IWYS Immigrant women, youth and seniors

A Research and Knowledge Mobilization Project on the Settlement Outcomes–Services Nexus

Immigrant Youth in Canada: A Literature Review of Migrant Youth Settlement and Service Issues

Knowledge Synthesis Report

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FOREWORD

This report, along with thematic reports on immigrant women and seniors, and a composite report, is an output of Phase 1 (2017-2018) of the IWYS project that aims to document the settlement and service experiences of the three groups, as well as proposing new intervention strategies. Building on Phase 1 (knowledge synthesis), we will conduct primary research during Phase 2 (2018–2019) in three Ontario communities—Ottawa, Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton, and Windsor—to inform strategies for service innovation that are scalable across the country.

We hope that this report on existing research provides service providers, policymakers, fellow researchers, and the general public an opportunity to consider the settlement needs and outcomes for immigrant youth. We also welcome input to guide our primary research. Readers can help shape this agenda by providing feedback on the report to ceris@yorku.ca, subscribing and contributing to the project newsletter on www.iwys.ca, and participating in focus groups and interviews.

We would like to thank our partners, volunteer members of the National Advisory Board, and staff at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and York University as contribution agreement partners.

IWYS Youth Research Domain Team

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the needs of immigrant youth in Canada. This report is based on the review of studies on immigrant youth and settlement services directed towards the following areas: Education; Health and Mental Health; Economy and Employment; Social Participation and Belonging/Identity; Settlement; Language; and Legal/Criminal Justice. Specifically, this report aims to answer the following research questions:

• What are the main issues affecting immigrant youth in Canada?
• What is the impact of settlement services on immigrant youth in Canada?

The present report is based on a critical review of academic and non-academic studies published from 2008 to 2017. These studies deal with immigrant youth services in Canada (except for Quebec), and only English language publications have been included. One-hundred-and-two studies were selected and analyzed based on a data-abstracting template. In terms of geographic distribution, most of the academic articles on immigrant youth focused on urban areas in Ontario and British Columbia, while only a small number of studies were conducted in the Atlantic Provinces. In this regard, the study of current services, needs, and experiences of immigrant youth tends to mirror the overall geographic distribution of the immigrant population in Canada. However, it does also point to gaps in research related to immigrant youth experiences in rural areas, smaller urban centres, and the more outlying regions of the country. Also, we found that there are many ways in which immigrant youth in the Canadian academic and non-academic literature come to be defined (ranging in our surveyed studies from 13 to 25 years old). Hence, differences in the definition of youth need to be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions about the service needs of immigrant youth.

In terms of areas of study, our review of the literature found that the largest number of academic articles on immigrant youth services in Canada deals with social issues in the areas of education and health/mental health. Overall, immigrant youth have strong academic outcomes as they are reported to be more likely to complete high school and more likely to attend university than those born in Canada. Also, immigrant youth tend to have cultural practices that help them avoid certain health risks while simultaneously being more engaged in sports activities. Additionally, immigrant youth are resilient and generally have more self-esteem than their Canadian-born counterparts.

Positive education and health/mental health outcomes, however, need to be understood in the context of complex challenges affecting some immigrant youth. Our study found that immigrant youth do experience high levels of stress and other mental health complications. Also, studies on education show significant differences in the school performance of immigrant youth based on their country/region of origin and age at the time of migration.

Furthermore, experience with teachers and other educational professionals can vary considerably. While many immigrant youth's experiences are quite positive, there is a lack of awareness of and sensitivity to issues faced by immigrant youth and, in some cases, even evidence of racism presenting serious barriers throughout the educational process. Similarly, studies demonstrate that the number of newcomer youth involved in gangs overall is relatively small, but youth who face isolation, exclusion, and discrimination are especially vulnerable to gang recruitment.

Major Themes and Findings

We identified major themes and findings across the following main settlement areas (Economic; Social and Civic/Political; Ideational (Belonging and Identity); Education; Health and Mental Health; Language, Legal/Criminal Justice; and Settlement Services). These themes show the close relationship between the social, family, structural, and economic problems affecting immigrant youth in Canada.

(A) Underemployment and Unemployment
Studies indicate that immigrant youth tend to experience high levels of unemployment and lower rates of labour market attachment. In addition, immigrant youth experience insecure precarious employment, and they tend to be employed in lower-wage jobs.

(B) Parental Educational Attainment, Unemployment/Underemployment, and Involvement
The educational outcomes of immigrant youth are influenced by their parents' levels of education, their settlement experiences, and their level of involvement. Also, parental unemployment/underemployment and parents' lack of knowledge of the Canadian health system play an important role in the social determinants of health affecting immigrant youth.

(C) Immigrant Youth Taking on Adult Responsibilities
Oftentimes, immigrant youth take on adult responsibilities, which vary from becoming key breadwinners for their families to raising their younger siblings and providing care to extended family members. Such family commitments can become significant barriers to the educational and personal development of immigrant youth as they can take time away from school work, sports, and other extracurricular activities.

(D) Language Barriers and Lack of Awareness about Services
Newcomer immigrant youth experience difficulties in obtaining information and guidance about the Canadian education system, and this can adversely affect how they are placed in schools when they first arrive. Similarly, health care practitioners and service providers state that they face significant language and communication barriers in their work with immigrant families; they recommend that immigrant parents be provided with more support so they may become aware of the resources available to their children.

(E) Differences Between Immigrant Youth

Studies consistently show that there are significant gender, ethnic, and generational differences in the educational, health, and employment experiences of immigrant youth. There are notable gender differences in educational attainment, as immigrant girls tend to attain higher levels of academic achievement and attachment to school than immigrant boys. Similarly, there are subtle differences between first- and second-generation immigrant youth's academic performance, but both have high levels of educational attainment. Furthermore, there is a racial and gender dimension in the earning gaps between immigrant youth, as well as in their experiences of marginalization.

(F) Need for More Culturally Appropriate Services

Studies point to the need for more culturally sensitive programs to introduce immigrant youth to Canadian health services, educational systems, and support services in general. There is a need for more culturally inclusive social services, as immigrant youth and their parents often feel judged and misunderstood by social and human service workers. The literature also suggests that assumptions/biases of health care providers, ethno-cultural differences, isolation, and lack of access to information are significant barriers for immigrant youth in accessing health care. Adequate mental health services for refugee youth are particularly important, as pre-migration trauma can negatively impact newcomer youth's mental and physical health. Immigrant youth generally tend to use less sexual health services and sex education resources than their Canadian-born counterparts.

(G) Lack of Adequate Housing and Transportation Services

Newcomer youth face significant challenges in accessing housing services and are subjected to housing discrimination practices by landlords. Especially challenging is the lack of suitable housing for extended families in both the marketplace and via social housing, particularly given the extreme supply shortages in social housing in cities such as Toronto. Newcomer youth homelessness has become an acute problem because of affordability issues. The lack of efficient public transportation also impacts immigrant youth access to educational, recreational, and employment services in both major metropolitan areas (especially suburbs) and smaller and more rural communities (where public transit is often completely lacking).

Summary

Our study of the academic and non-academic literature on immigrant youth presents a complex reality in which immigrant families and youth face significant economic challenges, barriers in the school system, problems accessing culturally appropriate health care, issues related to housing and transportation, and discrimination in the labour market. Immigrant youth and their families tend to experience high levels of underemployment and unemployment, which negatively affect immigrant youth's attachment to the labour market, their mental health, and their sense of belonging. Services for immigrant youth could benefit from coordinated and comprehensive

responses that take into account their interrelated employment, mental health, and social needs.

Immigrant-receiving countries have paid increasing attention to the social and economic integration of immigrant youth. In Canada, immigrant youth have been the subject of a significant number of studies that deal with a variety of topics, from social exclusion and cultural practices to radicalization, precarious employment, and poverty. Studies on the various settlement needs of immigrant youth and their experiences with services, or with the lack of services, are particularly relevant to understanding how service providers in areas such as education, settlement, employment, and health can further support immigrant youth to overcome barriers and fulfill their potential.

This report aims to provide a comprehensive analysis about the needs of immigrant youth in Canada based on the review of studies on immigrant youth and settlement services directed towards the following areas: Education; Health and Mental Health; Economy and Employment; Social Participation and Belonging/Identity; Settlement; Language; and Legal/Criminal Justice. The present report is based on a critical review of academic and non-academic studies published between 2008 and 2017. These studies deal with immigrant youth services in Canada (except for Quebec), and only English language publications have been included. One-hundred-and-two studies were selected and analyzed based on a data-abstracting template.

This report is divided into three sections: (1) an overview of the studies reviewed on immigrant youth in Canada; (2) an analysis of the main themes and findings across the research areas; and (3) a policy and programming recommendation section highlighting some of the major lessons drawn from the literature.

1. ACADEMIC LITERATURE ON IMMIGRANT YOUTH

1.1 Overview

Our review of the literature found that the largest number of academic articles on immigrant youth services in Canada deal with social issues in the areas of education and health/mental health. This is not surprising since youth tend to be school-aged, and schools serve as important centres for educational, social, and settlement services. Schools are also a major point of contact between the immigrant family and Canadian society and hence are a critical site for integration." Similarly, health and mental health are areas of study that include topics as varied as active and healthy living, sexual health services, and depression, which are relevant to a population experiencing both the complexities of reaching full physical and emotional maturity, and the challenges of settling in a new country.

On the other hand, our review of the literature shows that there are relatively few academic articles published in the last 10 years focusing on the civic/social contributions of immigrant youth in Canada and the services that they provide to their families and the community at large. In this regard, the literature on immigrant youth pays significantly less attention to their contribution to immigrant families (such as translation and child care) than to the social barriers that can negatively affect their health, education, and successful integration into Canadian society. Also surprisingly, given the centrality of employment challenges for immigrant youth, there is only a modest number of articles that focus on the employment and economic dimensions of immigrant youth integration.

Methodologically, we found that, overall, there is a relative balance in the literature between quantitative and qualitative studies on immigrant youth. Additionally, a significant number of studies utilize mixed methods, employing both quantitative and qualitative analysis. This balance is significant as it provides the present study with both relatively small-scale, in-depth qualitative studies and relatively large-scale statistical examinations of immigrant youth's experiences and needs. Hence, as a whole, we did not find important gaps in the methodologies utilized by the literature on immigrant youth or on the scale of the studies; however, as previously mentioned, there are significant gaps in the research areas examined by researchers.

In terms of geographic distribution, most of the academic articles on immigrant youth focus on urban areas in Ontario and British Columbia, while only a small number focus

on the Atlantic Provinces. This somewhat reflects the distribution of the immigrant population in Canada outside Quebec, which is skewed towards Ontario and British Columbia. Similarly, among the Prairie Provinces, there are more studies originating from Alberta (which has recently seen a large increase in levels of immigration) than from Manitoba, and Saskatchewan in particular. This further suggests that the study of current services, needs, and experiences of immigrant youth tends to mirror the overall geographic distribution of the immigrant population in Canada. However, it does also point to gaps in research related to immigrant youth experiences in rural areas, smaller urban centres, and the more outlying regions of the country.

Interestingly, we found many variations in the way that immigrant youth are defined in the Canadian academic and non-academic literature, ranging from the age of 13 to 25. Older age categories are commonly employed in studies dealing with the labour market (15 to 25 years of age), and younger starting points are used in areas such as education and health. In addition, studies about immigrant youth include first-generation immigrants, immigrants who have arrived in Canada as children or in their teens (also known as 1.5 generation immigrants), and to a lesser extent, second-generation immigrants who are children of immigrants born in Canada. Such discrepancies in the definition of youth can be explained by disciplinary differences and by the scope of the specific studies. For instance, the service needs and experiences of a 13-year-old newcomer can be significantly different from those of a 25-year-old, second-generation Canadian. Hence, differences in the definition of youth need to be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions about the service needs of immigrant youth. Having said that, the most prevalent age range used to define youth in our surveyed literature was the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) - ages 15 to 24.

A major reason behind immigrants' choice to come to Canada is to provide a better life and future for their children. The high quality of schooling in Canada is a prime driving factor in this reasoning (Shields et al. Forthcoming). Reaffirming the thinking of many immigrant families, the literature shows that immigrant youth have positive academic performance and experiences in the Canadian school system. Immigrant youth are 2.5 times more likely to complete high school and 39% more likely to attend university than those born in Canada (Stermac et al. 2010:7). Also, second-generation youth are 35% more likely to acquire a university degree than those born to two Canadian-born parents (Stermac et al. 2010). Such strong academic outcomes highlight the capacity of immigrant youth to adapt to and excel in the Canadian school system.

There are, however, a number of important issues worth noting. Studies on education show significant differences in the school performance of immigrant youth depending on their country/region of origin (Finnie 2009; Anisef et al. 2010; Hamilton et al. 2011; Odo D'Silva, and Gunderson 2012; Wilkinson et al. 2012). For example, Caribbean immigrant youth tend to experience racism (Rousseau et al. 2009), and Francophone immigrant youth experience language exclusion (Prasad 2012; Tabu, Jacquet, and Moore 2014), which negatively affect their academic outcomes. Others may have relatively strong academic achievement, as in the cases of Turkish

(Kayaalp 2014) and Chinese (Li 2009, 2010) immigrant youth, but often feel alienated by the Eurocentric school curricula they have to learn in Canada.

It has also been found that age at the time of migration can have a significant impact on academic outcomes, with younger people generally being able to adapt more quickly and more successfully, as well as learning English and/or French more easily than youth who are older at the time of migration. Furthermore, immigrant youth's experiences with teachers and other educational professionals can vary considerably. While many immigrant youth's experiences are quite positive, there is a lack of awareness of and sensitivity to issues that they face and, in some cases, even evidence of racism presenting serious barriers in the educational process. Moreover, many schools are not fully equipped to deal with newcomer youth. Most importantly, ESL/FSL resources are often lacking (Shields et al. Forthcoming).

Immigrant youth tend to have cultural practices that help them avoid certain health risks; such as eating a healthy diet (AMSSA 2016) and smoking less (Stoll 2008), while simultaneously being more engaged in sports activities than Canadian-born youth (Kukaswadia and Jansen 2014; Edge, Newbold, and McKeary 2014). Additionally, immigrant youth are resilient and generally have more self-esteem than their Canadian-born counterparts. For instance, students from war zones in general have higher scores on measures of self-efficacy - the belief in one's innate ability to achieve one's goals - than do Canadian-born students (Stermac et al. 2010:7). While active and healthy living and positive self-esteem may assist in countering some of the more negative health and mental health issues that immigrant youth confront, our study found that immigrant youth do experience high levels of stress and other mental health complications.

In addition, studies demonstrate that the number of newcomer youth involved in gangs overall is comparatively small but, for some immigrant youth with pre-migration trauma and those living in a low-income household, such conditions constitute risk factors that can lead to involvement in gang activities and other anti-social behaviour (Hamilton, Noh, and Adlaf 2009; Rossiter 2009a; Sersli 2010; Van Ngo et al. 2017). Youth who face isolation, exclusion, and discrimination are especially vulnerable to gang recruitment (Rossiter 2009a; Dei and Rummens 2010; Sersli 2010). For example, a qualitative study with 25 immigrant and refugee youth in Vancouver shows that disenfranchisement from school and society/school peers not being inclusive or respectful of difference (manifested by bullying, teasing, or simply indifference) are common risk factors for gang involvement (Sersli 2010:15). At the same time, gang involvement is a lengthy process, and newcomers are usually too focused on getting established during their initial years in Canada to be attracted to gangs (Sersli 2010:15). Settlement and educational services that facilitate social inclusion and school adaptation could help reduce risks of gang involvement among immigrant youth, whereas increasing cuts to settlement services could counterweigh gang prevention efforts.

Studies on gang involvement identify isolation as a risk factor and promote relationship-building programs and programs that foster connections with peers and adults as

effective forms of gang prevention (Rossiter 2009b; Sersli 2010). Parents and grandparents are adult family members who could help foster valuable interpersonal social skills among immigrant youth and also help reduce their sense of isolation. The decline in the number of parents and grandparents reuniting with their families in Canada, however, represents a significant barrier to promoting positive intergenerational relations. Given some of the ongoing challenges that many immigrant youth confront, it is perhaps surprising that higher levels of gang and other anti-social behaviour are not present. Arguably, increasing research on an area with such low levels of activity may be more a reflection of societal fears than the reality of immigrant youth experiences.

Therefore, immigrant youth's low levels of involvement in criminal activities and their overall positive education and health outcomes need to be understood in light of their ongoing challenges with isolation, social exclusion, and marginalization.

The following section presents major themes and findings that were identified across the main settlement areas (Economic; Social and Civic/Political; Ideational (Belonging and Identity); Education; Health and Mental Health; Language, Legal/Criminal Justice; and Settlement Services). These themes show the close relationship between the social, family, structural, and economic problems affecting immigrant youth in Canada. The themes include: (A) Underemployment and unemployment; (B) Parental educational attainment, unemployment/underemployment, and involvement; (C) Immigrant youth taking on adult responsibilities; (D) Language barriers and lack of awareness about services; (E) Differences between immigrant youth; (F) Need for culturally appropriate services; and (G) Lack of adequate housing and transportation services.

2. MAJOR THEMES AND FINDINGS

2.1 Underemployment and Unemployment

Studies indicate that immigrant youth tend to experience high levels of unemployment and relatively lower rates of labour market attachment, and that the problem of precarious employment among immigrant youth is prevalent. Low employment engagement rates can be explained by immigrant youth being school-aged. For example, a study using the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics shows that immigrant youth aged 15 to 19 years were much less likely to be active in the labour market, as a majority are enrolled in secondary education, while those aged 20 to 24 were more likely to participate in the labour market (Wilkinson 2008:159). However, in each case, immigrant youth had lower levels of labour market participation rates compared to Canadian-born youth (Yan, Lauer, and Jhangiani 2008). It remains unclear if the reason for this is a greater focus by immigrant youth on their studies or that many have given up actively looking for work because they have become discouraged by their previous lack of success in obtaining a job.

Some quantitative studies reveal that high unemployment rates can be the result of discriminatory practices by employers. A study in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood in Toronto shows that Ghanaian immigrant youth use different addresses on their job applications, as employers tend to see youth from that neighbourhood only in a negative light (Zaami 2015:85). Clearly one's class, race, gender, as well as neighbourhood can have a negative effect on employment prospects. Of course, these factors are related.

In Toronto, for example, low income neighborhoods have become concentrated within the inner suburbs of the city (Hulchanski 2010). A study by St. Stephen's Community House and Access Alliance (2016) found that immigrants and racialized groups are more likely to live in these areas. These inner suburbs have seen a rise of police presence that tends to target black male youth. Having a criminal background makes it more difficult for youth to obtain employment (St. Stephen's Community House and Access Alliance 2016). Studies also show that the neighbourhood within which a young person lives impacts their life chances in various ways, and belonging to a highly visible, marginalized community impacts those chances in a negative way. Such neighbourhoods are also underserviced by youth employment as well as other

programs (Zaami 2015). Hence, the literature points to the fact that postal code matters when examining labour market and socio-economic outcomes.

Canadian-born youth also have high levels of labour market marginalization; however, newcomer status adds an additional barrier to labour market access (Lauer et al. 2012; Abada 2014; Agyekum 2011). Immigrant non-students, those with more years of education but somewhat fewer years in Canada, and those from regions other than Africa, are more likely to find work in Canada (Wilkinson 2008). Thus, active immigrant students, particularly those from Africa, are at a higher risk of experiencing underemployment and unemployment than other immigrant youth. Our study also shows that refugee youth and the most recently arrived immigrant youth experience higher levels of unemployment (Hou and Bonikowska 2016). Newcomer youth have higher rates of unemployment compared to Canadian-born youth (AMSSA 2016), and refugee youth have lower levels of employment than Canadian-born youth and immigrant youth who are not refugees (Wilkinson 2008).

In addition, immigrant youth experience insecure precarious employment, and they tend to be employed in lower end jobs. Some immigrant/refugee youth are also forced to work in the "underground" economy while their immigration applications are being processed, which makes them particularly vulnerable to exploitation (Lauer et al. 2012). Moreover, immigrant youth - particularly African, Jamaican, and Latin American- tend to be employed in lower quality jobs (such as those found in the fast-food industry) compared to others. While these types of jobs are generally promoted as a way for immigrant youth to get the so-called all important "Canadian work experience" (Lauer et al. 2012), our review of the literature shows that immigration status and region of origin place some racialized immigrant youth such as Africans, Jamaicans, and Latin Americans at the very bottom of the entry-level employment ladder (Hou and Bonikowska 2016). Factors that appear to play into more negative employment outcomes for these groups include racial and country of origin discrimination, lower rates of advanced education compared to some other immigrant groups, and focusing on areas of work and educational orientation that tend to be less rewarded in the Canadian labour market. On the other hand, 1.5 generation immigrant youth from Hong Kong, Taiwan, People's Republic of China, and South Korea are likely to study business, management, public administration, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, eventually resulting in earnings advantages over the third-plus generation Canadians of European descent by a rate ranging between 14% and 25% (Boyd 2016:720).

Gender is, of course, important in determining labour market outcomes. Overall, men tend to do better than women in terms of salary, job security, and labour market participation rate, and these patterns hold when applied to various immigration statuses (Shields et al. 2010). Women, including female youth, are more likely to take jobs associated with the so-called "female" qualities in the caring spheres that are of lower status and pay (Tyyska 2014). Being a young female is correlated with earning less money and with longer periods of unemployment (Lightman and Gingrich 2012). In an earlier study by Wilkinson (2008), significant differences between male and female

refugee youth were found: specifically, 65.7% of male refugees were employed in the summer of 1998 compared to only 45.9% of female refugees. Yan, Lauer, and Chan (2012) label the experience of racialized immigrant youth in the Canadian labour market as "double jeopardy," because belonging to a minority group and being an immigrant create barriers for labour market success. Visible minority immigrant youth systematically earn less money and face more obstacles, including discrimination and racism, in the labour market (Pendakur and Pendakur 2016).

Overall, youth face many challenges in the Canadian labour market. Youth (ages 15 to 24) face unemployment levels that are double the adult rates. Immigrant youth unemployment rates are even higher than those for youth in general. In 2014, for example, immigrant youth unemployment was 17% compared to about 14% for overall youth. Unemployment rates among more recently arrived youth are higher than those for youth who have been in Canada for more extended time periods (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness 2017).

Our study of the literature shows that some of the common challenges faced by immigrant youth in their efforts to enter the Canadian labour market include lack of "appropriate" workplace clothing for interviews, lack of effective transportation (especially in suburban and more remote areas), and racial and ethnic discrimination (Agyekum 2011). Immigrant youth rely on informal employment strategies such as friendship networks to find employment and they are more than three times as likely to use co-ethnic friends as non co-ethnic friends to secure the first job in Canada (Lauer et al. 2012). Also, formal search strategies such as the use of want ads, cold calls, employment agencies, and volunteering are common strategies utilized by immigrant youth in their efforts to find employment (Yan, Lauer, and Chan 2012; Handy and Greenspan 2009). Poor employment outcomes, however, raise questions regarding the effectiveness of such approaches.

2.2 Parental Educational Attainment, Unemployment/Underemployment, and Involvement

The educational outcomes of immigrant youth are influenced by parents' levels of education, their settlement experiences, and their levels of involvement. A significant body of research reveals that the educational outcomes of immigrant youth in Canada are largely influenced by parental educational attainment, parental involvement, and their parents' inclusion in or exclusion from the labour market (Abada 2009a; Rousseau et al. 2009; Anisef et al. 2010; Hamilton et al. 2011; Li 2010; Taylor and Harvey 2013; Kayaalp 2014). Downward social mobility appears to be especially relevant in immigrant youth's academic development (Taylor and Harvey 2013). The relationship between immigrant youth's academic performance and their parents' experiences in the

labour market underscores the importance of the family's economic and emotional stability in the overall educational development and labour market attachment and success of immigrant youth. It also points to the importance of the family (Shields and Lujan Forthcoming) as a unit of analysis in examining youth.

Immigrant youth self-identified as Black are 25% less likely than non-visible minority Canadians to be in university (Abada 2009a:195). The educational disadvantage of self-identified Black immigrant youth has been linked to a low degree of trustful relations with networks that could provide them with valuable sources of educational support and information (Abada 2009a:202). By contrast, Asian immigrant youth have higher probabilities of obtaining a university education than do non-visible minority Canadians (Abada 2009a; Sweet et al. 2010). A study on recent Chinese immigrant youth shows that highly educated parents often cannot find professional employment in Canada and, instead, dedicate themselves fully to their children's education, providing direct academic instruction at home in areas such as math, physics, chemistry, and computer programming (Li 2009:489). Also, the academic success of Asian immigrant youth has been linked to a high level of parental support and involvement (Abada 2009a). Overall, first- and second-generation immigrants (54.3% and 57%, respectively) have higher university participation rates than non-immigrant Canadians (37.7%) (Finnie 2009:9).

Moreover, parental unemployment/underemployment and parents' lack of knowledge of the Canadian health system play an important role in the social determinants of health affecting immigrant youth. Research indicates that newcomer youth tend to suffer from stress resulting from the barriers their parents face in entering the Canadian labour market (Shakya, Khanlou, and Gonsalves 2010; George, Bassani, and Armstrong 2012). For example, a quantitative study with 1,225 Southeast Asian immigrant youth in British Columbia shows that Southeast Asian youth with recent immigrant status have been associated with five times higher odds of extreme despair than average and that extreme despair is generally higher among newcomer youth (Hilario et al. 2014:1126).

The same study shows that among young immigrant men, family connectedness is the only significant protective factor against extreme stress (Hilario et al. 2014:1126). However, immigrant parents have difficulties in effectively advocating for their children to attain the health services they may need (Lindsay et al. 2012; Beiser et al. 2011). Parents' socio-economic standing is a factor that is likely more important as a determinant of health for immigrant youth than is the case with non-immigrant youth (Barozzino 2010; Wahi et al. 2014). Linguistic barriers have been identified as one of the biggest challenges for immigrant parents to learn about the health system in Canada (Shakya, Khanlou, and Gonsalves 2010:99). The need for family-inclusive educational and health services that address the special circumstances of immigrant youth dealing with instability at home is made evident in the academic literature.

2.3 Immigrant Youth Taking on Adult Responsibilities

Oftentimes, immigrant youth take on adult responsibilities, which vary from becoming key breadwinners for their families to raising their younger siblings and providing care to extended family members (Lee and Pacini-Ketchabaw 2011; Shakya et al. 2010). Such family commitments can become significant barriers to the educational and personal development of immigrant youth, as they can take time away from school work, sports, and other extracurricular activities (Costigan 2009; Shakya et al. 2010). There is a gender and immigration status component to immigrant youth's family and community commitments as, for instance, child care services are generally expected to be carried out by girls (Lee and Pacini-Ketchabaw 2011), and refugee youth very often become interpreters, service navigators, and caretakers for their families (Shakya et al. 2010).

While some scholars advocate for educators, social workers, and policymakers not to see immigrant girl caregivers as victims but rather to recognize and support their contribution to society (Lee and Pacini-Ketchabaw 2011), it is evident that family and community commitments can be a double-edged sword. Refugee youth have identified financial barriers, such as limited social assistance and resettlement assistance, as one of the main causes for taking on adult responsibilities (Shakya et al. 2010:72).

Providing more social assistance and resettlement assistance, accessible child care, and social services for immigrant families can reduce the need for immigrant youth to take on overly burdensome adult responsibilities.

2.4 Language Barriers and Lack of Awareness about Services

Increasing funding shortfalls and a short-term planning mentality impact the ability of service providers to effectively disseminate information about their programs to newcomer youth (Francis and Yan 2016). Newcomer immigrant youth experience difficulties in obtaining information and guidance about the Canadian education system, which can be detrimental to how they are placed in schools when they first arrive (Shakya, Khanlou, and Gonsalves 2010). Also, some immigrant parents lack the necessary language skills and familiarity with the school system to find information about educational services available for their children and youth (Li 2016:8).

Similarly, health care practitioners and service providers state that they face significant language and communication barriers in their work with immigrant families; they recommend that immigrant parents be provided with more support so they may become aware of the resources available to their children (Lipsicas and Mäkinen 2010; Lindsay et al. 2012).

A practical suggestion to promote information about educational and settlement services and to assist in the integration of immigrant and refugee youth in a new school setting is the utilization of cultural brokers, which have been proven to facilitate school adaptation for this population (Yohani 2013). More information and support on how to access educational, health, and settlement services, however, are still needed. Some newcomer youth encounter barriers in accessing immigration services (Assefa et al. 2017) as well as lacking adequate information about settlement and health services (Sarnia-Lambton LIP 2013; Francis and Yan 2016; Thomson et al. 2015), and information about vaccinations, mental health issues, and recreational and physical activities (Li, Que, and Power 2017:1112).

There is also a need to provide more information about volunteering opportunities for services in the community and how these can be beneficial to immigrant youth (Handy and Greenspan 2009; Sarnia-Lambton LIP 2013). More information of better quality about the uses and potential value of volunteering opportunities available to immigrant youth would also be an asset (Handy and Greenspan 2009; Yan, Lauer, and Chan 2012; Sarnia-Lambton LIP 2013). Studies show that immigrant youth are frequently engaged in volunteering, particularly volunteering in hospitals with children, at local events, and through their religious institutions (Handy and Greenspan 2009; Yan, Lauer, and Chan 2012; Sarnia-Lambton LIP 2013). Volunteering can provide opportunities to develop skills, build social capital, and provide valuable Canadian work experience. Volunteering is commonly recommended by settlement agencies for newcomers as a useful strategy that can help in the long integration process (Shields et al. Forthcoming; Shields and Lujan Forthcoming).

2.5 Differences Between Immigrant Youth

Studies consistently show that there are significant gender, ethnic, and generational differences in the educational, health, and employment experiences of immigrant youth. There are notable gender differences in educational attainment, as immigrant girls tend to report higher academic achievement and attachment to school than immigrant boys (Abada 2009b; Stermac et al. 2010; Odo, D'Silva, and Gunderson 2012). Additionally, a higher proportion of immigrant females obtain university degrees, but this also reflects the more general Canadian pattern (Abada 2009b:590).

Similarly, there are subtle differences between first- and second-generation immigrant youth's academic performance (Kayaalp 2014; Anisef et al. 2010; Kayaalp 2015; Odo,

D'Silva, and Gunderson, 2012; Finnie 2009), but both have high levels of educational attainment (AMSSA 2016).

There are racial and gender differences in the earning gaps between immigrant youth, as well as in their experiences of marginalization. Our review of the academic literature shows that generally the earning gap is larger for visible minority males than for white immigrant males and white or visible minority immigrant women (Pendakur and Pendakur 2016). Moreover, immigrant boys tend to face more ethnic discrimination by their peers than immigrant girls (Oxman-Martinez et al. 2012; Oxman-Martinez and Choi 2014). Gender and racial differences in the experience of social and economic marginalization underscore the need to pay special attention to the social exclusion of male, racialized immigrant youth (Reza 2017; Walsh et al. 2011)

Immigrant youth from Muslim majority countries are commonly viewed by many in Canadian society as potential threats (Yogasingam 2017). As governmental counter-radicalization strategies increasingly focus on "evidence-based" research, studies show that there has been a tendency to connect Muslim theology and socio-cultural psychological characteristics with youth radicalization. There has been an increase in the number of publications on radicalization theories using typologies surrounding the so-called "lone wolf" threat (Silva 2018:7). Radicalized immigrant youth are included in this threat.

Some refugee youth from the Middle East are particularly vulnerable to marginalization as in the case of LGBT Syrian refugee youth in Toronto, for they face discrimination both within and without the Syrian community (City of Toronto 2016:16). Cultural change and adaptation are ongoing issues within the immigrant community, with limited programming addressing this issue.

Immigrant youth who speak English at home have greater access to services than those who do not (Salehi, Hynie, and Flicke 2014; Wahi et al. 2014). Lack of English language proficiency can form a barrier in education, employment, and social settings (Berman et al. 2009; Shakya, Khanlou, and Gonsalves 2010; Farrales and Pratt 2012; Edge, Newbold, and McKeary 2014; AMSSA 2016). Despite ongoing efforts, there are still significant language and communication issues for health and community service workers in providing services to immigrant families (Lindsay et al. 2012).

Bilingual youth are 50% more likely to be employed (Wilkinson 2008), and the ability to speak English or French enhances the possibilities for movement out of marginalized spaces (Berman et al. 2009:425). African Francophone immigrant youth in Ontario, however, experience difficulties accessing services in French (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2010; Mady 2012). Furthermore, Francophone immigrant youth in bilingual Ottawa experience significant economic and social barriers despite the fact that their parents may have Canadian post-secondary education, are often fluent in both official languages, and live in areas where there are French language services available (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2010). Clearly, there are specific challenges which Francophone immigrant youth confront outside of Quebec.

2.6 Need for More Culturally Appropriate Services

Studies consistently show the need for more culturally inclusive social services, as immigrant youth and their parents often feel judged and misunderstood by social and human service workers (Berman et al. 2009; Dumbrill 2009). The literature also suggests that the assumptions/biases of health care providers, as well as ethno-cultural differences, isolation, and lack of access to information, are significant barriers for immigrant youth in accessing health care (Barozzino 2010; Shakya, Khanlou, and Gonsalves 2010; Salehi, Hynie, and Flicke 2014). For instance, Syrian newcomer parents and youth often resist accessing professional mental health services; instead, they seek support from family and community sources who generally lack specialized health knowledge (City of Toronto 2016:13). Adequate mental health services for refugee youth are particularly important, as pre-migration trauma can very negatively impact newcomer youth's mental and physical health. Overall, studies indicate that there is a lack of adequate youth mental health support although the need seems to be expanding (Salehi 2010; Guruge and Butt 2015; AMSSA 2016).

Immigrant youth tend to use less sexual health services and sex education resources than non-immigrant youth (Flicker 2010; Homma et al. 2013; Salehi, Hynie, and Flicke 2014). This difference appears to be heavily influenced by religion and cultural practices. For instance, Asian youth are significantly less likely than other racial categories to have accessed sexual health services and health education resources (Flicker 2010; Homma et al. 2013; Salehi, Hynie, and Flicke 2014). While information about sex education and health services could be available outside school, it is important to point out that the exclusion from participating in popular mainstream peer culture pushes many new immigrant adolescents to value their ethnic social life (Li 2009). Consequently, they often develop a deeper sense of community within their own ethnic enclaves (Berman et al. 2009; AMSSA 2016), where informal sources of sex education and sexual health services are often not readily available. Studies point to the need for more culturally sensitive programs to introduce immigrant youth to Canadian health services, educational systems, and support services in general (MacNevin 2012; Sarnia-Lambton LIP 2013; Lund and Lee 2015; Wesley Urban Ministries 2014; Rossiter et al. 2015).

Other studies have found that some immigrant youth resent what they perceive as an overly Eurocentric Canadian school curriculum, which largely excludes the contributions of their own culture and history (Li 2009; Kayaalp 2014). Such studies suggest that educators should be trained to accommodate their teaching styles to take into consideration the unique life experiences of immigrant and refugee youth as well as to

expand their understanding of diversity in learning styles (MacNevin 2012; Yohani 2013).

2.7 Lack of Adequate Housing and Transportation Services

Our review of the literature shows that newcomer youth face significant challenges in accessing housing services and face housing discrimination practices by landlords (Immigrant Services Society of BC 2016; Sarnia-Lambton LIP 2013; Halton Region 2016; Assefa et al. 2017). Especially challenging is the lack of suitable housing for extended families in both the marketplace and via social housing, particularly given the extreme supply shortages in social housing in cities such as Toronto. Newcomer youth homelessness has become an acute problem because of affordability issues. Those under the age of 24 have been found to be "particularly overrepresented among the homeless population" in many cities across Canada. There is also the problem of "hidden homelessness," where newcomer youth lack permanent housing and are forced to couch-surf or reside in extremely overcrowded housing situations (Canadian Mental Health Association 2014). Similarly, high transportation costs and a lack of adequate public transportation services often negatively affect newcomer youth during the settlement process (Sarnia-Lambton 2013; Li et al. 2017). The lack of efficient public transportation services negatively affects immigrant youth access to educational, recreational, and employment services in both major metropolitan areas (especially suburbs) and smaller and more rural communities (where public transit is often completely lacking).

Summary
The main themes and findings we identified in the academic and non-academic literature on immigrant youth present a complex reality:= significant economic challenges affecting immigrant families and youth, barriers in the school system, problems accessing culturally appropriate health care, issues related to housing and transportation, and discrimination in the labour market, all influence the overall well-being of immigrant youth. Immigrant youth and their families tend to experience high levels of underemployment and unemployment, which negatively affect immigrant youth's attachment to the labour market, their mental health, and their sense of belonging. Services for immigrant youth could benefit from coordinated and comprehensive responses that take into account their interrelated employment, mental health, and social needs.

Similarly, immigrant youth's educational outcomes are influenced by parental educational attainment and parental unemployment/underemployment, which add significant stress into the lives of immigrant youth. Although this population is resilient,

their overall positive academic outcomes should also be understood in light of their experiences with significant levels of stress. Services should focus on providing immigrant youth with the necessary counselling and mental health support and should not be solely dependent on their individual ability to cope with stress and overcome social barriers. Relying exclusively on immigrant youth's resilience to successfully manage the challenges associated with movement to adulthood and integration into Canadian society is unrealistic. A more comprehensive and family-centric approach to educational and mental health service delivery could further support immigrant students to better deal with stress. Providing more support and incentives to immigrant parents using settlement and employment services could also help reduce the levels of stress that these families experience. This is important since our review of the literature shows that some immigrant youth take on adult responsibilities to help their families and that such activities can also impact their educational advancement.

The literature shows that immigrant youth's educational outcomes and integration into Canadian society and labour market differ significantly depending on their gender, countries/regions of origin, and immigration status. Service delivery that prioritizes the needs of refugee youth from specific regions/countries should take into consideration the effects of family separation, pre-migration trauma, poverty, and racial discrimination as interconnected issues. Outreach efforts and service delivery for specific ethnic groups could also benefit from partnerships with local ethnic community agencies that have relevant language and cultural expertise. Gender-specific programming is also necessary to address particular challenges faced by female and male immigrant youth.

There is a need for more culturally inclusive teaching methods and social service practices. While there is an overall appreciation of the Canadian school system by immigrant youth, there is also significant frustration by many immigrant high school students with the exclusion of Asian and Middle Eastern history and culture in the school curricula, as well as with more general problems associated with cultural insensitivity. Lack of culturally adequate services leads to lower utilization of services by immigrant youth in key areas such as sexual health and mental health. Furthermore, there is an overall lack of awareness among immigrant youth about the services available to them, which further complicates their access to services. Lastly, the lack of efficient public transportation services reduces immigrant youth access to services, and this is a particularly serious problem outside the major urban centres. Feelings of disconnection with the school curricula and social services can further increase levels of alienation from Canadian society among some immigrant youth. The complex and interrelated challenges affecting immigrant youth in Canada require comprehensive solutions, which must include the voice of immigrant youth and their families. The following section includes some practical policy recommendations to promote more inclusive and effective services for immigrant youth.

3. POLICY AND PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS

The major themes and findings in our study underscore the need for a comprehensive, culturally appropriate, and family-centred approach in the policies and services that aim to support the overall development of immigrant youth in Canada. The following recommendations are based on findings and recommendations from the studies reviewed, and they aim to direct policies and services in a more family and culturally inclusive direction.

3.1 Involving Immigrant Youth in the Development of Policies and Services

According to Van Ngo (2009), service providers need to actively engage and involve immigrant youth in the planning, development, and evaluation of all services for immigrant youth. This policy recommendation is echoed in the 2016 Refugee Resettlement Program of the City of Toronto, which argues for the development of a newcomer youth advisory board to further support and enhance the social and civic integration of newcomer youth in Toronto (City of Toronto 2016:16). Smaller municipalities also recognize the need to include the voice and perspective of immigrant youth in their service delivery. For example, Halton Region's newcomer strategy aims to apply a newcomer youth lens to programming in order to increase accessibility, uptake, and integration of immigrant youth (Halton Region 2016:3).

A practical manner to involve immigrant youth in the development of policies and services at the local level can be to promote organized immigrant youth groups in areas that may be of interest to them, such as sports, arts, and culture. For example, the Sarnia-Lambton strategy for promoting sports and recreation opportunities for immigrant children and youth aims to establish an immigrant youth group with a focus on the arts (Sarnia-Lambton LIP 2013). Immigrant youth groups can be consulted in developing specific policies and programs related to their specific area of interest. In addition, this represents a practical way to promote leadership and community engagement among immigrant youth.

3.2 Developing Culturally Appropriate Mental Health Services

Lack of culturally appropriate services is one of the main obstacles that prevents immigrant youth from accessing mental health services. Lindsay recommends matching clinicians with families from similar backgrounds (where feasible) and/or hiring more ethnically and/or linguistically diverse staff (2012). While such a policy recommendation is ideal, another solution can be to strengthen physicians' and patients' intercultural competency by: (1) periodically providing educational sessions on specific cultural practices and traditions for physicians working with immigrant youth; and (2) periodically providing educational sessions on mental health concepts and practices to immigrant youth seeking professional help. Cultural awareness sessions for physicians and educational sessions on mental health for immigrant youth can be developed in consultation with immigrant communities as well as with international mental health experts.

Further Support for the Educational Development of Refugee and Immigrant Youth
Yohani (2013) presents a practical approach to further supporting the social adaptation of refugee and immigrant youth to the Canadian school system, through employing cultural brokers to connect immigrant parents and youth with school and settlement services (Yohani 2013). This idea is also presented by Rossiter (2009b:14) who argues that cultural brokers should be employed in schools to facilitate the successful adaptation of newcomers. Cultural brokers can provide culturally appropriate school services for immigrant parents. This is necessary as some immigrant parents experience parenting challenges related to settlement issues, such as culture shock, racism, and lack of employment.

Many schools in Canada have successfully employed settlement workers in school programs. Cultural brokers and settlement workers in schools share many similarities. Settlement workers provide a link between immigrant children/youth and their families and the resources at the local school and within the community. Meanwhile, settlement workers are able to connect immigrant families with settlement and other services that are available, as well as important information about the settlement process. Settlement workers have been a very important asset for families and youth. Cultural brokers engage in similar activities while additionally serving a bridging and mediating role between the new immigrant or immigrant family and persons and institutions of a different cultural background. Cultural brokers are able to help reduce misunderstandings and conflicts between these groups and are able to facilitate and be an interpreter that facilitates service provision. Cultural brokers have been commonly used in the medical service field in the U.S. (see Michie 2003; North York Community House N.d.).

3.3 A Less Eurocentric Alternative to Social Inclusion

According to some, immigration policy frameworks should promote cultural identification with one's heritage culture, rather than simply endorsing acculturation (e.g., Nguyen, Jennine, and Flora 2011:1556). Promoting cultural identification of immigrant youth with their own heritage can help reduce levels of depressive symptoms in early adulthood among first-generation immigrants (Nguyen, Jennine, and Flora 2011:1556). Costigan (2009:270) suggests that one means of nurturing ethnic identity among immigrant youth is to promote active participation in ethnic cultural practices; this could be encouraged via increased local and federal government funding for immigrant and ethno-cultural community organizations that provide opportunities to learn about and participate in cultural activities.

Equally important, a less Eurocentric approach to the social inclusion of immigrant youth in Canada could actively promote Indigenous culture as an alternative to English and French Canadian cultural identities. Racialized immigrant youth may identify with the struggles of Indigenous people in Canada to overcome a history of colonization and marginalization and serve as a counterweight to the largely Eurocentric school curricula.

Youth from immigrant backgrounds tend to develop multiple identities and affiliations, as newcomer youth are at a life stage when they are more adaptable to change (Ali 2008; Dlamini et al 2009; Dlamini and Anucha 2009; Costigan et al. 2010; Franke 2010; Kondic 2011; AMSSA 2016). A policy promoting a strong identification with Indigenous culture and with immigrant youth's own cultural practices is hence feasible. The operationalization of a less Eurocentric approach to the social inclusion of immigrant youth could be conducted in partnerships with ethno-cultural immigrant organizations, Indigenous cultural and educational organizations, settlement agencies, school boards, and local governments. Such a policy alternative would align well with Canada's multiculturalism policy.

3.4 Promoting STEM Careers Among Immigrant Youth

Boyd 2016 shows that East Asians, and particularly Chinese students, are most likely to have studied business, management, public administration, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, which translates into higher incomes (Boyd 2016). The fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics are commonly referred to as STEM. The STEM sector in Canada is growing at a healthy rate, and STEM jobs offer higher salaries than most professional occupations on average (Expert Panel on STEM Skills for the Future 2015). Educational partnerships could be established between educational institutions, industry, and community organizations to further

promote careers in the STEM sector. The STEM Skills and Canada's Economic Productivity 2015 Report commissioned by the Council of Canadian Academies includes specific recommendations for promoting STEM professions among youth and promoting skill sets that could complement STEM skills to foster a growth in innovation and productivity. Such recommendations could be used to develop a strategic plan to further promote STEM professions among immigrant youth in Canada.

3.5 Adopting a Family-Centred Approach to Immigrant Youth Services

Research consistently identifies the value of more family-inclusive services to immigrant youth. The adoption of a family centric approach to educational, settlement, and mental health services can further support the overall development of immigrant youth. The dominant way in which services are constructed is with the idea of the autonomous individual outside of a family context. However, immigrant integration, especially in the case of youth, is not an individual process but truly a family affair, and programming needs to be designed within this reality (Shields and Lujan Forthcoming; Shields et al. Forthcoming).

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