

Examining the Lived Experiences of Integration by Refugees Residing
in Winnipeg, Manitoba

by

Maja Aziraj

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Family Social Sciences

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Copyright © 2018 Maja Aziraj

Acknowledgements

I have faced many struggles and obstacles in the writing of this thesis, and although at times it felt as if I would never complete it, I am grateful for the people along the way who helped me in one way or another.

First of all, I would like to thank my first three academic advisers, Wilder Robles, Rachel Eni and Regine King, and my committee members, Caroline Piotrowski and Jessica Senehi for their guidance, patience and support. I also want to send a special thank-you to Andrew Hatala for his dedication and support, but especially for motivating and believing in me during a time of high stress. His support was invaluable.

I feel very much indebted to all my informants for their significant contribution. For the individuals who shared their stories with me and gave me their time from their very busy schedule.

I would also like to give special thank-you to my husband Peter Harrison Brown, my best friend and strongest supporter. He and our daughter, Emma have sacrificed a lot during the writing of this thesis.

Finally, I would like to thank my dad, Mirsad Aziraj for always believing in me and telling me that I could do anything. Losing him during the writing of this thesis was the biggest struggle I faced and continue to deal with every day. I know you are proud of me. I love you.

Thank you all very much,

Maja Aziraj

Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
1.1. Demographics of Refugees in Canada	1
1.2. My Refugee Experience	4
1.3. Research Question	5
Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework	7
2.1. Literature Review.....	7
2.1.1. The Manitoba Context	10
2.2. Theoretical Framework.....	19
2.2.1. John Berry’s Acculturation Framework.....	19
2.2.2. Limitations of John Berry’s Acculturation Framework.....	22
2.2.3. Social Capital Theory	23
Chapter 3: Methodology	26
3.1. Overview	26
3.2. Participants.....	27
3.3. Confidentiality	29
3.4. Ethical Issues	30
3.5. Data Collection	30
3.6. Potential Distress	31
3.7. Data Analysis.....	32
3.8. Reflections on the Research Process.....	34
3.8.1. Difficulties Encountered	35
3.9. Methodological Rigour	36
Chapter 4: Results	38
4.1. Introduction.....	38
4.2. Life During the First Year.....	39
4.2.1. Canada as a Prosperous Destination	39
4.2.2. Problems with the First Year of Arrival	40
4.2.3 Cold Canadian Winters	44
4.2.4. Learning the Language	44

4.3. Social Connections as a Lifeline.....	45
4.3.1. Social Networks	45
4.3.2. Connections to Assistance	48
4.3.3. Bond with Faith/Cultural Group	52
4.4. Employment in Winnipeg	54
4.4.1. Back to School	54
4.4.2. Journey to Employment	55
4.5. Integration Experiences	56
4.5.1. Longing for Family Back Home	56
4.5.2. Struggles with Life in Winnipeg.....	57
4.5.3. Successes with Life in Winnipeg.....	59
4.5.4. Feelings of Integration	60
Chapter 5: Discussion	64
5.1. How Refugees Experience Integration in Winnipeg	64
5.2. The Importance of Social Capital	67
5.3. Implications for Social Programs and Refugee Services.....	70
5.4. Future Research	72
5.5. Limitations of the Present Study.....	73
5.6. Conclusion	75
References	77
Appendix	88
Appendix 1. Participant Recruitment Poster.....	88
Appendix 2. Interview Schedule.....	89
Appendix 3. Participant Consent Form.....	92
Appendix 4. Ethics Certificate	95

List of Tables and Figures

Table	Page
1. Top 5 Countries of Origin 2016.....	2
2. Syrian Refugees by Province Between November 2015-July 2016.....	3
3. Refugees in Manitoba by Metropolitan Area, January 2015-May 2017.....	4
4. Berry's (1984) Acculturation Model	20
5. Master Themes and Subthemes	38

Figure	Page
1. The Role of the Larger Society	21

Abstract

This thesis examines the integration experiences of refugees in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Using Berry's acculturation model and Social Capital theory, this research aims to gain a critical understanding of the challenges facing these newcomers during their integration experiences. This research used qualitative methods through semi-structured interviews with three participants. Results have shown that the pathway to integration is not fixed, but rather fluid and may change over time. Findings indicate that forming social networks with the larger Canadian society and within faith/cultural groups are significant factors to refugees' feelings of integration. This study suggests that social programs and refugee services in Winnipeg create opportunities for networking and collaboration amongst each other by sharing information, new innovations and best practices. It is also suggested that social programs and refugee services should also support the Canadian society in its process of adaptation to newcomers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The migration of individuals from one place to another has occurred throughout history. For thousands of years, migrants around the world have chosen to leave their home countries on discovery missions and in search of a better life in foreign places. Unfortunately, many others with little choice have been forced to leave their place of birth. Unlike immigrants, refugees are individuals who have not chosen to leave their home countries. Instead, they have often faced conflict and persecution and have had to settle into new communities with little or no resources. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the lived experiences of integration by refugees residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

More specifically, the goal of this research is to gain first-hand knowledge from refugees regarding their lived experiences of settling and integrating into Winnipeg, Manitoba. The focus is on understanding the social, economic and cultural factors and contexts that hinder or promote the integration of refugees into Canadian society. It is important to understand the integration experiences of newcomers as they help our province grow, become stronger and add to the cultural diversity that already exists. Gaining insight into refugees' lived integration experiences can help to facilitate the overall settlement process for newcomers in our province by informing policy makers and developers of social programs. As this thesis outlines below, there are important reasons for choosing to focus on the lived experiences of refugees and integration.

1.1. Demographics of Refugees in Canada

By the end of 2014, out of a growing population of 7 billion inhabitants on the entire planet, 59.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations (UNHCR, 2015). This is the highest annual increase in a single year with 8.3 million persons more than the year before (UNHCR, 2015). Of particular

concern is the rapid acceleration of displacement that has occurred in the last three years. Since 2011, the world has been challenged with a 40% increase in displaced persons, when the levels stood at 42.5 million (UNHCR, 2015). Out of the 59.5 million displaced persons worldwide in 2014, 19.5 million were considered refugees (UNHCR, 2015). In the same year, Canada hosted 29,812 refugees (Statistics Canada, 2016).

As the numbers of refugees continues to increase in Canada, research focusing on their integration and settlement experience is becoming more important. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Canada resettled 46,700 refugees in 2016, marking the largest number of refugees admitted in a single year since 1978, when the Immigration Act came into effect (Nyembwe, 2017). The top country of origin for the same year was Syria (UNHCR, 2016).

Table 1.
Top 5 Countries of Origin 2016

Country	Number of Refugees
Syria	33,266
Eritrea	3,934
Iraq	1,650
Congo	1,644
Afghanistan	1,354

The recent increase in the number of refugees in Canada can be attributed to the Government of Canada’s initiative to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees by 2016. As of January 29, 2017, 40,081 Syrian refugees have been resettled under the initiative (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2017). Between November 2015 and July 2016, the Province of Manitoba

welcomed 988 Syrian refugees (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2016a). Table 2 outlines the number of Syrian refugees welcomed to Canada by province between November 2015 and July 2016 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2016b).

Table 2.

Syrian Refugees by Province Between November 2015-July 2016

NL	PEI	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	YT	Not Stated
282	215	1,061	1,421	5,674	12,377	988	1,188	3,700	2,610	11	19

The province of Manitoba is a popular destination choice for many refugees, with roughly 1,000 people arriving annually for the last 10 years (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). In 2014, Manitoba settled 435 government-assisted refugees (6%) and 1,004 privately sponsored refugees, the highest number per capita in Canada (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2015). About 57% of government-assisted refugees came to Manitoba from Somalia, Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo and Eritrea, and about 92% of privately sponsored refugees came from Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2015). According to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (2017), the city of Winnipeg settled a total of 6,420 refugees between January 2015 to May 2017 (see Table 3).

Table 3.*Refugees in Manitoba by Metropolitan Area, January 2015-May 2017*

Metropolitan Area (Manitoba)	Number of Refugees
Winnipeg	6,065
Brandon	125
Steinbach	30
Other-Manitoba	205
Manitoba Total	6,420

1.2. My Refugee Experience

Self-reflexivity is of particular importance in qualitative research. It is argued that researcher's need to place a focus on self-knowledge and sensitivity, understand the role of self in the creation of knowledge and self-monitor the impact of their personal experiences on their research (Berger, 2013). According to Berger (2013), self-reflexivity can impact the research process in three ways. First, the researcher may gain greater access to participants as individuals feel more comfortable sharing their experiences with someone who they perceive as empathetic to their experiences (Berger, 2013). Second, reflexivity can shape the relationship between the researcher and participant, which can affect the information the participants are willing to share (Berger, 2013). Third, the background of the researcher affects the way in which he or she constructs the world and thus may shape the conclusions and findings of the study (Berger, 2013).

I was born in Sarajevo in 1987, the capital city of Bosnia-Herzegovina, formerly known as Yugoslavia. I lived with my mother, father and brother in a small apartment in the centre of the city. When I was five years old, a civil war had started in my country that forced my mother,

brother and I to leave our home very quickly. My father, who had extensive military training, stayed behind to fight in the war.

For two years after, my mother, brother and I lived in Czechoslovakia in a refugee camp. Communication with my father was extremely limited during this time and we all struggled with the unknowns surrounding his safety and well-being. In 1995, our refugee camp was shut down by the Czech government and we were told that we would be going to Canada to settle and live permanently. One year later, my father was able to join us in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

As a young child arriving to a new country, I remember feeling excited about the snow, school and new friends I was able to make. However, I also remember that the settlement process was vastly different for my parents than it was for my brother and I. My parents seemed to struggle with the new culture and way of life in Canada. I noticed that for the first few years they were feeling frustrated and angry as they tried to rebuild their lives in a new country with two young children. I also noticed that it took my father much longer to feel settled in Canada than it had taken my mother. This difference in settlement experiences for my parents made me interested in conducting research with refugees. I wanted to learn more about what promotes or hinders successful integration and settlement among refugees in Winnipeg, Manitoba. What is the role of the host society? And what can service providers do to help?

1.3. Research Question

Research questions in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis projects are usually framed broadly and openly. There is no attempt to test a predetermined hypothesis of the researcher; rather, the aim is to explore, flexibly and in detail, an area of concern (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

The central research question for this study is the following: What are the lived experiences of integration for refugees residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba?

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. Literature Review

The term “integration” has recently been widely utilized in the literature surrounding refugees (Eastmond, 2011; Phillimore, 2011; Pittaway, Muli, & Shteir, 2009; Olwig, 2011; Moreira & Baeninger, 2010). The concept has also become a key policy goal for many governments, as reflected in an appendix of thirty-six varying interpretations of integration compiled by Ager and Strang (2008) in which six were explicitly defined by governments. However, there continues to be variations among academics, governments and NGOs about what constitutes successful integration. Ager and Strang (2008) suggest that the varying definitions and interpretations successful integration demonstrate a dependence on context and perspective, where differing policies, histories, cultures and attitudes have influenced the integration of refugees within society.

Perhaps the two most widely cited publications defining refugee integration are those by Ager and Strang (2008) and Castles, Korac, Vasta, and Vertovec (2002). Ager and Strang (2008) derived a framework for understanding refugee integration in the UK from their “Indicators of Integration” study in 2002. Ager and Strang (2008) argue that an individual or group is integrated within a society when they achieve public outcomes such as employment, when they have become socially connected and when they have sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge. Castles et al. (2002) developed an interpretation of integration from their project “Integration: Mapping the Field,” which surveyed British research on immigrants and refugees between the years of 1996 to 2001. Castles et al. (2002) argue that “Integration is a two-way process of adaptation, involving changes in values, norms and behaviour for both

newcomers and members of the existing society” (p. 113). Additional research on refugee integration also supports the idea of integration as a multidimensional process that includes involvement from both refugees and the host society (see Berry, 1992; Baffoe, 2011).

In Canadian policy, integration is viewed as a two-way process. The 2012 Plans and Priorities Report for Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2011a) indicates that the settlement and integration of newcomers, one of ten program activities, received more funding than all other programs combined. Under this program, the integration of refugees is centred on information/orientation, language/skills, labour market access and welcoming communities (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011a). Tunis (2010) suggests a welcoming community should openly receive newcomers and create an inclusive environment, strive to understand the needs of newcomers and offer support. They should also provide access to a full range of services and programs and ensure newcomers are able to participate fully in all aspects of community life and Canadian society with responsibility falling on newcomers to act upon the opportunities provided.

An alternative term used for the process of settlement of refugees and their interaction with the host society is assimilation. Assimilation refers to the process by which immigrants become similar to individuals living in the host society, particularly in a cultural sense – leading to the reduction of ethnic difference between them (Rumbaut, 1997). However, the term is not widely used in Canadian society to describe the settlement of immigrants. Fostering social connections with refugees and the wider community goes beyond instilling a sense of belonging as refugees settle into Canadian society. These social connections can help with other aspects of integration, such as access to employment opportunities, marital prospects, creating friendships

(Gold & Kibria, 1993), financial assistance (Lamba & Krahn, 2003), and maintaining cultural and religious ties (Eby, Iverson, Smyers, & Kekic, 2011).

A literature review of public opinion research on Canadian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration for the years of 2006–2009 (Soroka & Robertson, 2010) found that positive perceptions are widespread when Canadians are asked about the effect of immigration on their city or community. It was found that half (50%) of Canadians say immigration has a “very” or “somewhat positive” effect, compared to 15% who say it has a “negative” effect (one-third chose to say “neither”) (Soroka & Robertson, 2010).

Although Canadian public attitudes towards newcomers tend to be generally positive, there continue to be instances where refugees face discrimination and racism in Canadian society, hindering their social integration and sense of belonging. Studies have shown a positive link between perceived discrimination by newcomers and mental health and depression symptoms (Montgomery & Foldspang, 2007; Noh et al., 1999). A study of Afghan youth in Canada found that prejudice and discrimination was a powerful and explicit theme influencing cultural identity, with many youth choosing to keep their cultural identity a secret to the wider community (De Maio & Kemp, 2010).

Family and community connections have shown to be particularly important in helping refugees integrate into new communities (Ager & Strang, 2008; Williams, 2006). Many refugees will arrive into new communities with little or no resources and may only have their families and/or ethnic communities and organizations to rely on. In the following excerpt, an Afghan refugee describes the difficulty of settling into a host community without the support of family and community: *“Imagine when you go to a country where you are new and you don’t know*

anybody and you don't have any relatives and no friends. You don't know anything about their culture and nothing from the language. Would that be easy to live or hard?" (Phillimore, 2011).

A study of 525 adult refugees in Canada found that despite the often sudden and unplanned nature of refugees' departure from their homeland, a minority managed to stay connected with extended family networks and almost half have plans to increase these networks (Lamba & Krahn, 2003). "Although refugees typically arrive in Canada with limited financial capital and often with undervalued human capital, they bring with them and maintain considerable stocks of social capital" (Lamba & Krahn, 2003, p. 344). Another study of 120 immigrants and refugees in Canada found that family members, friends and peers were the primary sources of support for refugees with ethnic community organizations and mainstream organizations serving as secondary sources of support (Stewart et al., 2008). In the same study, participants reported barriers to coping with integration and settlement when social networks were inadequate or depleted.

2.1.1 The Manitoba Context

Manitoba has a rich history of receiving refugees since the arrival of world war two refugees to the more recent refugees from wars and persecution in Europe, Middle East and Africa. Refugees are an important component of Manitoba's annual immigration flows and make up 9% of all immigrants settling in province (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2014). Settling into a new country and community such as Manitoba is not easy for refugees, especially as they navigate through various systems such as health, housing and education. It is important to understand the specific needs, challenges and experiences of the refugee population in Manitoba in order to

provide appropriate settlement services which in turn will help refugees call our province “home.”

In Manitoba, the oral histories of refugees have been collected since 1945 for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada-funded project “Stories of Homeland, Violence, and Migration: Memories and Histories of Refugees in Manitoba” (Freund, 2015). The project looks at Canadian history through refugees’ experiences, memories and stories of homeland, violence and migration and analyzes how these have contributed to their integration and building of meaningful lives in Manitoba. A recent study by Freund (2015) examined how three different groups of refugees (European Post War displaced persons, Salvadoran and Afghanistan) narrate home in Winnipeg through life story oral histories. The study found that refugees are continually engaged in the process of making home and their experience is shaped by drawing on experiences, stories, traditions and memories that were formed in their countries of origin and countries along the migration route (Freud, 2015).

As refugees continue to settle into Manitoba and call our province “home,” they will face specific challenges relating to their integration experiences such as housing, income, employment, language, family matters, health and social/emotional support. Housing is particularly important to refugees’ integration experience and is their most immediate need upon arrival. Quality affordable housing can provide refugees with a stable base from which they can improve upon their language skills, further their education, enquire skills training and gain suitable employment (Preston, Murdie, D’Addario, Sibanda, Murnaghan, 2011).

A two-year study of recently arrived refugees (Carter, Polevychok, Friesen, & Osborne, 2008) highlighted housing challenges in Winnipeg during the first year or arrival. The study found that affordability, overcrowding and safety were the major challenges refugees face with

finding quality housing (Carter, Polevychok, Friesen, & Osborne, 2008). In addition, the majority of respondents did not know their rights and responsibilities as tenants and felt they faced discrimination in the housing market (Carter, Polevychok, Friesen, & Osborne, 2008).

Another study in Winnipeg focused on the quality and type of housing refugees were able to find, the cost and affordability of their housing, their level of housing satisfaction and their relationship with landlords and caretakers (Carter, Polevychok & Osborne, 2009). The study found that refugees in Winnipeg do not face the affordability problems that are common in larger cities such as Toronto; however with lower than average incomes, housing costs can be a source of stress (Carter, Polevychok & Osborne, 2009). The study also found that refugees have a relatively high satisfaction with the neighbourhoods they live in except for those living in the inner-city who reference safety and security concerns as the main reasons they would like to move to non-inner city neighbourhoods.

A recent study by Silvius, Al-Ubeady, Chyz-Lund, Colorado and Halldorson (2017) examined the housing needs of Syrian refugees in Manitoba and the role of service providers in assisting refugees with their housing needs. The case of Syrian refugees in Manitoba was particularly interesting because of the large number of arrivals in a compressed period of time. The study highlights the importance of increased government funding of resources devoted to staffing, infrastructure and rent supplementation in the success of housing Syrian refugees (Silvius, Al-Ubeady, Chyz-Lund, Colorado and Halldorson, 2017). Although community-based organizations received funding from governments, the “temporary nature of such supports has jeopardized the community’s ability to serve ongoing arriving Syrian refugees” (Silvius, Al-Ubeady, Chyz-Lund, Colorado and Halldorson, 2017, pg. 2). The authors call on provincial and federal governments to focus attention on increasing the temporary/transitional housing capacity

of refugee serving organizations, restoring rent supplements and prioritizing the hiring and retention of skilled workers within the refugee serving sector beyond a temporary basis (Silvius, Al-Ubeady, Chyz-Lund, Colorado and Halldorson, 2017).

In addition to housing needs, refugees often arrive to Manitoba with specific health challenges. Compared to immigrants, refugees generally have greater health needs that are shaped by the traumatic refugee experience and settlement process (Gabriel, Morgan-Jonker, Phung, Barrios & Kaczorowski, 2011). A recent study by Woodgate, Busolo, Crockett, Dean, Amaladas and Plourde (2017) found that African immigrant and refugee families in Manitoba faced challenges when accessing primary health care including transportation, weather, employment, language, cultural differences and lack of social supports. Academic research in Manitoba tends to focus on mental health challenges, leaving a gap in the research of health and refugees. Future studies should include a focus on issues such as the effects of the refugee experience on health in Manitoba and the health status of recently arrived refugees.

A 2017 study utilized the method of photovoice to gain a deeper knowledge of the realities and lived experiences of refugees who have or are dealing with mental health problems in Winnipeg (Sherzoi, 2017). The participants in the study voiced concerns with the different social determinants of health that have an impact on their mental health and access to services such as structural barriers, non-recognition of non-Canadian credentials, underemployment and unemployment, poverty, homelessness, discrimination, stigma, language barriers, lack of culturally inclusive services, inequality, lack of a social network, and marginalization (Sherzoi, 2017).

Another study looked at the factors contributing to positive mental health outcomes among refugees to Winnipeg (Assam, 2015). The author found that refugees relied on five

resources to maintain positive mental health including support from macro and micro levels of interpersonal relationships, religious activities and spiritual beliefs/faith, hope for the future, educational opportunities and employment prospects (Assam, 2015). In addition, the study found that participants had confidence in the availability and accessibility of existing resources in Manitoba's health care system in providing for their basic needs (Assam, 2015).

In 2014, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) created a conceptual framework that outlines the requirements of a comprehensive approach to optimizing the mental health and emotional well-being of immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg. The report provides a listing of the social determinants/factors of mental health which are of importance to immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg, including socio-economic status following migration, isolation & absence of social support, language, employment, housing, resilience, healthy child development, barriers to accessing mental health, gender, culture, discrimination and age (WRHA, 2014). The WRHA suggests that providing mental health services to immigrants and refugees requires an understanding of how culture impinges on mental health (2014).

Most refugees arriving in Manitoba are settling into the capital city of Winnipeg, however some individuals are finding home in small towns and rural areas of the province. Settling into smaller communities can be more challenging for refugees due to the limited resources and services available to them. A 2016 study in Manitoba examined five rural communities' ability to welcome refugees (Ashton, Galatsanou, Cronkrite & Pettigrew, 2016). Among all five communities, language, including the availability of interpreters and English classes, and transportation, both within communities and getting to and from larger centres, were found to be a challenge (Ashton, Galatsanou, Cronkrite & Pettigrew, 2016). The study found that the availability of services was limited for some refugees in smaller towns, however all

participants felt welcomed into their new communities (Ashton, Galatsanou, Cronkrite & Pettigrew, 2016).

In another study, community-based organizations were asked their opinions on how they are addressing the challenges and opportunities for resettling refugees in the rural areas of Manitoba, their impression of rural communities capacity to resettle and retain refugees, what the unique needs of refugees resettling in rural areas are, and from a national perspective, what have been the challenges facing refugee resettlement and how these challenges may be addressed (Cronkrite, Galatsanou & Ashton, 2017). The study also found that community-based organizations have limited resources to meet the needs of refugees in smaller towns, however their capacity is increased by the strength of social connections that exist, the ability to mobilize available resources as well as the availability of housing options (Cronkrite, Galatsanou & Ashton, 2017).

The rural influx of refugees is also having an impact on Manitoba's education system that has traditionally been homogeneous. A study examining the impact of immigration on Southern Manitoba schools found that mainstream teachers, English as an Additional Language teachers, administrators and educational assistants needed additional professional learning opportunities to support new students with language barriers and culturally diverse backgrounds (Schellenberg, 2011). The author suggests a paradigmatic shift that challenges teachers' mental sets and core beliefs is needed to accommodate the needs of refugee of youth in rural areas .

Another study examined the educational needs and barriers for African refugee students in two inner-city high school in Manitoba (Kanu, 2008). The study found that many refugee families have limited knowledge of support systems in their new communities and language barriers which make navigating the education system difficult. In addition, many refugee

families do not have a set date for arrival which means refugee students can enter the classroom anytime during the school year and be placed into the grade that best matches their age. Grade placement can result in a setback for refugee students as they may be struggling with trauma resulting from war and oppression.

A 2011 study explored the experiences of an English as an Additional Language teacher in a Manitoba High School working with refugee students who have had their learning interrupted due to a variety of reasons (Melo, 2011). The study utilized narrative inquiry to inform readers what it is like to work with refugee youth in a school setting. Melo (2011) describes the impact of hearing the stories and experiences of students who fled war and persecution and the profound effects they had on teachers. “Teachers were more empathetic to the students and began to comprehend what it must have been like for these kids as they fled, as well as finding the courage to share something so private” (p. 10). According to Melo (2011), the teachers were more connected to the lives of their students as they gained insight into what their students were bringing into their classes on a daily basis.

In addition to navigating the educational system, refugee youth and their families face additional challenges when settling into Manitoba, such as gang recruitment and finding a sense of belonging (Fast, 2013; Mbabaali, 2012). A recent study explored the perceptions and life experiences of formerly gang-involved young adult refugees living in Winnipeg (Fast, 2013). The study found that participants faced many negative experiences and challenges in school, family, neighbourhood, ethnic community, peer group and with law enforcement. The lack of support systems in these six areas resulted in the unfulfilled basic needs of the participants and the void was filled by gangs. The participants expressed that engaged and passionate educators

have a positive impact on their lives as well as the need for more programming such as music, sports, employment, spiritual mentoring or counselling.

Mbabaali (2012) investigated a sense of belonging of war-affected refugee youth during their pre-migration and post-migration periods, as well as the factors that may enhance or hinder their sense of belonging. The participants in the study revealed that the pre-migration experiences of loss, uprooting, uncertainty and fear as well as the post-migration experiences of isolation, loneliness, acculturation stress, identity crisis, and discrimination challenged their sense of belonging to the community. However, they also identified the importance of educational programs, teachers' actions, peer supports and positive social interactions in helping them feel a sense of belonging in Manitoba.

Refugee families who settle in Manitoba find themselves coping with the stressors of adjusting to a new life and culture while at the same time caring for their children. A recent study examined the experiences of refugee fathers raising children in Winnipeg, Manitoba (Rezania, 2015). The study found that refugee fathers face numerous challenges including lack of knowledge on how to care for children, lack of extended family for support, burden of self-reliance, differing paces of acculturation by family members, marital issues and parenting children in a different social, cultural and legal environment (Rezania, 2015).

The literature surrounding refugees in Manitoba addresses a variety of factors affecting integration such as housing, employment, health and language. The literature helps build an awareness and understanding of the Manitoba context as it supports refugees through their integration and settlement experience. However, there remains a gap in the existing literature surrounding refugees and the settlement experience in Manitoba.

Most of the research in Manitoba focuses on the experiences refugees as they adapt to their new lives in the province with few studies examining the experiences of the host society as they react to the influx of refugees. Studies which include the experiences of both refugees and the host society can help us understand how Manitoban's experience integration. In addition, there are very few longitudinal studies surrounding refugees in Manitoba. This type of research design could help us answer important questions such as what are the long-term health outcomes for refugees? Do they reach their educational and employment goals? How do social connections with Manitoban's affect the settlement experience over time?

There is no research examining the experiences of French-speaking refugees who make Manitoba their home. Manitoba's strong Francophone heritage makes it a unique province to settle in for French-speaking refugees. Nearly 9% of Manitoba's population can speak both English and French (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2017). Eight percent of Franco-Manitobans are born abroad and nearly half of those immigrants are born in Africa (Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, 2017). Understanding the experiences of bilingual refugees in Manitoba can help add to the existing knowledge of integration experiences in our province.

Finally, most of the refugee research in Manitoba does not distinguish between the different categories of refugees. Privately-sponsored refugees, government-assisted refugees and refugee claimants should be studied separately as they exhibit distinctive characteristics such as age and educational level which may affect their settlement experiences. Studying the different types of refugees separately can also help shed light on services as the different categories often have different access to services.

This study adds to the refugee integration literature in Manitoba by examining the experiences of integration from the views of participants themselves. More specifically, the study helps us to understand the meaning that refugees in Manitoba assign to their settlement experience by utilizing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The research analyzes factors which affect integration and highlights the successes and challenges of settling in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1. John Berry's Acculturation Framework

Berry's acculturation model can be utilized in understanding refugees' experiences of social and cultural integration by placing emphasis on cultural maintenance and participation with one's own ethnic or national group and the wider community. Berry's bi-dimensional acculturation framework (1984) identifies the acculturation strategies individuals and groups utilize when interacting in culturally plural societies, such as Canada. Culturally plural societies are the result of immigration in which several different cultural groups (e.g. refugees, immigrants, indigenous peoples) live together within a diverse society (Berry, 1997). In this context, acculturation refers to "the general processes and outcomes of intercultural contact" (Berry, 1997, p. 8). Berry's framework can assist in the understanding of refugee integration in Canada as it acknowledges the multicultural context, incorporates minority individuals such as refugees and recognizes that each individual has some choice in the path they take in the acculturation process (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

Berry (1984) proposes that there are two principles underlying the process of acculturation, including the degree of one's own cultural maintenance and the degree of contact

and participation with host societies. It is these two principles that influence the two questions that form the model: 1) Is it considered to be of value to maintain one’s own cultural identity and characteristics? and 2) Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with other groups? (Berry, 1992). The “yes” or “no” answers to these questions generate a fourfold model (see Table 4) where the quadrants represent one of the following acculturation paths: assimilation, separation or segregation, marginalization and integration (Berry, 1992)

Table 4.
Berry’s (1984) Acculturation Model

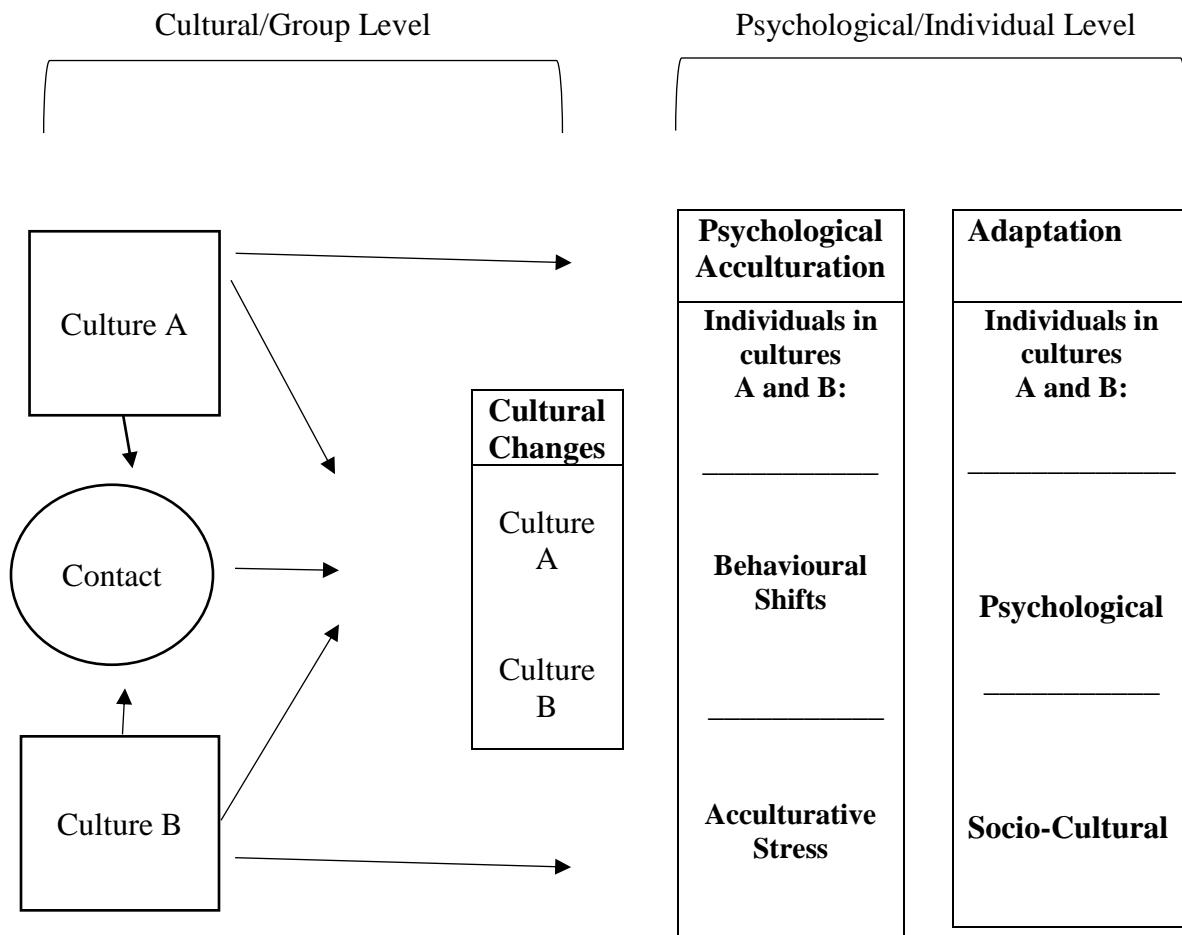
Is it considered to be of value to develop relationships with the larger society?	YES	Assimilation	Integration
	NO	Marginalization	Separation
Is it considered to be of value to maintain one’s cultural heritage?		NO	YES

Assimilation is the outcome when the first question is answered “yes” and the second answered “no,” resulting in the full absorption of the characteristics of the new culture, commonly referred to as the “melting pot” (Berry, 1992). Separation or segregation occurs when individuals choose cultural maintenance while avoiding contact with host societies. This process can also be involuntary when it is imposed by the dominant group (Berry, 1992). Marginalization occurs when individuals do not maintain their own culture and reject the new culture. Finally, integrated individuals are those who choose to maintain their own cultural characteristics while also adopting the characteristics of the new culture.

Berry (2005) argues that the relationships between the attitudes of the wider society to acculturation, and acculturating groups is of theoretical importance. Berry (2005) has illustrated this importance in a model which shows that in order for integration to be possible for minority

groups (such as refugees) a mutual accommodation is required whereby both groups accept the rights of everyone to live as culturally different peoples. This requires refugees to accept the basic values of the Canadian society, while at the same time Canadian Society must be prepared to meet the needs of all the groups living together in a plural society (Berry, 2005; Figure 1).

Figure 1.
The Role of the Larger society



In Canada, the acculturation paths of refugees vary *between* and *within* the different cultural and ethnic groups (see Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2009; Dona & Berry, 1994; Hopkins, 2010; Hyman, Vu, & Beiser, 2000; Samuel, 2009). In a study of the acculturation and ethnic identity paths of 101 Central American refugees in Canada, the authors found all four of Berry's

modes of acculturation were utilized (Dona, 1991). However, in another study of former Yugoslavian refugees in Canada, all six participants reported achieving integration through various pathways, although some contemplated assimilation (Djuraskovic & Arthur, 2009).

2.2.2. Limitations of John Berry's Acculturation Framework

Scholars have criticized the bi-dimensional nature of Berry's acculturation model (see Ngo, 2008; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga & Szapocznik, 2010). Ngo (2008) argues that immigrants may view their cultural identities differently at various points in life and even experience a false sense of identity; therefore the model should take into consideration factors that have been involved in the formation of multiple identities such as race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. Ngo (2008) also criticizes the model's sole focus on immigrants' perception of their relationships to the dominant culture. Ngo (2008) argues that this focus "undermines the dominant-subordinate interactive processes that involve 'othering,' exclusion, negotiation, acceptance, accommodation, and so forth, and have varying impacts on immigrants' relationships with the dominant culture" (p. 18).

Another criticism of the model is its attempt to categorize all immigrants equally, using the same four acculturation strategies regardless of the type of migrant, the countries of origin and settlement, and the ethnic group in question (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga & Szapocznik, 2010). The model implies that individual differences in acculturation outcomes are the result of specific choices made by refugees and not influenced by certain demographic and contextual factors such as race. For instance, refugees from visible minorities may be faced with integrating themselves into a host society that does not fully accept them because of discrimination and stereotyping.

A further critique of Berry's acculturation model is the suggestion that the acculturation strategies chosen by refugees are fixed, rather than fluid. The model implies that once a strategy is chosen, it cannot be changed. It also implies that refugees cannot experience more than one acculturation strategy as they settle into a new country. For instance, a refugee may experience separation for a short period of time before moving to integration.

2.2.3. Social Capital Theory

Social Capital Theory is widely utilized to understand how social connections within and between refugee populations and the wider community have aided in the integration process (see Torezani, Colic-Peisker, & Fozdar, 2008; D'Addario, Hiebert, & Sherrell, 2007; De Vroome & Van Tubergen, 2010; Morrice, 2007; Lamba, 2003). Social capital can be defined as the ability to access resources through social networks (Foley & Edwards, 1999) grounded in trust and participation (Veenstra, 2002). "One of the assumptions of social capital theory is that the individual alone is socially ineffective . . . when one interacts . . . there will be an accumulation of social capital, which satisfies not only one's own social needs but [the entire community's needs]" (Boateng, 2010, p. 388).

Bourdieu (1986), an influential French sociologist, argues that social capital is not always consciously pursued; it may arise as a by-product of activities engaged in for other purposes. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) define social capital as "the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (p. 119). For Bourdieu (1986) social capital refers to an unequally distributed resource that is produced and invested in by social actors for their individual and mutual benefit.

Coleman (1988) proposes a model in which social capital is one of the potential resources which an individual can use, alongside other resources such as their own skills and expertise, tools, or money. He argues that social capital is a resource that is not owned, but rather available to individuals. For example, if you live on a street with a free community garden, then you have access to a form of social capital that others who live in more industrialized areas may not have. In his model, Coleman further highlights social capital as a resource based on trust and shared values, and as a source of useful everyday information which can facilitate certain kinds of actions that in its absence would not be possible.

According to Lin (1999), individuals invest in social networks to increase their chances of returns such as employment, housing and access to choices otherwise not available. He argues that there are three explanations as to why social networks work to increase returns for individuals. First, they facilitate the flow of information. Social ties can provide an individual with useful information about opportunities and choices otherwise not available and may alert an organization or community about the availability and interest of an otherwise unrecognized individual. Second, social networks influence individuals who play a critical role in decisions such as recruiters or supervisors. Third, “social tie resources, and their acknowledged relationships to the individual, may be conceived by the organization or its agents as certifications of the individual's social credentials, some of which reflect the individual's accessibility to resources through social networks and relations -- his/her social capital” (p. 31). This is especially important for refugees as “one of the few resources available to most refugees is social capital in the form of social support networks” (Lamba & Krahn, 2003, p. 336)

A study by Lamba and Krahn (2003) on social capital and refugee integration in Canada found that most adult refugees remain part of at least some familial networks. The study

found that as resettlement continues, refugees expand their social networks to neighbours, co-workers, employers and other community members. These social networks were valuable in providing assistance and support when refugees are faced with financial, employment, personal or health problems (Lamba & Krahn, 2003). However, in another study refugees claimed that their social capital has little or no value in the Canadian labour market and that their current networks may not be sufficient to compensate for their occupational mobility (Lamba, 2003).

In a study of refugees in Sweden, social capital mediated the effects for psychological distress (Johnson, Rostila, Svensson, & Engstrom, 2017). In this study, social capital explained the differences in mental health for some immigrant groups as they may lack social support systems important for maintaining mental health, highlighting its role as a potentially important post-migration factor. In another study of Canadian Iraqi-Christian's, social capital was a resource that reduced psychological stressors and lead to an improvement in the health and well-being of participants (Abdulahad, Graham, Montelpare & Brownlee, 2014).

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Overview

The central aim of this thesis is to capture refugees' lived experiences of settling and integrating into Winnipeg, Manitoba, thus suggesting that the qualitative paradigm is most appropriate for this study. Designs are most effective when they are dictated by the nature of the research question (Vogt, 2008). As such, the research is conducted through a phenomenological lens, utilizing the methodology of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Methodology is a procedure of doing research and the overall approach to answering the what, why and how, which in turn leads to certain tools, methods and techniques of inquiry (Hegde, 2015)

IPA is concerned with the individual's experience in making sense of their personal and social worlds (Smith & Osborne, 2003). Smith (2004) argues that the characteristic features of IPA can be described as idiographic, inductive and interrogative. IPA is idiographic as it intensely examines the details of each case before moving onto another and so on (Smith, 2004). IPA is also inductive as it does not attempt to verify any specific hypothesis and utilizes methodologies that are flexible in nature, allowing for unanticipated themes (Smith, 2004). The interrogative aspect of IPA suggests that a contribution to the field of social sciences will be made through studying the lived experiences of individuals' personal and social worlds (Smith, 2004).

The nature of IPA is dynamic, with the researcher seen as taking on an active role in interpretation while attempting to understand phenomena through the perspective of the participants (Smith & Osborne, 2003). As these authors suggest, "the participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world" (Smith & Osborne, 2003). The researcher attempts to capture the

participant's voice while contextualizing their experiences and concerns (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006).

Utilizing IPA in the study of refugees' experiences of integration in Winnipeg, Manitoba ensures data is collected and analyzed through the perspective of the participants, with results describing the meanings and lived experiences of integration for a group of refugees. As IPA is concerned with understanding what the participant thinks or believes, this approach meets the central aim of the study: to capture former refugees' lived experiences of integrating into Winnipeg, Manitoba.

This chapter describes the process of data collection and presentation. To start, I will present the characteristics of the participants chosen and the procedures of data collection and data analysis. This chapter also depicts some of the difficulties encountered during the research process.

3.2. Participants

The target population for this study is former refugees who are English-speaking and residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Participants must have lived in Canada for minimum of ten years and been between the ages of 18–39 at the time of arrival. It was assumed that a minimum of ten years of residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba is an adequate amount of time for individuals to reflect on their integration experiences. There were no restrictions placed upon potential participants' country of origin.

The primary data was collected from 3 individuals, 2 men and 1 women. All participants chose a pseudonym for their names in order to protect their identity. The pseudonyms chosen in this study included Hasan, Nadia and Jamil. Hasan is a 38-year-old male born in Somalia who

lived as a refugee in Kenya. He arrived to Winnipeg alone, with his wife and 3 children joining him a few years later. Nadia is a female who described her age as “in my thirties”. She was born in Afghanistan and lived as a refugee in Iran. She arrived to Winnipeg with her mother and younger sister. Jamil is a 29-year-old male born in Sudan. He lived as a refugee in Egypt for 7 years and arrived in Winnipeg with his younger brother. Jamil had extended family living in Winnipeg prior to his arrival.

According to Smith and Osborn (2008), for students using the methodology of IPA for the first time, 3 is a useful number for the sample. The authors suggest that “this allows sufficient in-depth engagement with each individual case but also allows a detailed examination of similarity and difference, convergence and divergence (Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 57). IPA sacrifices breadth for depth and its distinctive feature includes a commitment to a detailed interpretative account of the cases involved, which may only realistically be done with a small sample (Smith & Osborn, 2008).

Informants were interviewed in a private room at their place of work and they were asked open-ended questions about their overall experience of integrating into Winnipeg society. In particular, participants were asked about their experience of finding work/volunteer opportunities, housing, financial support or any other support upon arrival and the role social connections served in the same areas. All participants answered the same questions (Appendix 2).

The participants were selected using purposive sampling. The aim of utilizing purposive sampling in this study was to recruit participants from a particular social group (refugees) who are willing to be open about their experiences. Snowball sampling was used to recruit one of the participants. Snowball sampling is a type of purposive sampling where existing participants

recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. In this study, Hasan recruited Nadia. The purpose of the sampling used in this study was not to gain a statistical representation of refugees living in Winnipeg but rather to understand the nature of the lived experiences of integration from the perspective of the participants.

Initially, participant recruitment was attempted using posters (Appendix 1) through community centers, faith/cultural centres and online through Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations monthly e-newsletter. After 2 months, this form of recruitment proved to be unsuccessful in recruiting any participants. A personal connection between the principle investigator and an individual working at the Newcomers Employment and Education Development Centre Inc. was used to recruit the first and second participant. The third participant was recommended by the previous participant.

3.3. Confidentiality

Participants were notified of the nature of the interview and provided full consent before data collection began through a participant consent form (Appendix 3). In Social Sciences research, if data cannot be collected anonymously, researcher's must collect, analyze and report the data without compromising the identities of their participants (Kaiser, 2009). Participants were made aware that any data collected would be kept confidential, audio-recordings would be password protected on the principle investigators personal computer and subsequent transcriptions would have any potentially identifying information removed. Participants were made aware that the principle investigators academic adviser would have access to the transcripts in order to help with analysis.

3.4. Ethical Issues

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Joint-Faculty Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. The Ethics certificate can be found in Appendix 4.

3.5. Data Collection

Participants' narrative accounts of their experiences of integration in Winnipeg, Manitoba is the main source of data. Data was collected through audio-recorded semi-structured interviews. The central aim of utilizing the semi-structured interview is to understand each participant's own means and experiences of settling into Winnipeg, Manitoba through open dialogue with the researcher. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) explain that "the interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (p. 103). The IPA approach encourages using semi-structured interviews as the main data collection method, allowing the researcher flexibility to modify future questions and probe participants if interesting and important themes arise during dialogue (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Each participant was interviewed one time, on a one-on-one basis. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, with participants having the option of taking a break or terminating the interview at any time. Interviews were audio recorded with consent of the participants in order to avoid the intrusion of note taking by the researcher during the interview process and for the encouragement of open and uninterrupted dialogue. All audio-recorded interviews were transcribed by the principle investigator on her password protected personal computer.

The role of the researcher in IPA interviewing is interactive and interpretative; the researcher is trying to interpret the world through the eyes of the participants as they attempt to make sense of their own world, creating a two-stage interpretation process, or a double hermeneutic (Smith & Osborne, 2003). In order to interpret the integration experiences of refugees in Winnipeg, Manitoba from the participants' point of view, an adequate amount of time was given to participants to answer each question. In addition, minimal probes such as "tell me more about that," were used when respondents were exploring interesting themes and only one question was asked at a time to lower confusion for the respondent and researcher during data analysis and interpretation. Finally, participants' responses and non-verbal cues were observed to determine if certain lines of questioning are uncomfortable.

The semi-structured interview method creates and encourages open dialogue between the researcher and the participant and allows the researcher to ask each participant the same questions while choosing the ordering based on previous responses (Dearnley, 2005). However, for many individuals it can be a difficult process to share with another about one's intimate life. The refugee community may experience difficulties sharing their stories due to the sensitive and often traumatic experience prior to arrival. Lee (1993) suggests that when faced with situations of interviewing subjects on sensitive topics, the interviewer may resort to enduring and sharing the pain of the participant.

3.6. Potential Distress

Participating in this study carried a small risk of emotional distress as participants described and retold their stories of integration. The principle investigator regularly checked to see if participants were comfortable with the line of questioning or needed a break, as well as

reassuring them that they could terminate the interview at anytime without having to give a reason for doing so. Once they had agreed to be interviewed, no participants withdrew. At the end of each interview, the principle investigator and participant took part in a short debrief on the topics discussed during the interview. Participants were provided with contact details for the principle investigator, the academic adviser and the University of Manitoba's Research Ethics Board in the event they wanted more information or wished to complain about the research. Finally, a list of free counselling services was distributed to each participant at the beginning of the interview.

Despite the small risk of emotional distress during the interviews, there was also the potential for short-term benefits as participants shared their stories and personal feelings with someone else that has the potential to help others in the future. In addition, the benefits of taking part in this research included being listened to empathically and being given the space to reflect on past experiences.

3.7. Data Analysis

The aim of data analysis in IPA is to learn something interesting about how respondents' make meaning of their world (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Understanding the world through the eyes of the participant can be obtained through a sustained engagement with the text and a process of interpretation by looking in detail at the transcript of one interview before moving on to examine the others, case by case (Smith & Osborne, 2003). Interviews were read repeatedly and emerging themes were recorded. All of the themes were supported with verbatim extracts from the former refugees' interview transcripts. Anything that could potentially identify participants was omitted. Repeated words and utterances such as "umm" have been omitted for ease of reading unless

relevant for interpretation. Significant pauses are indicated using dots. For example, “...” would indicate a three-second pause.

Three general steps are followed in IPA data analysis: 1) look for themes in the first case, 2) find connections between the themes then 3) continue the analysis with other themes (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Look for Themes in the First Case

The first stage of data analysis involves reading the first transcript a number of times to capture what is interesting or significant about what the respondent said. The left margin is then used to record these thoughts and feelings as they arise during the reading of the transcript, eventually creating themes. Once emergent themes have been identified, they are noted in the right-hand side and “no attempt is made to omit or select any particular passages for special attention” (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 71).

Connect the Themes

In this stage, the themes are ordered in an analytical or theoretical manner rather than chronological in order to make sense of the themes (Smith & Osborne, 2003). During this stage, the researcher is attempting to interpret or make sense of what the participant is saying through clustered themes. Direct quotes from the participants will be used to support the related themes that have emerged. This stage is finalized when a table of clustered themes has been produced.

Continue the Analysis with Other Themes

Once the emergent themes have been finalized for the first case, the second case will start with step number one until emergent themes have been captured and so on. Once all cases have been analyzed for emergent themes, the researcher will look for patterns and new themes as they emerge. In addition, transcripts will be analyzed for “convergences and divergences in the data-recognizing ways in which accounts from participants are similar but also different” (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 73).

3.8. Reflections on the Research Process

In the qualitative research paradigm, the researcher is increasingly recognized as an instrument in the research process which requires a reflection on the techniques and biases that they bring into their work (Medico & Santiago-Delefosse, 2014). After all, no one can be purely objective, the researcher’s beliefs, values and moral stances are inseparable from the research process. Therefore, it is important to mindfully and intentionally reflect on the decisions made throughout the research process.

As I began to prepare to conduct interviews with former refugees in which I would engage them with open discussions about their integration and settlement experiences, I expected that my former experience as a refugee would allow me to connect especially well with my participants. The refugee experience acted as level of commonality between my participants and I, which seemed to create a trusting space for the participants to have their stories sought and heard. The ways in which I interacted with the participants was based in my own lived experiences as a refugee, and the ways in which I perceive the issues of settlement and integration.

I analyzed the data and looked for emergent themes through the lens of a former refugee. I noticed that I was labelling certain narratives as more important if they related to a personal experience of mine. I was also explicitly relating to the experiences of the participants during the interview process through quick comments such as “I can relate to that” or “That sounds very similar to what happened in my family.” The participants seemed to respond to my sincere interest in their lives as an opportunity to engage in a discourse about refugee experiences in Winnipeg. Through this reflection process, I have come to realize that it is important to be transparent about the influence my lived experience as a former refugee has on the research process.

3.8.1. Difficulties Encountered

Participant recruitment was one of the biggest challenges I encountered. Given the fact that the participants were no longer refugees, it was difficult recruiting individuals for a study on refugee integration. Many gave feedback that they were not comfortable discussing their integration experience or felt that they would not remember enough information to be a part of the study. Some expressed not having enough time for an interview. I relied heavily on personal connections with newcomer serving agencies to recruit for the study. The majority of participants were staff at the agencies.

Another challenge was transcribing the audio-recorded interviews due to the accents of the participants. In some cases, it was difficult to capture the full answer in written form, therefore I did some follow-up with participants over the phone. This challenge extended the time period for data collection.

3.9. Methodological Rigour

In qualitative research, rigour is the way in which we demonstrate integrity and legitimacy of the research process (Tobin & Begley, 2003). A recent study by Smith (2011) described some of the general quality indicators that are useful in IPA studies. Smith (2011) argues that IPA studies should include the following features:

- Collecting appropriate data from selected participants
- Degree of idiographic focus
- Focus on how things are understood and not what happened
- Appropriate use of commentary to achieve transparency
- Appropriate level of contextual detail
- Attention to process-both analytic and reflexive

In an effort to improve the rigour and trustworthiness of this study, the researcher used three strategies: member-checking, clarification of bias and transcribing the audio-recordings on their own.

Member-checking is an important quality control process in which participants receive the opportunity to review their statements for accuracy (Harper & Cole, 2012). One of the greatest benefits of member checking is that it verifies the accuracy of the findings which in turn helps to improve the validity of the study (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). In this study, member checking occurred at the end of the research process when the analyzed data was given to participants to review for authenticity. The participants were e-mailed a copy of the analyzed data to check whether a true representation was made of what they expressed during the interview. Out of the three participants, one replied in agreeance with the themes and the final

report. There were no additional efforts made to contact the remaining two participants for feedback.

Clarification of bias, or reflexivity, has been explicitly used throughout this study. The researcher has been transparent about her lived experience as a former refugee and the possible effects this may have had on the interpretation and approach to the study. In addition to the above, all the audio-recordings were transcribed by the researcher to ensure methodological rigour. Transcribing the audio-recordings allows the researcher to connect more deeply to the participants narratives as they are listened to multiple times. Through this process, the researcher can put themselves in another's shoes and see the world from that person's perspective.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1. Introduction

This chapter represents the results of an interpretative phenomenological analysis of three former refugees' lived experience of integration in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Four key themes emerged to form the basis for analysis.

1. Life during the first year
2. Social connections as a lifeline
3. Employment in Winnipeg
4. Integration experiences

These master themes and the subthemes contributing to them are summarized in table 5 below.

Table 5.
Master Themes and Subthemes

Life During the First Year	Canada as a prosperous destination
	Problems with the first year of arrival
	Cold Canadian winters
	Learning the language
Social Connections as a Lifeline	Social networks
	Connections to assistance
	Bond with faith/cultural groups
Employment in Winnipeg	Back to school
	Journey to employment
Integration Experiences	Longing for family back home
	Struggles with life in Winnipeg
	Successes with Life in Winnipeg
	Feelings of integration

The master themes and contributing subthemes will be expanded into a written narrative in the remainder of the chapter. All of the themes are supported with verbatim extracts from the former refugees' interview transcripts. Anything that could potentially identify participants has been omitted. Repeated words and utterances such as "umm" have been omitted for ease of reading unless relevant for interpretation. Significant pauses are indicated using dots, for example "... " would indicate a three-second pause.

4.2. Life During the First Year

All participants experienced mixed feeling upon arrival to Winnipeg, including excitement to be in a safe country as well as fear and anxiety over the unknown. They felt excited to arrive in a safe country that is known for its prosperity and had hope for the future and a better life in Winnipeg. These feelings were soon followed by fear and anxiety as they tried to rebuild their lives, including the desire and need to secure housing, employment and connections with others from their cultural or faith background. The cold Winnipeg winters were also found to be a factor in refugees' mixed feelings upon arrival. The participants were nervous for their first winter as none of them have experienced temperatures as cold as the ones found here in Winnipeg.

4.2.1. Canada as a Prosperous Destination

Canada was seen as a land of opportunities and participants held perceptions on what life in Canada would hold for them. Two of the participants had positive perceptions of Canada prior to arrival which added to their feeling of excitement when they learned they would settle in Winnipeg. The participants felt that Canada would provide them with many opportunities and

life would be better for them. Jamil's account seems to suggest he viewed coming to Canada as an improvement in his life where he would receive increased opportunities.

There was like a lot of happiness, excitement. New culture and new things.

The things that you watched on TV would become a reality. There was more space. Language, because people speak different languages. You have new neighbours. This was totally different.

As a government-assisted refugee, Nadia learned she would be settling in Canada from the United Nations while she was in a refugee camp with her family. She felt similar feelings of excitement to be moving to a country like Canada:

When United Nations told us that they were going to send us to Canada, we were so excited. And we thought all our problems will be finished. We are going to a first world country so we were happy and excited.

Nadia's perceptions of Canada prior to arrival hints to high expectations of what she thought life would be like in Canada. Inherent is a suggestion that Canada provides a life that is vastly different to the life experienced by refugees prior to arrival.

4.2.2. Problems with the First Year of Arrival

Newly arrived refugees to Winnipeg face a number of challenges due to their status as new arrivals. All of the participants faced some struggles with their first year of arrival including missing their family and friends back home, feelings of isolation, the cost of living, accessing services and navigating around the city. The participants' feelings seemed to change from excitement to fear and anxiety as they tried to rebuild their lives in Winnipeg.

Jamil describes the feelings he experienced as he thought about his friends and family back home. He struggled with having to leave friends and his support network behind in his country of origin:

My biggest fear was losing my friends back home because you leave all your friends. And you think, "Should I talk to them about my problems?" When I give good news, are they going to judge me because I left them behind in Egypt? It was basically fear about my friendships and family members that you may not see forever.

Loneliness and isolation were viewed as barriers that impede the integration experience. Hasan described feelings of isolation upon arriving in Winnipeg:

When I first arrived in Winnipeg I cried a lot and. ... It's difficult for men to cry in my culture because—. It was so isolating. I felt like I came to the end of the world where there is nothing. There is a hole. And it was very isolating at the beginning.

The cost of living in Winnipeg was difficult for the participants when they first arrived in Winnipeg. Financial resources were minimal making it difficult to purchase what they needed such as food and clothing. Jamil described the tensions he faced with his family as a result of the cost of living:

You feel like you are going to have a lot of money when you come here. My family were all like, "Can I buy this?"

I was like, "No."

They were like "Why?"

"You got to have money to buy that."

That was the case. A lot of pressure and getting mad at each other. People kind of argue a lot because they don't have enough money to buy something to eat or a brand-new pair of shoes. (Jamil)

Access to services was problematic for privately-sponsored refugees. Two of the participants were privately-sponsored refugees which meant they did not have the same access to resources that were available to the government-sponsored refugees. The participants were very clear about the resources and services that they were missing, which they considered to be crucial to their integration process. Jamil explained the lack of services available to him:

The only kind of support we got was through the church. On Saturdays, we kind of sit down and talk. It wasn't really like a service. We just come and chat about the difficulties as newcomers.

Services weren't that—. ... I don't know, maybe if I wasn't privately-sponsored—. I don't think services were really that available. Maybe they were available to government-sponsored. But honestly there was nothing beside hanging out with friends. There were no sorts of services really. (Hasan)

Hasan described how the lack of services made him feel like others around him did not understand his struggles with starting a new life in Canada. He describes how he feels about the differences in support for government-sponsored refugees and privately-sponsored refugees:

Sometimes you don't have help. People don't understand your struggles. Here the people that came through sponsorship were struggling more and the government didn't really pay attention to our needs. They think all the people that bring them here should be taking care of them. I feel like, "Why

the hell am I being treated differently?” We can’t all get the same services or...lack of services. We had to pay out of our own pockets. But if you came through the government, that may be covered.

Jamil described a similar situation with accessing resources as a privately-sponsored refugee:

Nothing. I got nothing. I came as a privately-sponsored refugee. So, I got...let me not say nothing. I got into social assistance for about a month. And still refugees can still get assistance from Employment Insurance Assistance. So I got assisted from Employment Insurance for about a month, and then I take care of myself. In terms of connecting with settlement services, I got nothing. Never got anything.

The lack of access to resources for Jamil also had an effect on finding employment or volunteer opportunities:

None. None at all. I don’t remember any place I went to that helped me find employment or employment opportunities. I worked on my own to find all these.

Navigating around Winnipeg was viewed by one participant as a struggle during the first year of arrival. In particular, a lack of understanding about the transit system made getting from place to place difficult:

A big struggle was means of transportation. I remember going to work. I did some part-time job that was on call. I remember taking the bus. I thought it ended at the end of Portage. I got late for work for one hour. Understanding the transit system was very difficult. (Hasan)

4.2.3. Cold Canadian Winters

The cold Canadian winters were a source of frustration and fear for all of the participants.

Weather-related challenges included fear of catching the cold virus, the vast amount of snow, the lack of people walking the streets and the bitter-cold temperatures. Nadia's account shows her fear and anxiety over arriving to Canada during the winter time and the possible effect the cold may have on her elderly mother:

When we arrived in Winnipeg, we arrived in January so it was very cold.

When we woke up, we looked out from the window and saw nobody outside on the street only snow and my mom start crying. The cold was one thing everyone was scared about and my mom might get sick and be sick constantly because of the cold.

Hasan also mentioned the Winnipeg winter in their account of the problems they faced during the first year of arrival:

Coming to a country that can be very cold is a big struggle. I came here in the fall so the winter was quite challenging. I remember it was quite cold. I felt like, "Why did I come here? Did I get cursed by my parents?"

Likewise, Jamil found the weather challenging:

The cold weather is so terrible. Lots of my friends moved away because of the weather.

4.2.4. Learning the Language

One participant arrived to Winnipeg speaking English and the other two participants learned English upon arrival. Both the participants took informal pathways to learn English, including

games and casual conversations with others. Nadia explained how her counsellor and her volunteer work helped her to learn English:

When I came to Canada, I only knew “Hi, how are you? My name is—.” So when I started going to school it was difficult. It was challenging. But I think listening to my counsellor advice of “Don’t be shy if you don’t know just go and talk” and that gave me courage. Volunteering at IRCOM and Welcome Place helped me lots because of translating.

Jamil described knowing a few English words due to the time he spent in a Catholic school growing up. He explains using games with his friends as a way to learn more English:

There was this game hangman. We used to play hangman, and it was kind of more like, I learned English through that.

4.3. Social Connections as a Lifeline

Social connections played a major factor in the integration experiences of all the participants.

One participant arrived to Winnipeg alone while the other two arrived with family. However, it was the connections they made upon arrival that helped the participants find work, housing and a sense of belonging. The two privately-sponsored refugees seemed to rely more on their faith/cultural groups while the government-sponsored refugee relied on her connections to individuals from organizations such as counsellors and school teachers.

4.3.1. Social Networks

In this study, social networks were formed both within formal organizations such as faith groups and immigrant and refugee serving organizations, and informal cultural and social networks. The

participants seemed to make social connections quickly upon arriving to Winnipeg. These social connections were seen to generate resources useful for emotional well-being and belonging. The participants' social networks were able to welcome them, facilitate settlement in informal ways, and connect them to the people, jobs and resources they know and use. Nadia described the first connections she made with others in Winnipeg:

We didn't know anyone in Winnipeg. Our first contact was with Welcome Place staff. And then we went to IRCOM. There were a few Afghan families. We also had friends from school, mostly newcomer and immigrant people.

The initial social connections Nadia made helped her connect to others and expand her social circle:

Our counsellor is from Iran. And where there was a function, she used to let us know and we would go. So that is how we made connections.

Hasan made connections with individuals from within his ethnic community and ones who spoke the same language:

I ended up in Winnipeg because I knew one person who lived in Winnipeg. So I ended up in Winnipeg. So immediately he connected me to a few people. My closest connection was Somalis who came from Kenya. The ones from Kenya, we speak Swahili. So, I was looking for those people. That was my immediate connection.

Hasan's informal network and the ability to participate with members of his community was regarded as more effective than government-sponsored integration programs or even more formal community-based initiatives. His informal support system seemed to reduce levels of

isolation, enhance his sense of belonging and help ease his integration into a new society. He described how this initial connection accounted for most of his integration support:

On the social side, I connected with members of my community. And you know there's more integration support from your own community than outside your community. Seventy percent of integration support comes from your own community, people in your inner circle. All these kinds of connections that you make that helps a lot.

The participants' connections to faith and/or cultural groups played a key role in their integration experiences. They offer mutual help which increased the sense of belonging and of being supported. Hasan's initial connections to his ethnic community also seemed to play a role in helping him find extracurricular activities:

Members of my community connected me to the local mosque where my social connections increased. Finding place to play soccer, for example, or place to play basketball, hanging out with younger people—all these connections that I received from my community.

Jamil had family in Winnipeg who helped him make connections with others. Jamil's connection to a local church also seemed to play a role in helping him find extra-curricular activities and making friends:

When I first arrived in Winnipeg, I knew there was family. There's one cousin that lived here. My cousin kind of helped me connect to people in the community. One time I remember him connecting me to these people, and these few introduced me to other people. I build a relationship through that

*and through people in the church. We went to summer camp with the church,
... So I build relationships with some kids from camp.*

Hasan described how his social circle had the biggest impact on his settlement experience:

*It was the biggest impact in terms of how I settled, found a job. Ended up in
Downtown. I lived in Downtown for eight years so all my connections were
in the downtown area.*

*I moved out. I live in Elmwood right now, but I still come to
Downtown because most of our friends are Downtown. So those social
connections endure and are lasting.*

4.3.2. Connections to Assistance

Participating in social networks was largely motivated by personal improvement including employment, housing and gaining knowledge. Participants received assistance from family members, community members, faith/cultural groups, and counsellors. Hasan described how the connection he made within his ethnic community helped him secure housing:

*Perhaps finding housing was the easiest thing for me because the community
was small. The Somali community was small. We were able to get together
quickly. So...people in the community, the social networks are very good. If
you know someone is looking for a place other people pass the information
on.*

*Mainly members from my community helped me with housing. No
external source helped me find a place to live. I was looking for a place to
live and someone in my community connected me with somebody who owned*

a house who rented rooming houses to people. And I got to meet him and he rented a place to me. He brought me to his place. He cooked lunch for me.

And he rented a place to me.

Jamil had family members living in Winnipeg prior to arrival. This social connection helped him and his family secure housing.

We stayed with family that lived here before us. When we left for Winnipeg they picked us up. And we stayed at the same house and basically didn't pay anything.

Nadia, a government-sponsored refugee was guaranteed housing from the government at Welcome place. Her housing counsellor assisted the family in finding housing. Her family was then relocated to IRCOM House where they were guaranteed housing for another three years:

I came as a government-assisted refugee so Welcome Place pick us up from the airport. Since we were a client of Welcome Place, the housing counsellor found us a place to live. We lived at IRCOM for three years, and after that we moved out.

Nadia also used her connection with her counsellors to ask for advice on life in Winnipeg:

For me my main contact was my counsellors at Welcome Place and we became friends and they used to advise me to do certain activities. That's how they helped. ... They have experience. They were living here longer than me. If there was something that I didn't know about, I would ask them, "What do you think about this issue?"

Two of the participants used their social connections to find volunteer and/or employment opportunities. The respondents described the relative ease with which they could call upon social

networks to find employment. All of the participants found their first jobs through their social networks, underlining the importance of successfully building social networks.

Having social connections beyond one's co-ethnic community was been found to be particularly important in finding work, as it increases the number of employment opportunities available. Nadia describes how her counsellor at Welcome Place encouraged her to volunteer with other newcomer families:

My counsellor at Welcome Place asked me to volunteer at Welcome Place and IRCOM after work and whenever I have time. At IRCOM, the moms had a hard time communicating with the staff so I was kind of an interpreter there. So everyone used to come ask me to translate. Also, if the counsellor needed any help I would do it.

Aside from volunteering, Nadia also used her social connections to find employment opportunities:

All of my classmates started working at McDonald's and they helped me get a job there too. I worked there for three months.

Jamil had a cousin who lived in Winnipeg prior to his arrival who helped him find employment opportunities:

I got a job through a cousin of mine that lived here before so he knew a lot of places. He kind of connected me with people. He called a friend, and he said, "Hey, you want to work for my family restaurant?"

I said, "Yes." That was actually Stella's Coffee. He just hired me. He told me to come one day and see like, just to test my skills, whether I can talk to people.

Unlike Nadia and Jamil, Hasan did not have social connections that helped him with finding employment opportunities. Hasan found employment on his own:

I don't remember any place I went to that helped me find employment or employment opportunities or even volunteer opportunities. I worked on my own to find all these.

The aspiration to find employment that matched qualifications seemed important for Hasan's integration process. He struggled with a lack of recognition of previous education, experience and training and was denied jobs due to a lack of Canadian experience. He described some of the struggles he faced with the general lack of employment availability and skilled employment opportunities

I started looking for a job along my professional lines. Worked throughout the winter delivering resumes everywhere. Everywhere I went, people talked about how many languages I spoke and did not talk about my qualifications I had, which is quite hurting. So finally, after looking for a job for six months, I resigned myself and got a job as someone who was helping make donuts, breads and muffins.

There seemed to be a lack of appropriate support and services to help Hasan cope with challenges involving employment. He explained how assistance could have helped him find employment in Winnipeg:

You know when I was looking for a job, if I had someone to explain to me the transition from finding a job in the first place and then looking forward to finding my footing in my professional qualifications, that would have helped me a lot. Someone to sit down with me—that would have helped a lot. So, at

the beginning, if I had a place where I could go to that provided a pathway, that would have been very helpful.

4.3.3. Bond with Faith/Cultural Group

All the participants were able to connect to their faith/cultural groups shortly upon arriving to Winnipeg. Maintaining contact with their faith/culture was particularly important. Participants felt a particular sense of obligation to their identity group, and stressed the importance of celebrating traditional and cultural events in order to maintain their sense of identity and cohesion within the community.

Nadia described how her counsellor connected her to other Afghan families:

It took us four months to find some Afghan family and get connected to them. Our counsellor told us that there are Afghan family that lives in Winnipeg and when they came to see her she would tell us. Eventually there were a few Afghan family living in IRCOM and we got to know each other .

The former refugees in this study all left their home of origin with little or no choice.

Participating in faith/cultural groups created a sense of belonging and community for the participants that fit within their sociocultural and linguistic needs.

Jamil and his family made a connection with a local church, which provided nonspiritual fellowship and practical assistance for some of their needs. The church helped them with food and clothes and was a space where Jamil could connect with other newcomers and make friends:

Church played a big role in my personal experience. It was actually good through the church. They were good family. They were really supportive.

They have a kind of network. They somehow get stuff, like food. Or we go to church and some will get a pair of shoes or jacket. At least for a few years we received those.

Hasan seemed to connect with individuals from his faith, the wider Muslim community. Through his participation in religious activities, Hasan was able to find comfort, security and fellowship:

The faith groups to the Mosques—that was a good connection for me because I'm practicing Muslim, but I'm not devotional. I didn't have a job so I spent every evening in the Mosque. Connection with my faith created an opportunity for me.

And, also, people who are in these social groups— ... We would play soccer together in the evenings so that created a bigger connection with me. People who are the same age as me, spoke the same language, and same cultural background.

Hasan continues to maintain contact with his faith/cultural group and uses his personal skills to contribute to and help the community.

The desire to maintain contact with his faith/cultural group contained an element of reciprocity. People could call upon him to help them in times of need and, in return, he gained a sense of community.

I maintain contact through community meetings that I go to. I am well used in the community. Always available for community support or advice. I regularly attend prayers in the Mosque. I attend cultural events. So, I've expanded my own small cocoon to my bigger community. I go to social gatherings of community events in Winnipeg.

Nadia also maintains contact with her faith/cultural group:

I maintain contact because of where I work. Most of new Afghan families that come here for services come to me. I also do community events. In terms of faith groups, during Ramadan many people go to Mosques and I try to participate. I volunteer at the Afghan Association sometimes too.

Jamil explained how cultural events and family members have helped him maintain contact to his faith/cultural group:

We do have a bit of community here. We kind of do things, like cultural things, like dance. More Sudanese came here so we have weddings, festival. They have different things that we do here. It's not as big of community, but these people kind of know each other and will talk and visit, learn more about each other. It was just through the church. When it's a wedding, we'll all go there.

4.4. Employment in Winnipeg

Employment played an important role in the participants sense of belonging and defined what it means for them to feel “at home” in Canada. All of the participants went to school in Winnipeg to increase their employability skills. One of the participants struggled with finding employment along his professional lines, and all three worked entry level jobs before finding their footing in a job that was meaningful and satisfying.

4.4.1 Back to School

The participants recognized the need to return to school and upgrade their skills in order to attain meaningful employment. Hasan seemed to have problems finding a meaningful job when he first

arrived. He described the decision to go back to University in Manitoba to gain a Canadian degree:

I had very huge ambitions. I thought, "I had a University degree. I have very good experience along my professional lines, I came as an urban planner."

I thought I was gonna find a job easily.

After three years, I decided I have to go back to University and get a Canadian degree. So I went back to University and got a degree. Finally, after graduating I got a job that I wanted.

Nadia and Jamil went to school immediately upon arriving to Winnipeg.

4.4.2. Journey to Employment

The participants faced a number of barriers to employment that is commensurate with their skills and experience including minimal English skills and a lack of understanding of the Canadian work culture. Hasan explained his journey of having to settle for entry-level employment positions shortly after arriving to Winnipeg:

After delivering 60-70 resumes in different places I got nothing. No response, but someone saying, "Wow, you speak so many languages. Can you volunteer to translate a newsletter for us from English to Swahili?" That was the best I got.

Guys who I lived with told me, "Swallow your pride, sit down, and find a job where you can feed yourself. And then think about the future.

Nadia was able to secure employment as a result of her volunteer work. However, she still faced some struggles with her initial employment due to her English skills:

Because I was volunteering at IRCOM and Welcome Place, eventually IRCOM asked me to start childminding and working in the after-school program. It was challenging because my English was not perfect, and I didn't know most of the slang the kids use, and they used to make fun of me.

Eventually, Nadia's volunteer and work experience led to more secure and long-term employment:

Until 2006, Welcome Place was looking for a life-skills trainer. So the person from the same background was supposed to take the newcomer and show them around Winnipeg. So I applied for that job. So that's how my employment start until it changed to full-time.

At the same time, I applied at a disability organization. It was part-time. And since I started, I worked there and haven't looked for different job.

Jamil also faced some struggles with his first employment experience in Winnipeg:

It was challenging, kind of, your first job, you don't know much. You don't really know how everything works here.

4.5. Integration Experiences

All the participants reported feeling a sense of integration into Winnipeg society. However, some differed in how long it took them to feel integrated. The participants still face struggles with life in Winnipeg, but have also experienced some major successes. Longing for family back home was one of the struggles experienced by all the participants.

4.5.1. Longing for Family Back Home

Separation from family left behind was a prominent issue for the participants. Distance and financial demands of travelling were the biggest factors in the participants ability to visit family back home. Nadia explained how the distance between Winnipeg and her home country can be difficult at times:

One of my struggles is that Winnipeg—it's far away. Travelling internationally, there are extra costs. Due to distance, you can't find that connection.

For Hasan and his family, the financial costs of travelling back to his home country with a large family leaves him feeling isolated from family members living in Somalia. He described what seems to be a loss of home:

I think the isolation from family members back home is a big struggle. We would like to go back every three years, but it's financially challenging for our big family of five. We still want to maintain connection with our family members.

4.5.2. Struggles with Life in Winnipeg

Nadia seemed to have family pressure to maintain her Afghan culture. This pressure made it a struggle to find balance between her Afghan culture and the Canadian culture:

For me, because I was older, I was circulating between two cultures. Trying to keep my culture and fit into Canadian culture was a kind of challenge. To keep some of my own culture because my mom was so concerned about that. My mom wanted to make sure I dressed and behaved a certain way.

One of Hasan's biggest struggles with life in Winnipeg was finding employment. He also struggled with the inability to find food from his own ethnic background, feelings of isolation and transportation:

Employment was my biggest struggle. I needed a job.

I think isolation was another thing. If I didn't get to know Somali community members, I think that would have been devastating.

The other thing that I'll say, even finding food from your own ethnic background, I think, it's quite important. If you don't have them, it's very problematic.

The other thing was means of transportation.

Money and financial struggles were Jamil's biggest struggles with life in Winnipeg. He seemed to connect this struggle with a lack of services available to him as a privately-sponsored refugee:

I find obstacles, of course, with services, because sometimes I don't have money, and maybe my family doesn't have money.

There is no way to go around. You have to live within what your family had so if you don't have money or bus fare, sometimes then I have to walk. I'll walk sometimes when it's not really cold—wake up early and walk to school. Just those issues with money were a struggle.

Hasan also mentioned how newcomer services and the general immigration system in Canada can contribute to struggles with life in Winnipeg:

Generally, I think the system needs to be accepting of newcomers. We are still talking about newcomers integrating into the system, but we are not talking about the system being open to integrating people.

Jamil adds that low wages in Winnipeg can make it difficult to maintain his lifestyle:

Newcomers, when they get a job—. Wages are very low, and paying rent can be hard. You're just getting all the household stuff you need. It could be struggle because you don't make enough money. Winnipeg is—. ... Just bad income and very low for newcomers. Minimum wages are kind of low and it's hard for newcomers to live. It's hard to maintain the lifestyle with \$11 or \$12. You can't get anywhere with that.

4.5.3. Successes with Life in Winnipeg

The participants all experienced some form of success and satisfaction with life in Winnipeg.

Building relationships with supportive friends and community members functioned as a mode of resiliency for the participants and provided a buffer against some of the struggles mentioned above. Jamil explained how his social skills and connections with others within his own community and wider community helped him integrate into Winnipeg society. The openness and tolerance that Jamil perceived in Winnipeg seemed to have facilitated his integration experience:

I believe that my biggest success is my integration to the community because I'm good at building friends. When people accept you and you accept people, that's the big success. It's just building friends and kind of knowing people. I'm kind of building relationships outside my community. Its important to build relationships within your community but I kind of spread my wings a little bit and build relationships with other communities (Jamil).

Hasan's biggest success with life in Winnipeg was the connection he made to his faith/cultural group. His connection with individuals from within his cultural group functioned as a significant

coping mechanism. He was able to use his skills to make a positive contribution to his community as well as other refugees.

For Hasan, the ability to use his skills to benefit others in a similar situation was central to improving the quality of his life and constructing a future for himself in Winnipeg:

My biggest success was connecting with members from my community. The Somali community has faced almost thirty years of lack of government, and many of the people did not have good education or writing skills.

I was fortunate enough to have grown up in Kenya where I had good education so I became quite useful in my community. So, refugee claimants who came after me, I wrote their cases. If someone needed interpretation, I'll go and interpret for them. If someone needed a connection to a place they would take me. So, in a way this help the community. I had lots of opportunities to volunteer in the community informally.

Nadia did not seem to have a hard time integrating into Winnipeg society. She views the smooth settlement experience as one of her biggest successes. Similar to Jamil and Hasan, making friends was also a success for Nadia:

I think the transition was not very difficult for us at the beginning. I think it was kind of natural because what I heard from everyone was that, "You're from Afghanistan, but you're not very conservative." Also making friends.

4.5.4. Feelings of Integration

To be successfully integrated had different meanings for the participants. For most, it meant having feelings of belonging and a place to build a future. All of the participants had generally

positive feelings of integration into Winnipeg society. They expressed a strong desire to adjust to life in Canada and get back on track with their education and career aspirations. One participant said the transition would be faster and smoother if they could get appropriate help and support at arrival.

The length of time required to feel integrated varied among the participants. For two of the participants, it took three years to feel integrated and the other participant did not feel integrated for the first ten years. Hasan described how he went from viewing Winnipeg as a temporary home to realizing that Winnipeg is his permanent home:

It didn't happen for me for at least ten years. For the first ten years, I did not feel integrated. My mind was back home. I used to think, "One day I will go back home. I'm still not Canadian. I am Somali. My family will grow up in Somalia. Hopefully the situation will improve, and we are going back. This is temporary."

So, in the last two years I have started to think, "This is my home. I am staying here. We need to buy property. We are not temporary anymore. My kids' future is here. We are part of Canadian society. This is home."

These are now things I am going through after ten years of being here. But at the beginning, no, I was not integrated. I was still part of my community. My body was here, my mind was back home.

Hasan also explains how he could have felt integrated sooner if he had received the support he needed when he first arrived:

If I got the support I needed at the beginning, it could have taken a shorter time. So I consider the first five years an investment that prepared me for what I'm doing now. It could have been different.

Jamil has very positive feeling of integration. He seems to identify as being both Sudanese and Canadian:

When people ask, "What is your first home?" I say, "Canada, my first country, and Sudan."

Me, I'm well integrated to community here. Part of my heritage is Sudanese, but at the same time I am Canadian. It's kind of this melted cultures here in Canada. I'm on my way to become like a tour guide, tour Canadian guide. I'm well integrated.

Jamil's feelings of integration seemed to be largely influenced by his social connections.

He expresses an appreciation to Canadians for creating a welcoming community towards him:

It took me three whole years to feel integrated. People welcomed me and everything. When people learn about you, they're just your friend. Then you feel welcoming. I think it took me three whole years. I was home. I knew people here.

It also took Nadia three years to feel integrated into Winnipeg society. Her feelings of integration seemed to be largely influenced by her family:

First three years, if I was alone without family, I would have settled, no problem.

When asked if she felt integrated into Winnipeg society, Nadia attributes employment to her feelings:

I think I am. Especially at this field that I work now. I almost know every agency, I have many connections to different agencies. And outside of this agency, I think I am well integrated.

Nadia explained her overall satisfaction with life in Winnipeg:

In terms of community support, I am very satisfied because people in my circle are very helpful and supportive.

The weather: I don't like cold. The winter makes me depressed if it lasts long. If I move, the only reason would be the weather.

I am satisfied with everything.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1. How Refugees Experience Integration in Winnipeg, Manitoba

The pathway to integration encompasses participants' feelings and experience of settlement and adaptation to their new life and culture in Winnipeg. Integration requires refugees to adopt the basic values of Canadian society while at the same time the larger Canadian society must be prepared to adapt national institutions such as the education and health system to meet the needs of all those living together in a multicultural society (Berry, 1997). This study found that participants felt connected to both their own ethnic/cultural community and the wider Canadian society. Although all of the participants in this study reported integration, their journeys also differed from one another. According to Berry (1984), integrated individuals are those who choose to maintain their own cultural characteristics while also adopting the characteristics of the new culture. Feelings of integration seem to take place at different times for the participants, ranging from three years for two participants and ten years for the other.

One of the participants contemplated the acculturation pathway of Separation for a short period of time. This occurs when individuals choose cultural maintenance while avoiding contact with host societies (Berry, 1984). For this participant, the pathway of Separation was caused by feelings of hope that the situation in his home country would improve and he would eventually be able to move back with his family. This suggests that the pathway to integration is not fixed, but rather fluid and may change over time. The experience of this participant confirms Berry's (1997) finding that short-term changes during acculturation are sometimes negative and can be disruptive in character. However, after a period of time, some long-term positive adaptation to

the new cultural context usually takes place. None of the participants followed the pathway of Assimilation and Marginalization.

Berry's (1984) acculturation theory proposes that there are two principles underlying the process of acculturation, including the degree of one's own cultural maintenance and the degree of contact and participation with host societies. The model asks two questions relating to the two principles: 1) Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's own cultural identity and characteristics? and 2) Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with other groups? This study found that participants maintained contact with their own cultural identity while creating connections and relationships with the wider Canadian society. Participants stayed connected with their ethnic/cultural communities through community events, meeting other families, attending community meetings and going to faith-based institutions such as the Mosque.

For the participants in this study, successful integration meant a sense of belonging to the community and a closeness with others living in Winnipeg. It included an affinity to the environment and people around them, and that Winnipeggers in turn share an affinity with them. According to Berry (1997), a *mutual accommodation* is required for integration to be attained. The results of this study show that the participants experienced a sense of attachment and identification with the larger Canadian society, while at the same time maintaining their own identity and cultural characteristics. There was an overall acceptance of Canada and its way of life. However, participants continued to identify with their culture and country of origin by maintaining their language and cultural traditions, such as attending weddings.

In this study, participants reported that making friends with Canadians played a major role in their feelings and experiences of integration. According to Berry (2001, p. 619), the

dominant group plays a “powerful role in influencing the way in which acculturation will take place.” The situations where the participants met Canadians were varied and included school, community events and faith/cultural organizations. Nobody reported any discrimination or disrespect based on their language skills, religion and race and one participant shared a quite moving anecdote to the friendliness and openness of others who live in Winnipeg. Developing these friendships seemed to act as a buffer to the stresses of integration and provided the necessary information needed to understand the Winnipeg community.

Although participants made friends from the wider Winnipeg community, their initial interactions were mostly with others from their own faith/cultural group. This seemed to be due to the common language, culture and a shared understanding of what they had been through prior to arrival. These social interactions with others from one’s own faith/cultural group provided a chance to interact with like-minded people and to socialize in an environment in which it was safe to share emotions. The initial interactions also provided instrumental support by way of housing, clothing and access to information and services.

This study shows that the two networks in which the participants engaged in, the wider Canadian society and within their own ethnic/cultural and family groups, are complementary and both work to facilitate successful adaptation and integration as suggested by Berry (1997). The family and faith/cultural group network provided access to resources such as employment, housing and access to information, while the Canadian network provided feelings of belonging. Both networks provided emotional support.

In this study, Canada represented a new beginning and freedom from their past struggles. Participants shared their views of what they thought life would be like in Canada. They all related to the notion of having a better life in this country through a positive future. All of the

participants were seeking opportunities to begin or continue post-secondary education in Canada. Subsequently, they would obtain employment and housing that would allow them to live meaningful and fulfilling lives.

Participants experienced initial struggles during their first year of resettlement. Participants realized that even though Canada represented an ideal choice for them, living in it still carried some challenges, such as losing family bonds, the cost of living, achieving a minimal financial security, integrating in the labour market in a meaningful way, accessing services, cold Canadian winters and navigating around the city. When coupled with feelings of isolation, those experiences seemed to complicate the participants' process of integration to the new life in Canada. Although participants indicated struggling with their first year of arrival to Winnipeg, they all seemed to accept Canada as their new home country and identified as being Canadian.

This study has also documented considerable struggles for refugees in maintaining their own culture and connections with family back home. One participant seemed to struggle with familial pressures to maintain her culture. The narratives of the participants showed that the pressures of re-establishing their lives in a new country made it very difficult to maintain the customs and networks from the home country. The differences in culture and customs also created significant challenges and made the maintenance of cultural ties difficult. One of the participants mentioned the lack of access to his ethnic food as an obstacle to cultural maintenance. The need to connect with family back home was discussed by all participants. The pain caused by family separation was seen as major challenge to successful integration.

5.2. The importance of social capital

This study found that social capital and the development of social networks was an integral part of the integration process. Participants relied heavily on their social capital to secure employment, housing, financial assistance and emotional support upon arriving to Winnipeg. This is consistent with Ager and Strang's (2003) observation that family and community connections are particularly important in helping refugees integrate into new communities. The results of this study align with Lin's (1999) Social Capital theory which states that individuals invest in social networks to increase their chances of returns such as employment, housing and access to choices otherwise not available. All of the participants used existing social connections or made connections with others quickly upon arrival that influenced their integration experience.

In this study, social capital developed through relationships with others from the same background, including similar ethnic and cultural ties or the general experience of being a newcomer, and the wider Canadian society. Two participants made initial connections with others from their faith/cultural group while the other participant connected with a counsellor that was also a newcomer. All the participants created friendships with Canadians. A number of themes emerged regarding the way in which social capital was formed for the participants. Religion was an important form of social capital, with the mosque and church important in fostering this. Relationships between participants and their ethnic community also appear crucial in forming social capital and helping participants bond with others and overcome feelings of isolation. Existing connections with familial networks were essential in helping two participants benefit from the social capital that already existed. The participants used these connections to create further bonds with others in the community and potential employers. As noted by Lamba and Krahn (2003), most adult refugees remain part of at least some familial networks and as

resettlement continues, refugees expand their social networks to neighbours, co-workers, employers and other community members.

In this study, two of the participants who were privately expressed a lack of government services available to them as privately-sponsored refugees. This forced them to rely on their personal skills and social networks in finding their way into Canadian society. During this period, their contacts were overwhelmingly within and across the boundaries of their cultural/faith groups. The nature and character of the connections they developed with their faith/cultural group were central to how they assessed their situation in Winnipeg. This social network tended to compensate for their dissatisfaction with the quality of their economic integration. It can be argued that the disadvantages involved in the lack of government services or assistance entailed potential advantages because it permitted and enhanced their ability to create and use social networks to access resources.

One of the biggest impacts of social networks on refugee integration was connecting the participants to employment and housing resources. All of the participants used their social capital to find both employment and housing opportunities shortly upon arrival. Social capital was especially seen as crucial in helping the participants find housing. However, this study reveals limited value of these network ties when it comes to employment. The results show that while family, cultural/faith groups and counsellors can aid refugees in their employment integration, these ties were not able to connect the participants to employment that matched their professional or skill set. All of the participants resorted to entry-level employment positions upon arrival.

Social networks were also found to be important for generating social relationships, friendship groups and emotional support. The participants identified support from community members who understood and had similar refugee experiences to themselves as fundamental to

their settlement and integration experience. All of the participants in this study made friends outside their faith/cultural groups. These friendship groups played a role in developing a sense of belonging that helped the participants feel like a part of Canadian society.

This study found that refugees arrive in Winnipeg with a vast amount of social capital and have the potential to uniquely contribute to their communities. The participants arrived with a range of new or different skills and knowledge that they used to give back to their communities such as translating or assisting other immigrant and refugee families. Strang and Ager (2008) discuss the value of social capital in restoring self-esteem and enabling self-reliance as one of the many factors in facilitating refugee integration.

The accounts of the refugees in this study show a desire to become a part of Canadian society through the establishment of closer ties with the wider community while retaining a sense of their identity. Their narratives show a conscious effort to create ties with Canadian society as the majority of participants attribute their integration success to “making friends” in Winnipeg. This study indicates that the openness to receive and accept refugees by the host society plays a role in the integration process. It also indicates that personal satisfaction of integration includes the strength of social networks created with the host society.

5.3. Implications for social programs and refugee services

Refugees often arrive to Winnipeg with little or no resources, making their needs for services unique compared to other newcomer populations. Therefore, it is important for service providers to gain background knowledge about refugees so that they develop general knowledge about involuntary immigration and skills to better serve and support refugee populations. Increased

knowledge of refugee issues by service providers could increase successful service delivery and improve integration outcomes.

Organizations in Winnipeg have a particularly important role to play in helping refugees with their overall settlement and integration experiences. Organizations provide services at the human level and are essential for creating a welcoming community. Many organizations in Winnipeg have been working with newcomers for decades and their experience and expertise are essential. It is essential for organizations to stay current on their knowledge of refugee's needs and experiences as they are always evolving and changing. For example, the influx of refugees from Syria in Winnipeg have brought with them different needs and challenges compared to previous groups. Understanding the experiences of refugees can help organizations tailor their services to better meet the needs of refugees.

It is important for social programs and refugee services to provide support for long-term integration through collaboration and networking. Organizations should look for opportunities to create partnerships where there could be mutual benefit in serving the refugee population. Information, new innovations and best practices should be shared between organizations to improve integration outcomes.

To help reduce the struggles associated with refugee integration, it is important to consider the development of more structured, and better resourced, social programs and integration services. We also need to consider whether the adaptation of wider services is necessary to better meet the needs of the influx of new arrivals to Winnipeg, particularly in the areas of employment and social networking.

Finally, social programs and refugee services should also support the Canadian society in its process of adaptation to newcomers. Programs and services should have a focus on public

education, cross-cultural and anti-racism training, and programs to assist mainstream service providers to integrate refugees. Integration in Canada is seen as a two-way process; therefore, organizations should place a focus on serving and educating the wider Canadian society alongside refugees.

5.4. Future Research

There is a need for further research with the refugee population in Canada in order to add to the current understanding of refugees' integration experiences. According to Berry (1997), a complete study of acculturation would need to start with a fairly comprehensive examination of the country of origin and the country of settlement. Therefore, any future studies should take into consideration refugees' experiences prior to arrival.

A number of important research questions about the integration experiences of refugees could not be answered with the data collected in this study. These include, what are the long-term experiences of integration for refugees residing in Winnipeg? Do acculturation strategies change over-time? What role do social networks play long-term? To answer these questions, a longitudinal study would be required that follows the integration experiences of refugee's over-time. There are very limited studies following refugee's experiences of integration over-time, thus a longitudinal study would be the next natural step in research on refugees in Canada.

This study found that refugees attributes some of their integration success to making friends with others from the host society. Future studies should make an effort to measure how host societies react to refugees settling into their communities. This type of research can help shed light on the two-way process of integration by including attitudes of the host society. The

research could be expanded to include how refugees and Canadian-born individuals interact and treat each other.

This study found that services and support seemed to differ for government-sponsored and privately-sponsored refugees. Currently, there is little research that explores the differences in integration experiences for private versus government sponsorship. The limited data that is available does not tend to differentiate between the two and does not evaluate their integration experiences. There is a need for research to identify which aspects of the two sponsorships are most important for successful refugee integration. Also, since integration experiences differ for both groups, they should be studied separately whenever possible.

This study found that employment played a significant role in the integration experiences of refugees. Future studies should examine the employment experiences of refugees in Canada and investigate factors such as lack of recognition of credentials, discrimination, the role of social capital and job training programs. This is an important area of investigation as refugees in this study reported low wages and a lack of access to employment along their professional and skill set were a hindrance to their successful integration.

Finally, more research is needed to address the barriers to successful integration such as loss of identity, family conflict and tension, discrimination, lack of social networks, access to services and programs, recognition of credentials and financial difficulties to add to the understanding of integration experiences of refugees.

5.5. Limitations of the Present Study

There were several limitations observed within this study. First is the use of Berry's bi-dimensional acculturation model. Berry's bi-dimensional acculturation model places a sole focus

on how refugees acculturate themselves into the dominant culture in a one-way process. The use of this theory has some conceptual limitations. Berry's model does not take into consideration the various factors involved in the formation of multiple identities among refugees (e.g. race, age, gender, sexual orientation) and so forth (Ngo, 2008). This is an important consideration as refugees may experience a false sense of identity at times or may even view their cultural identity differently at various stages of life (Ngo, 2008). This model also fails to acknowledge the factors that may have an impact on the refugees' relationship with the dominant cultures (e.g. "othering", acceptance) and assumes that refugees have free-will when interacting with the dominant culture (Ngo, 2008). Overall, Berry's acculturation model cannot provide an explanation for the socioeconomic factors affecting some refugees (Ngo, 2008).

Second, this study did not focus on understanding how demographic and socio-economic factors such as race, age, gender, sexual orientation and family structure have influenced the integration experiences of refugees. Successful integration requires a host community that is both welcoming and open, and enables refugees to form a sense of community regardless of differences. Therefore, it is important for future studies to determine how demographic and socioeconomic factors may promote or hinder successful integration in Canada. For instance, are there employment differences between older and younger adults? What are the experiences of visible minorities? How do single mothers experience housing upon arrival? Does sexual orientation play a role in successful integration?

Third, the questions chosen by the researcher in the interview schedule limited the scope of information collected for the study. The questions for this study were based on Hyndman's 2011 research summary on refugee integration in Canada and focused on two categories: integration indicators and connections with the host society. By placing a focus on these two

factors, the study excluded other integration indicators such as pre-arrival experience, health and well-being, legal/citizenship issues and perceived discrimination.

5.6. Conclusion

This research illustrates the integration experiences of a small group of former refugees residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Berry's Acculturation model (1984) has provided a useful tool for understanding the acculturation strategies of refugees. The participants in this study all followed the acculturation strategy of integration, although one contemplated separation for a short period of time. Integration had a different meaning for all the participants, however, some themes defining integration emerged. Integration was found to be a two-way process, creating networks, connections and attachments among the wider Canadian society without abandoning the culture of origin and the ability to live a self-determined independent life.

Social networks within faith/cultural groups were seen as critical in helping refugees integrate into Canadian society. These connections helped the participants find housing, employment, access to information, emotional support and extra-curricular activities. Connections with the host society played an important role in helping participants feel like Winnipeg is their new home. Both struggles and successes were documented with the experiences of integration. Struggles included cold winters, missing family and friends back home, feelings of isolation, the cost of living, accessing services, finding meaningful employment and navigating around the city. Successes documented included making friends with the wider Canadian society and within faith/cultural groups and helping other refugees

It is obvious from the findings of this study that refugees in Winnipeg have enormous potential to settle and integrate successfully into Canadian society. They are contributing significantly to our social, economic, and cultural life and adding diversity to our city. Successful

integration allows refugees to rebuild their lives and allows Winnipeg to share in the rewards of the knowledge and skills that refugees bring with them

References

- Abdulahad, R., Graham, R. J., Montelpare, J. W., & Brownlee, K. (2014). Social capital: Understanding acculturative stress in the Canadian-Iraqi Christian community. *British Journal of Social Work, 44*(3), 694-713. doi: 10.1093/bjsw/bcs160
- Ager, A., & Strang, A. (2008). Understanding integration: A conceptual framework. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 21*, 166-191. doi:10.1093/jrs/fen016
- Ashton, W., Galatsanou, E., & Cronkrite, M. (2016). *Refugees in Manitoba: Small centre settlement*. Rural Development Institute, Brandon University. Brandon, Manitoba. Retrieved from <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2017/05/RDI-Refugees-in-MB-May17.pdf>
- Ashton, W., Galatsanou, E., Cronkrite, M., & Pettigrew, R. (2016). *Immigration in 5 rural Manitoba communities with a focus on refugees: Case studies*. Rural Development Institute, Brandon University. Brandon, Manitoba. Retrieved from <https://www.brandonu.ca/rdi/files/2016/09/Immigration-in-5-Rural-Manitoba-Communities-with-a-Focus-on-Refugees-Case-Studies-August-2016.pdf>
- Assam, M., H. (2015). *Mental health and well-being of refugees to Canada: A brighter future* (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/bitstream/handle/1993/30700/Asaam_Harriette.pdf?sequence=1
- Baffoe, M. (2011). Navigating two worlds: New identity constructions as determinants for successful integration of new black immigrant and refugee youth in Canadian society. *Journal of Social Sciences, 7*(4), 475-484.

- Berry, J. W. (1984). Cultural relations in plural societies. In N, Miller., & M, B., Brewer (Eds.), *Groups in contact: The psychology of desegregation* (pp. 11-27). Orlando, FL: Academic Press
- Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. *Applied Psychology*, 46(1), 5-34.
- Berry, J. W. (2001). A psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(3), 615–632.
- Berry, J.W. (1992). Acculturation and adaptation in a new society. *International Migration*, 30(1), 69-85.
- Berry, J.W. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 29(6), 697-712.
- Boateng, A. (2010). Survival voices: Social capital and the well-being of Liberian refugee women in Ghana. *Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Studies*, 8(4), 386-408.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, K. L. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. LA: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). 'The Forms of Capital'. In Richardson, J. G. (ed). *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. New York: Greenwood.
- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. D. (1992). *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Carter, T., Polevychok, C., & Osborne, J. (2009). The role of housing and neighbourhood in the re-settlement process: A case study of refugee households in Winnipeg. *The Canadian Geographer*, 53(3), 305-322.

- Carter, T., Polevychok, C., Friesen, A., & Osborne, J. (2008). *The housing circumstances of recently arrived refugees: The Winnipeg experience*. Winnipeg: Canada Research Chair in Urban Change and Adaptation, The University of Winnipeg
- Castles, S., Korac, M., Vasta, E., & Vertovec, S. (2002). *Integration: Mapping the field* (Home Office online report 28/03). Retrieved from <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2011a). *Annual report to parliament on immigration* (ISSN 1706-3329). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/publications>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2011b). *Preliminary tables: Permanent and temporary residents 2011: Canada - permanent residents by category, 2006-2010*. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2012). *Canada Facts and Figures 2012* (ISSN 1495-6578). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2012). *Canada Facts and Figures 2012* (ISSN 1495-6578). Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2016a). *Manitoba - Admissions of Syrian Refugees* by Immigration Category and Family Composition, November 4, 2015 - July 31, 2016*. [Data Set]. Retrieved from <http://open.canada.ca/data/en/dataset>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2016b). *Syrian Refugee Family Composition: Ad hoc IRCC specialized data sets*. [Data Set]. Retrieved from <http://open.canada.ca/>
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2017). *#WelcomeRefugees: Canada resettled Syrian refugees*. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca>
- Coleman, J. (1988). Social capital in the creation of human capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, 94, 95-120. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2780243>

- D'Addario, S., Hiebert, D., & Sherrell, K. (2007). Restricted access: The role of social capital in mitigating absolute homelessness among immigrants and refugees in the GVRD. *Refuge*, 24(1), 107-115.
- De Maio, F. G., & Kemp, E. (2010). The deterioration of health status among immigrants to Canada. *Global Public Health*, 5, 462-478. doi:10.1080/17441690902942480
- De Vroome, T., & Van Tubergen, F. (2010). The employment experience of refugees in the Netherlands. *International Migration Review*, 44, 376-403. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2010.00810.x
- Dean, J., & Wilson, K. (2010). My health has improved because I always have everything I need here...”: A qualitative exploration of health improvement and decline among immigrants. *Social Science and Medicine*, 70(8), 1219-1228.
- Dearnley, C. (2005). A reflection on the use of semi-structured interviews. *Nurse Researcher*, 13(1), 19-28.
- Djuraskovic, I., & Arthur, N. (2009). The acculturation of former Yugoslavian refugees. *Canadian Journal of Counselling / Revue Canadienne de Counseling*, 43(1), 18-3
- Dona, G. (1991). Acculturation and ethnic identity of Central American refugees in Canada. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Science*, 13, 230-231. doi: 10.1177/07399863910132009
- Dona, G. G., & Berry, J. W. (1994). Acculturation attitudes and acculturative stress of Central American refugees. *International Journal of Psychology*, 29(1), 57-70.
- Eastmond, M. (2011). Egalitarian ambitions, constructions of difference: The paradoxes of refugee integration in Sweden. *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies*, 37, 277- 295. doi:10.1080/1369183X.2010.521323

- Eby, J., Iverson, E., Smyers, J., & Kekic, E. (2011). The faith community's role in refugee resettlement in the United States. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 24, 586-605.
doi:10.1093/jrs/fer038
- Fast, M. (2013). *Making a way when there is no way: The experiences and challenges of gang affected young adult refugees in Winnipeg* (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from http://www.needsinc.ca/asset_library/page/yktt/MakingAWayWhenThereIsNoWy.pdf
- Foley, M., & Edwards, B. (1999). Is it time to disinvest in social capital? *Journal of Public Policy*, 19(2) 141-173.
- Freund, A. (2015). Transnationalizing home in Winnipeg: Refugees' stories of the places between the "here-and-there". *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 47(1), 61-86.
- Gabriel, S., Morgan-Jonker, C., Phung, M., Barrios, R. & Kaczorowski, J. (2011) Refugees and health care – the need for data: Understanding the health of government-assisted refugees in Canada through a prospective longitudinal cohort. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 102(4), 269–272.
- Gold, S. J., & Kibria, N. (1993). Vietnamese refugees and blocked mobility. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 2(1), 27-55.
- Hegde, D. S. (2015). Knowledge claims: Approaches and perspectives. In D. S. Hegde (Ed.), *Essays on Research Methodology* (pp. 9-24). Mumbai, India: Springer India
- Hopkins, G. (2010). A changing sense of Somaliness: Somali women in London and Toronto. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 17, 519-538.
doi:10.1080/0966369X.2010.485846

- Hyman, I., Vu, N., & Beiser, M. (2000). Post-migration stresses among Southeast Asian refugee youth in Canada: A research note. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 31(2), 281-293.
- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. (2017). *Canada - Admissions of Resettled Refugees by Province/Territory and Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) of Intended Destination and Immigration Category*[Table]. Retrieved from <http://open.canada.ca>
- Janesick, J. V. (1999). Journal about journal writing as a qualitative research technique: History, issues, and reflections. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5(4), 505-524.
- Johnson, C. M., Rostila, M., Svensson, A. C., & Engstrom, K. (2017). The role of social capital in explaining mental health inequalities between immigrants and Swedish-born: a population-based cross-sectional study. *BMC Public Health*, 17(1). doi: 10.1186/s12889-016-3955-3
- Kaiser, K. (2009). Protecting respondent confidentiality in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 19(11), 1632-1641. doi: 10.1177/1049732309350879
- Kanu Y. (2008). Educational needs and barriers for African refugee students in Manitoba. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 31(4), 915-940.
- Lamba, N. K. (2003). The employment experiences of Canadian refugees: Measuring the impact of human social capital on quality of employment. *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology*, 40(1), 45-64.
- Lamba, N. K., & Krahn, H. (2003). Social capital and refugee resettlement: The social networks of refugees in Canada. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 4, 335-360. doi: 10.1007/s12134-003-1025-z

- Larkin, M., & Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 102-120.
- Lee, M. R. (1993). *Doing research on sensitive topics*. London: SAGE publications Ltd.
- Lin, N. (1999). Building a network theory of social capital. *Connections*, 22(1), 28-51.
- Manitoba Labour and Immigration, *Manitoba Immigration Facts 2014 Statistical Report*, [Winnipeg], 2015. Retrieved from http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/immigration/pdf/mb_imm_facts_rep_2014.pdf
- Manitoba Labour and Immigration. (2015). *Manitoba immigration facts: 2014 statistical report*. Winnipeg, Canada: Author
- Mbabaali, F. (2012). *Exploring the sense of belonging of war affected refugee youth* (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from <https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/bitstream/handle/1993/8917/Exploring%20the%20sense%20of%20belonging%20of%20war%20affected%20refugee%20youth.pdf?sequence=1>
- Melo, P., S. (2011). *Winding pathways: Supporting refugee students in high school a narrative inquiry into the experiences of one EAL teacher in Manitoba* (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from <https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1993/5085/Melo%20%2CSand%20P.%20Thesis%20Jan.10%20home%2C2012.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y>
- Montgomery, E. & Foldspang, A. (2007). Discrimination, mental problems and social adaptation in young refugees. *European Journal of Public Health*, 18(2), 156-161.

- Moreira, J., & Baeninger, R. (2010). Local integration of refugees in Brazil. *Forced Migration Review, 35*, 48-49.
- Morrice, L. (2007). Lifelong learning and the social integration of refugees in the UK: The significance of social capital. *International Journal of Lifelong Education, 26*, 155-172.
doi:10.1080/02601370701219467
- Newman, I., & Benz, R. C. (1998). *Qualitative-quantitative research methodology: Exploring the interactive continuum*. Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Noh, S., Beiser, M., Kaspar, V., Hou, F., & Rummens, J. (1999). Perceived racial discrimination, depression, and coping: A study of Southeast Asian refugees in Canada. *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour, 40*(3), 193-207.
- Nyembwe, G. (2017, April 24). *Canada's 2016 record high level of resettlement praised by UNHCR*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org>
- Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. (2017). *The French presence in Manitoba*. Retrieved from <http://www.ocol-clo.gc.ca/en/statistics/infographics/french-presence-manitoba>
- Olwig, K. (2011). 'Integration': Migrants and refugees between Scandinavian welfare societies and family relations. *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies, 37*, 179-196.
doi:10.1080/1369183X.2010.521327
- Ortlipp, M. (2008). Keeping and using reflective journals in qualitative research process. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 695-705

- Padilla, M., & Perez, W. (2003). Acculturation, social identity, and social cognition: A new perspective. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 25*, 35-55.
doi:10.1177/0739986303251694
- Phillimore, J. (2011). Refugees, acculturation strategies, stress and integration. *Journal of Social Policy, 40*, 575-593. doi:10.1017/S0047279410000929
- Pittaway, E., Muli, C., & Shteir, S. (2009). "I have a voice--hear me!" Findings of an Australian study examining the resettlement and integration experience of refugees and migrants from the Horn of Africa in Australia. *Refuge, 26*(2), 133-146.
- Preston, V., Murdie, R., D'Addario, S., Sibanda, P., & Murnaghan, A. (2011). *Precarious housing and hidden homelessness among refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants in Toronto metropolitan area*. Ontario: The Ontario Metropolis Centre
- Samuel, E. (2009). Acculturative Stress: South Asian immigrant women's experiences in Canada's Atlantic provinces. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies, 7*, 16-34.
doi:10.1080/15562940802687207
- Schellenberg, V. (2012). The impact of immigration on southern Manitoba schools: A case study of a rural school division. *Diaspora, Indigenous and Minority Education, 5*(4), 277-284.
- Schwartz, S. J., Unger, J. B., Zamboanga, B. L., & Szapocznik, J. (2010). Rethinking the concept of acculturation: Implications for theory and research. *The American Psychologist, 65*(4), 237-251. doi:10.1037/a0019330
- Sherzoi, O. (2011). *Photovoice: exploring immigrants and refugees' perceptions and access to mental health services in Winnipeg* (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from
file:///C:/Users/petea/AppData/Local/Packages/Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8weky 3d8bwe/TempState/Downloads/Sherzoi_Ogai.pdf

- Smith, J., & Osborn, M. (2003). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative Psychology* (pp. 51-90). London: SAGE publications Ltd.
- Smith, A., J. (2004). Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 1(1), 39-54.
- Smith, J. A., & Osborn, M. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide* (second edition). London: SAGE publications Ltd
- Soojin, Y., Ouellet, E., & Warmington, A. (2007). Refugee integration in Canada: A study of empirical evidence and existing services. *Refuge*, 24(2), 17-34.
- Soroka, S., & Robertson, S. (2010). *A literature review of public opinion research on Canadian attitudes towards multiculturalism and immigration, 2006-2009*. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/>
- Statistics Canada. (2016). Permanent and temporary immigration to Canada from 2012-2014. (ISSN 1718-7788). Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub>
- Stewart, M., Anderson, J., Beiser, M., Mwakarimba, E., Neufeld, A., Simich, L., & Spitzer, D. (2008). Multicultural meanings of social support among immigrants and refugees. *International Migration*, 46, 123-159. doi:10.1111/j.14682435.2008.00464.x
- Torezani, S., Colic-Peisker, V., & Fozdar, F. (2008). Looking for a "missing link": Formal employment services and social networks in refugees' job search. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 29, 135-152. doi:10.1080/07256860801938617
- Tunis, D. (2010). *Building welcoming communities: The role of the federal government*. Retrieved from <http://canada.metropolis.net/>

- UNHCR. (2015). *Forced displacements in 2014*. Geneva, Switzerland: Author
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2012). Trends in Displacement, Protection and Solutions: Eleven Years of Statistics. *Statistical yearbook 2011*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics>.
- United Nations Population Fund. (2011). *State of the world population 2011*. New York, NY: UNFPA
- Veenstra, G. (2002). Explicating social capital: Trust and participation in the civil space. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 27(4), 547-572.
- Vogt, P. W. (2008). The dictatorship of the problem: Choosing research methods. *Methodological Innovations Online*, (3)1, 1-17. doi: 10.4256/mio.2008.0006
- Williams , L. (2006). Social networks of refugees in the United Kingdom: Tradition, tactics and new community spaces. *Journal of Ethnic & Migration Studies*, 32, 865-879. doi:10.1080/13691830600704446
- Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. (2014). *Optimizing the mental health and emotional wellbeing of immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg: A conceptual framework*. Retrieved from <http://www.immigratemanitoba.com/wpcontent/uploads/2015/12/Optimizing-Emotional-Health-Mental-Well-BeingImmigrants-Refugees-Wpg.pdf>

Appendix

Appendix 1: Participant Recruitment Poster

 UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK

**PARTICIPANTS WANTED FOR A STUDY
ON REFUGEE INTEGRATION**

Volunteers are needed to take part in a study examining the lived experiences of refugees residing in Winnipeg, MB

ARE YOU THE ONE?

-FORMER REFUGEE
-HAVE LIVED IN WINNIPEG, MB FOR AT LEAST 10 YEARS
-BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18-39 AT TIME OF ARRIVAL TO WINNIPEG, MB
-ENGLISH SPEAKING

YOU WILL BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE IN ONE INTERVIEW LASTING APPROXIMATELY 1.5 HOURS. EACH PARTICIPANT WILL RECEIVE \$20.00 FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY

This study has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance by the University of Manitoba Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board.

Appendix 2: Interview Schedule

I. Opening

A. [shake hands] My name is Maja Aziraj and I am a graduate student at the University of Manitoba. I am completing my Master's Thesis research on refugee integration.

B. I would like to ask you some questions about your experiences of integrating and settling into Canadian society.

C. I hope to use this information to complete and Master's Thesis research and to better understand the lived experiences of integration by refugees. I hope this research will be used in the future to help inform and design better social programs that target newcomers in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

D. The interview should take about 1 hour. Are you available to respond to some questions at this time?

(**Transition:** Let me begin by asking you some questions about yourself)

II. Body

A. *Description of participants*

1. In which country were you born?
2. Which country(s) did you live in as a refugee before coming to Winnipeg?
3. How old are you?
4. Who arrived with you to Winnipeg?

(Transition: Thank you. I will now ask you about your experience with first arriving in Winnipeg)

B. *Participants experience of arriving in Winnipeg*

1. Can you describe your feelings when you first arrived in Winnipeg?

Probes:

- a) What made you happy or excited, if anything, when you first arrived in Winnipeg?
- b) What were your biggest fears, if anything, when you first arrived in Winnipeg?

C. *Participants experience with assistance when arriving in Winnipeg*

1. Can you describe any help you received financially, if any, when you arrived in Winnipeg?
2. Can you describe any help you received with finding a place to live, if any, when you arrived in Winnipeg?
3. Can you describe any help you received with finding employment or volunteer experience, if any, when you arrived in Winnipeg?
4. Can you describe any other help you received when you arrived in Winnipeg?

Probes:

- a) Such as childcare, connection to faith/cultural groups, extracurricular activities, language programs, programs for your children)
5. How did receiving help impact your experience of settling in Winnipeg?
6. How did the lack of help impact your experience of settling in Winnipeg?

(Transition: Thank you, I will now ask you about your experience of settling into Winnipeg)

D. *Participants experience of integration*

1. Can you describe your experience with seeking and/or finding employment/volunteer opportunities?

2. Can you describe your experience with seeking and/or finding a place to live in Winnipeg?

3. Can you describe your experience of learning English in Winnipeg, if applicable?

4. Can you describe your experience with social services in Winnipeg?

Probes:

a) Such as finding childcare, programs for your children, counselling services, connection to faith/cultural groups?

5. What were your biggest successes when settling in Winnipeg?

6. What were your biggest struggles or obstacles when settling in Winnipeg?

(Transition: Thank you. I will now ask you about your social circle when you arrived in Winnipeg)

E. Social connections and integration

1. Can you describe your social circle when you arrived in Winnipeg?

Probes:

a) Did you arrive with family, friends?

b) Did you know anyone in Winnipeg when you arrived?

c) Did you immediately meet individuals from your faith/cultural group?

If participant had a social circle:

2. How did your social circle help you, if at all, financially?

3. How did your social circle help you, if at all, with seeking and/or finding employment/volunteer opportunities?

4. How did your social circle help you, if at all, with seeking and/or finding a place to live in Winnipeg?

5. How did your social circle help you, if at all, with finding social programs in Winnipeg?

Probes:

a) With childcare, language programs, programs for your children, connections to faith/cultural groups)

6. How did your social circle impact your experience of settling in Winnipeg?

If participant did not have a social circle:

7. Describe how the lack of a social circle impacted your experience of settling in Winnipeg?

F. Participants feelings of integration

1. Can you describe if you feel integrated or settled into Winnipeg society?

2. Can you describe how long it took for you to feel settled into Winnipeg society?

3. Describe the ways, if any, you maintain contact with your cultural/faith group?

4. Describe your overall satisfaction with life in Winnipeg?

5. Describe some struggles you face with life in Winnipeg

III Conclusion

- A. That concludes our interview. Thank you so much for taking the time to be in this study
- B. You will be contacted once a summary of the study is complete

Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form

Study Title: Examining the lived Experiences of Integration by Refugees Residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba

Principal Investigator: Maja Aziraj, M.Sc. Student, Human Ecology,
[REDACTED]

Research Supervisor: Dr. Andrew Hatala, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health
Sciences, [REDACTED]

Sponsor: Self-Sponsored

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

You are being invited to join a research study conducted by the principal investigator (researcher) regarding your experiences as a former refugee residing in Winnipeg Manitoba. This research is being conducted by Maja Aziraj as part of a Master's Thesis, under the supervision of Dr. Andrew Hatala at the University of Manitoba. This project examines the integration experiences of refugees residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The primary goal of the research is to better understand the social, economic and cultural factors and contexts that hinder or promote the integration of refugees into Canadian society. The term "integration" refers to a two-way process of adaptation for both refugees and members of the Canadian society during the settlement process (Castles, Korac, Vasta, and Vertovec, 2002)

Participating in this study is entirely your decision. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. You have the right to not answer any question as well as to withdraw from the interview completely. Your decision will not affect the relationship with the investigator of the study or result in any loss of benefit to which you are entitled. You have the right to ask questions about this research study and to have those questions answered by me before, during or after the research. If you have any further questions about the study, feel free at any time to contact me, Maja Aziraj at [REDACTED] or by telephone at [REDACTED]. You are being asked to participate in an interview that will be held during the day in any location that is agreeable to both of us and provides reasonable privacy. The interview is not expected to exceed one hour in length.

You will be asked about your experiences of settling into Canadian society shortly upon arriving in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Questions will be focused on your experiences with housing, work, learning the English language, schooling and leisure. You will also be asked about any social connections that may have helped or hindered your integration experience. I will

request to audio record the interview. All participants who agree take part in the study will be audio recorded

There may be a short-term benefit of participating in this study as you share with someone your personal feelings and experiences. More long-term, your participation will help contribute to a better understanding of the integration experiences of refugees residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Please note that describing your integration experience may carry a risk of emotional distress. With this in mind, a list of free counselling resources in Winnipeg have been attached to this consent form.

All data collected during this study will be kept confidential. In order to help keep your identity confidential, you will be asked to provide a pseudonym for your name. The researcher will store any identifying information on her password protected computer and the information will be deleted once the study is completed. Audio-recordings will be transcribed and stored onto the researcher's password protected personal computer. All audio-recorded material will be transcribed using Express Scribe, a free download transcription. Audio recordings and hand-written notes will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. The data collected will be accessible by the researcher and her academic advisor, Dr. Andrew Hatala. The University of Manitoba may look at the project's records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way. All data will be kept until the completion of the research study. Once the study is completed, data will be deleted off of the computer and audio-recording will be destroyed. You will be compensated \$20.00 for any costs you incur that are directly related to the interview, such as transportation, food, and child care. Compensation will be in the form of cash and will be given at the beginning of the interview to every participant.

You will be provided with a brief summary of research results within two months of the interview. You will have the choice of receiving the summary through written form or electronically through e-mail. The final report of this study will be in the form of a Masters Thesis and will be disseminated to the University of Manitoba Graduate Studies and made available to the public through the University of Manitoba libraries. I may also attempt to have the findings of this study published through academic journals. Add the section that any identifying information will be removed from these publications Participant's names and any identifying information will be removed from any data collected and publications.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate in it. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Joint-Faculty REB. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 4: Ethics Certificate



Research Ethics and Compliance
Office of the Vice-President (Research and International)

Human Ethics
208-194 Dafoe Road
Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3T 2N2
Phone +204-474-7122
Fax +204-269-7173

APPROVAL CERTIFICATE

November 4, 2016

TO: Maja Azra] (Advisor: Regine King)
Principal Investigator

FROM: Kelley Main, Chair
Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (PSREB)

Re: Protocol #P2016:115 (HS20074)
"Examining the lived experiences of integration by refugees residing
in Winnipeg, Manitoba"

Please be advised that your above-referenced protocol has received human ethics approval by the Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board, which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2). It is the researcher's responsibility to comply with any copyright requirements. This approval is valid for one year only and will expire on November 4, 2017.

Any changes to the protocol and/or informed consent form should be reported to the Human Ethics Coordinator in advance of the implementation of such changes.

Please note:

- If you have funds pending human ethics approval, please mail/e-mail/fax (261-0325) a copy of this Approval (identifying the related UM Project Number) to the Research Grants Officer in ORS in order to initiate fund setup. (How to find your UM Project Number: <http://umanitoba.ca/research/ors/mrt-faq.html#pr0>)
- If you have received multi-year funding for this research, responsibility lies with you to apply for and obtain Renewal Approval at the expiry of the initial one-year approval; otherwise, the account will be locked.

The University of Manitoba may request to review research documentation from this project to demonstrate compliance with this approved protocol and the University of Manitoba *Ethics of Research Involving Humans*.

The Research Ethics Board requests a final report for your study (available at http://umanitoba.ca/research/orec/ethics/human_ethics_REB_forms_guidelines.html) in order to be in compliance with Tri-Council Guidelines.

umanitoba.ca/research