representatives, policy makers, and other experts. The role of these advisory committees is: to provide input and feedback regarding questionnaire development; to advise regarding sampling possibilities as well as optimal participant access and approach; to facilitate collaborative academic-community linkages for survey implementation; to provide input into the interpretation of research findings and policy implications; and to assist in the dissemination of research results to all interested stakeholders.

- The formal Terms of Reference for these Advisory Committees are currently being completed.

Community Collaboration

- Community collaboration has been sought from various ethnocultural organizations whose membership encompasses the sixteen immigrant and refugee communities that make up the NCCYS sample (see enclosed Letters of Support). Community collaboration is essential for developing cultural relevant and sensitive survey questionnaires. These organizations will further assist in the drawing of the study sample and in the dissemination of final research results to community members. They are also represented on site Advisory Committees, where they join resettlement workers, health-care providers, governmental representatives, and other individuals responsible for immigrant resettlement.

Intercentre Collaboration

- This has entailed the building of a committed multi-disciplinary research team across three Metropolis Centres of Excellence and five urban sites (see list of Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators included in this submission). Site Leaders have been determined and responsibilities assigned regarding the division of labour and coordination of tasks among research team members.
- The number of Centres and sites has been recently expanded beyond Montreal (CRIMIIDU), Toronto (CERIS), Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Calgary (PCERII) to include Vancouver (RIIM).

Infrastructural Support

- A part-time NCCYS Project Coordinator has been in place in Toronto since January 1999.
- A part-time Project Coordinator hired at the Prairie Centre in December 1999.
- Research assistants have been employed at the Toronto, Montreal and Prairie Centres on a casual basis to assist with the organization of research meetings/workshops, focus group sessions and literature reviews.
- A system for data storage, inter-centre transfer and sharing has been developed.

NCCYS Research Meetings, National/Regional Research Workshops & Conference Presentations

- **National NCCYS Research Workshop (Toronto, February 26 - 27, 1999).** Mobilized academic, community and government expertise in order to determine research issues and needs regarding immigrant and refugee children. Workshop goals were to a) develop a research framework for the project and identify the domains of interest; b) to determine the target sample population (age groups and specific immigrant communities); and c) to discuss collaboration between academics and community representatives, and among Metropolis Centres of Excellence. Workshop participants included academics, community representatives (school board, ethnocultural organizations, resettlement agencies, health care providers), public servants and policy makers.
- **Toronto Research Meetings (March 12, 1999).** Determined sample selection, procedures for data collection, and workload division of labour with respect to background preparation for key study domains (ie. parenting/family/functioning; teachers and peers/school stressors/educational system; identities and ethnicity; community; heritage languages; work and income; service utilization; health outcomes). Participants included academic researchers, school board representatives, ethnocultural community leaders, and various social service providers. **(April 7,**

1999). Discussed the development of sections on Identity and on Discrimination in the NCCYS survey instruments and reviewed possible items. (**April 16, 1999**). Reviewed NLSCY survey instruments dealing with Family Functioning/Parenting. (**May 6, 1999**). Reviewed NLSCY survey instruments dealing with Education. (**May 13, 1999**). Reviewed modified NLSCY questions for the Education, and Family Functioning/Parenting sections.

- **Montreal Research Meetings (Feb. 15, March 26, April 13, May 20, June 23, July 26, August 17, August 27, September 10, December 3, 1999).** Revised major sections of the French language NLSCY Cycle Two questionnaires. Developed an Identification Chart for use in the NCCYS survey.
- **Prairie Centre Research Meetings (March 1999; June 1999).** Organized a comprehensive literature review and the establishment of effective community linkages. Determined strategy regarding site funding for the development phase of the project and planned the regional pilot study.
- **National NCCYS Research Workshop (Toronto, June 28-29, 1999).** Discussed various grant submissions to secure sufficient start-up funds for NCCYS project development and NCCYS pilot studies. Provided updates of progress made at all three centres (and five sites). Planned NCCYS sampling strategy and sampling base for identified target populations; this included choice of immigrant/refugee groups, determination of sampling size, decisions regarding the nature and number of age cohorts, and the development of a "national sample" to enable cross-site comparisons. Calculated the budgetary requirements for a national study and determined funding strategies; the latter included the decision to encourage researchers to seek individual funding for complementary in-depth qualitative studies on NCCYS related issues. Planned the required translation of NCCYS questionnaires from English to French for use by Montreal researchers.
- **Prairies Centre Regional Meeting Presentation (Calgary, October 1999).** Provided an overview of the NCCYS initiative and the Prairie Centre's pilot study design. The regional team also met to plan advisory group composition as well as strategies and structures for effective community consultation.
- **Prairie Centre Research Team Meeting (Winnipeg November 1999).** NCCYS questionnaire development based on a detailed review of NLSCY Cycles One and Two survey instruments.
- **Joint (Toronto, Montreal, Prairies) NCCYS Workshop Presentation (December 1999).** Overview of the NCCYS initiative provided at the Third Annual International Metropolis Conference in Washington.
- **National NCCYS Research Workshop (Edmonton, February 5-7, 2000).** Final decisions regarding suggested modifications of various sections of NLSCY questionnaires based on work completed at each Centre. Content Development of the Parents' Questionnaire, Parent's Questionnaire about the Child, and the Child's Questionnaire. Sections completed include Household Composition, Socio-Demographic Characteristics, Family/Neighbourhood/Community, School/Peers, and Health. Presentation of draft Identities section. Discussion of community

collaborations and formalization of Advisory Boards at each site. Coordination of communications and remaining task division regarding questionnaire development among Centres.

Comprehensive Literature Review

- A comprehensive literature review with annotated bibliography has been completed by the Prairie and Toronto Centres

Ethics Review

- Ethics approval sought and granted for NCCYS questionnaire pilot testing in Winnipeg, Calgary and Edmonton
- Ethics approval sought and granted for entire study by McGill University Research Ethics Board, Montreal

II - Examining the Appropriateness of the NLSCY Survey for Use with Immigrant/Refugee Populations

Focus Group Sessions (Toronto Centre)

- Focus group sessions have been held with each of the three ethnocultural immigrant and refugee communities that will participate in both the pilot and national NCCYS study. The purpose of these sessions was to a) examine the cultural appropriateness of various sections of the NLSCY questionnaires; and b) to help generate new items that tap the resettlement experience. These focus groups were conducted with representatives from the Ethiopian, Former Yugoslavian, and Hong Kong Chinese communities. Illustrative examples of focus group feedback on questionnaire items included in the “Family Functioning” section of the NLSCY questionnaires are provided below.

i) The Ethiopian Community

- Generous verbal expression of feelings is uncommon; instead hugging, kissing and buying gifts are used to express positive emotions of parents towards their children
- Authority figure is an important part of parenting
- Decision making in the family is connected to gender roles
- Substance issues, including alcohol and illicit drugs, should be explored

ii) The Former Yugoslavian Community

- Seeking outside help (particularly professional help) is not popular due to language barriers, the belief that self-help is more appropriate and a questioned usefulness of “cultural interpreters”
- In cases of domestic abuse, women and children do not have, or are not aware of, resources that would help them
- The financial situation of families should be captured by the questionnaire (debts and liabilities)
- Generation gaps may be widened by polarization of values (children becoming “more Canadian” while parents emphasize the values from the country of origin)

iii) *The Hong Kong Chinese Community*

- Questions on the ‘astronaut syndrome’ (parent/s work overseas while the rest of the family lives in Canada) need to be added
- Questions require modification to reflect the communications of thoughts rather than feelings, since the open communication of thoughts is an indication of good family functioning in Chinese culture

Translations

- The modified NLSCY “Family Functioning” section has been translated into Amharic (Ethiopia), Serbian (Former Yugoslavia), and Chinese (Mainland China/Hong Kong/Taiwan) for use in the NCCYS study
- Parts of the prepared NCCYS questionnaire have also been translated into French for use in Montreal as well as into Arabic (Lebanon)

NLSCY Cross-Cycle Comparisons

- Changes made in questionnaire content and design across NLSCY Cycles 1, 2 and 3 have been determined and summarized in order to maximize NCCYS Wave One questionnaire compatibility. This will enhance latter cross-sectional and longitudinal comparisons of NCCYS and NLSCY results regarding the health and well being of immigrant/refugee children and dominant culture children respectively.

Comparison with International Surveys

- The NLSCY questionnaire content and design have been compared in some detail with that of the Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) study, a World Health Organization-sponsored survey of children in 28 different countries (including several European nations, Israel, Russia, the U.S.A. and Canada). The purpose of this comparative review is to both inform the development of NCCYS survey instruments and maximize effective comparisons of NCCYS research results with those of this large-scale international survey.

Modification of NLSCY Survey Instruments

- The Household Composition, Socio-Demographic Characteristics, School/ Peers, Family/ Neighbourhood/ Community and Health sections of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children (NLSCY) survey instruments have been adapted for use with various immigrant and refugee populations for each of three planned NCCYS questionnaires: Parent about Family, Parent about Child, and Child about Child. Examples of recent revisions to the NLSCY questionnaire are included in this Appendix.

III - Developing Concepts and Measures of Resettlement Stress, Coping and Support

The development of concepts and measure of resettlement stress, coping and support for the NCCYS study draws upon extensive literature reviews, the joint research experience and areas of expertise of NCCYS research team members, as well as on the results of research meetings/workshops, community consultations and focus group sessions.

- Items specific to the immigration experience are currently being developed for inclusion in NCCYS survey instruments. This includes consideration of: pre-migrations stressors (exposure to violence, family separation, other trauma); post-migration stressors (home/school adjustments, parental attitudes towards dominant culture values, parental unemployment); personal resources (temperament, locus of control, sense of self, ethnic identification); social resources (social support, family milieu).
- A scale measuring Perceived Discrimination on the basis of sex, race/colour, and ethnicity has been developed for the NCCYS and translated into Arabic for use in Montreal for the Lebanese community.
- An Identities section has been drafted and is currently being completed for review by the NCCYS research team and inclusion in planned focus group sessions and site pilot studies.

Work Currently in Progress and Upcoming Activities:

- Completion of the adaptation of NLSCY questionnaire for the NCCYS pilot testing. This includes the addition of new sections dealing with Migration and Resettlement Experience, Identity Issues, and Perceived Discrimination
- **Joint NCCYS Conference Presentation** at the Fourth Annual Metropolis Conference in Toronto (March 22-25, 2000)
- **NCCYS National Meeting (Toronto, March 25-26, 2000)** planned in conjunction with the Fourth Annual National Metropolis Conference to be held in Toronto from March 22-25, 2000. The purpose is to complete the Content Development of the Parents' Questionnaire, Parent's Questionnaire about the Child, and the Child's Questionnaire. Sections to be addressed include the new sections drafted regarding Migration and Resettlement Experience, Identity Issues, and Perceived Discrimination
- Review of newly revised NLSCY items/sections and added NCCYS sections via research workshops, community consultations and focus group sessions
- Modification of the NLSCY Teacher's Questionnaire to reflect changes made for the NCCYS study in the Parent about Family, Parent about Child, and Child about Child questionnaires
- Translation and back-translation of the final versions of the NCCYS questionnaires into French (for use by the Montreal Centre) as well as the various ethnocultural languages required for the site pilot studies
- **Pilot Study Pre-testing of NCCYS Instruments (Spring 2000).** The Montreal, Toronto and Prairies Centres will conduct pilot study pre-tests of the developed NCCYS questionnaires with immigrant/refugee children and their families at each of the five national sites (Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Calgary). These pilot studies will only include the 12-13 year old age cohort and draw from a selected sample of the 16 target groups identified for the full NCCYS survey. Pilot study sample sizes vary from 10 per community for each of 7 targeted communities

in Toronto to up to 25 for each of 4 communities across three sites in the Prairies. The immigrant and refugee communities to be included in these pilot studies are as follows: Caribbean, Ethiopian, Hong Kong Chinese/Taiwanese, Serbian, and Vietnamese (Toronto); Lebanese/Palestinian and Haitian (Montreal); Kurdish, Filipino, and Vietnamese (Prairies). The Chinese community will be included in all three pilot studies so as to permit cross-site comparisons. Funds will be sought for similar pilot testing in Vancouver within the Indian, Iranian and/or Romanian communities (as yet to be determined).

- Formation of a National Advisory Board to facilitate communication with project funders as well as the dissemination of research results to policy makers and other interested stakeholders