



The Integration of Black Francophone Immigrant Youth in Ontario

Key Details

KEY WORDS

Black Francophone Refugee and Immigrant Youth, Integrative Process, Racialization, Racial profiling, Socio-economic Inequality

POPULATION GROUP

Newcomer Youth, Francophone youth, Racialized youth

STEPPING UP THEMES

Diversity, Social Inclusion and Safety

RESEARCH ORIGIN

Ontario

SOURCE

Academic

“Achieving [social] integration necessitates addressing issues of concern to youth with regard to the political representation of immigrants, fair distribution of income and opportunities, removing systemic barriers and enhancing citizenship and belonging.”

1. What is the research about?

The Francophone community in Ontario is becoming increasingly diverse, comprised of French speakers from many parts of the world. In Ontario, racialized Francophones are younger than non-racialized Francophones. This research examines issues that Black Francophone youth experience as newcomers to Canadian society. In the process of integration, these young newcomers encounter challenges related to language, racialization and violence.

2. Where did the research take place?

This research took place in Ontario, Canada.

3. Who is this research about?

This research is about Black Francophone youth who are refugees and first-generation immigrants from Haiti, Congo and Somalia.

4. How was the research done?

This research was undertaken over a period of six years from 2000 to 2006. In-depth interviews were conducted with black Francophone immigrant and refugee youth between the ages of 18-30 years. Parents of these youth and various stakeholders from community organizations serving these youth were also interviewed. Related research documents were analyzed in an effort to gain a perspective on the key issues concerning these youth.

5. What are the key findings?

Black Francophone youth face compounding barriers to full economic, social and political participation in Francophone communities and more generally, in Ontario society. This study identifies three key areas of challenge for Black Francophone youth in Ontario: language, racism, and violence.

- **Language:** Francophone youth are forced to seek counseling, housing and employment help from Anglophone services due to a lack of French-language resources. Those who primarily speak French are unable to access employment, education and other support services.
- **Racism:** The author found that there is an under-representation of Black youth in Francophone athletic and cultural events. Public school curricula do not provide a sufficient depiction of Black history and culture. There is a lack of Black teachers and high suspension and drop-out rates for Black

students. Racial profiling of youth by police also creates barriers to successful integration.

- **Violence:** The youth and parents who were interviewed expressed the opinion that youth who are socially disenfranchised and alienated are more likely to resort to violent behavior.

6. Why does this research matter for youth work?

This research makes the following suggestions for better integration of Black Francophone youth into Canada:

- Youth workers can develop educational programs to educate society about racism, create pathways for dialogue between various social groups on the challenges that hinder the successful integration of Black Francophone youth into Canadian society.
- The severe poverty of black Francophone youth sometimes lures them into gang violence. Youth services can organize French-language recreational, training and employment opportunities for these youth.
- Advocacy for the recognition of educational and professional credentials earned outside Canada.
- Increasing the number of Francophone resources for youth such as counseling services, employment and housing programs.

The author concludes that further research into the various social and economic factors that influence successful settlement and integration of Francophone youth in Ontario.



Madibbo, A. (2008). The Integration of Black Francophone Immigrant Youth in Ontario: Challenges and possibilities. *Canadian Issues*, 45-49.

FIND IT ONLINE

http://canada.metropolis.net/publications/CITC_spring2008_franco_e.pdf