

**Leisure Participation of Recent Afghan Immigrants and
Factors Influencing their Utilization of Leisure Services**

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
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Abstract

In-depth interviews were conducted with 11 recent Afghan immigrants in order to examine their leisure interests, constraints and their perspectives on how service providers influence their access to leisure programming. Interviews with 3 leisure service providers including the City of Winnipeg, The International Centre of Winnipeg and The YMCA-YWCA South Branch, examined aspects of agencies that may inhibit or promote service utilization by newcomers. Interview data from both sources were recorded and transcribed for analysis and key themes and sub-themes were identified. Participants were found to be constrained by time and other priorities. They also expressed a preference for home-based family-centered activities and educational programs. Practical implications for service providers include marketing strategies such as home visits and multi-lingual publications, and more family-friendly and educational programming.

Chapter I: Introduction

Canada is a country comprised of people as diverse as its terrain from east to west. The population is growing and changing due to changes in the Immigration Act and as a result of certain world events such as unstable economies, war and an increasingly global job market. People are admitted to Canada under the Immigration Act based on economic, social, and humanitarian concerns (Canadian Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees, 1988) and are allowed entry into Canada under one of the following three categories: family class, convention refugees, and independent immigrants. In order to ensure the successful integration of these newcomers into Canadian society, it is essential that their quality of life is maintained. Not only will this benefit newcomers in terms of their own well being, but the ability of these individuals to reach their fullest potential will also provide a healthier economy and society for Canada as a whole.

One way to provide a better quality of life for newcomers to Canada is to develop services that are designed to meet their specific needs and interests. However, in the planning and development of services for the immigrant population, it is essential that attention be given to the fact that the composition of this group is constantly changing. One cannot provide a service that addresses the needs of a society without knowing who the members of that society are. Services developed ten years ago are likely to be outdated and of little use for Canada's most recent newcomers, which is an ongoing concern as Canada has witnessed a change in the number and the composition of its immigrant population. The number of immigrants to the province of Manitoba has been increasing consistently in recent years and is evident when contrasting the 4,588

applicants in 2001 to the 6,492 in 2003. Change can be seen not only in the number of applications received, but in the primary source countries as well. Hong Kong and Poland were the top two source countries in 1990, China and India were the top two in 2000 (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2001) and the Philippines and Germany were the top two in 2003 (Manitoba Labour and Immigration, 2003). These trends demonstrate how necessary it is for service providers to be aware of the changing composition of the community they serve and to realize that needs may change equally as fast.

Studies that have targeted ethnic minorities in leisure research, but not specifically recent immigrants, have examined issues such as leisure preferences and styles (e.g., Edwards, 1981; Floyd, Shiness, McGuire, & Noe, 1994; Karlis, 1998; Kelly, 1999), motivation for participation (e.g., Walker & Dieser, 2000), suggested research methods for this population (e.g., Camino, 1995; Henderson, 1998; Anderson, 1993), and the constraints they encounter (e.g. Gramann & Allison, 1999; Phillip, 1995; Tirone, 2000). The majority of the research is American based and therefore much of the terminology in the research is American and differs from that used in Canada. An example of such is the American term “racial minority” as opposed to the Canadian term “ethnic minority”.

The present study attempted to fill part of the void in research in the areas of constraints perceived by recent immigrants, and the possibility of barriers to their leisure participation created by leisure service providers themselves. The research questions that this study attempted to answer are:

1. What do recent immigrants identify as their leisure interests?
2. What are the constraints to leisure participation perceived by recent immigrants?

3. What aspects of leisure service providers may inhibit or encourage service utilization by recent immigrants?

The study used a qualitative approach (Merriam, 1998) to explore these research questions as a way of giving insights into the leisure experiences of recent immigrants and to understand the role of service providers. The participants included 11 Afghans who immigrated to Winnipeg within the last 5 years and service providers from 3 organizations. The Afghan community was selected because they are an under-researched minority group who have not yet established a strong community network of their own within the city. Therefore, they may not be as organized nor as connected as immigrants from other more established communities in the city such as the Chinese or the Filipinos. It is thought that individuals from this smaller and less established group may identify unique leisure interests and/or perceived constraints. Also, most studies have not focused specifically on recent immigrants and therefore findings of this study may prove useful in determining how to better include and accommodate recent newcomers. The interviews with recent Afghan newcomers will examine all three of the research questions.

A brief overview of Afghan culture is necessary in order to understand how the ideas, preferences, and expectations of the Afghans currently living in Winnipeg may be influenced and shaped. It is only in the recent past that the rest of the world has come to know the problems and challenges within Afghanistan. In the last century alone there has been much unrest within the country resulting from attempted reforms by various leaders. When the world opened its eyes to what was happening in Afghanistan, the Taliban were forcefully inflicting their strict policies on Afghans with the claim they wanted to

“cleanse society of the evils perpetrated by their predecessors, and install a pure Islamic state within the sanctity of the family as a stabilizing cornerstone” (Dupree, 2004, p.323).

Women were forced to cover themselves by wearing a burqa and were no longer allowed to attend educational institutions or work. Their ability to move about freely in public spaces was also restricted and permitted only when escorted by a close male relative (Dupree, 2004; Stabile & Kumar, 2005). Although the oppressive Taliban policies were extreme, a patriarchal social structure has existed within Afghanistan for centuries.

Moghadam (2002) refers to Afghanistan as a case of “classic patriarchy”. She describes this as follows; “the patriarchal extended family is the central social unit, in which the senior man has the authority over everyone else, including younger men. Women are subject to forms of control and subordination that include restrictive codes of behavior, gender segregation, and the association of female virtue with family honor...” (p.20).

This patriarchal structure is a significant part of Afghan culture and may have a profound impact on the leisure preferences and expectations of Afghans now living in Canada.

The family institution in Afghanistan is another factor that is strongly embedded in the culture of Afghans. In Afghanistan during the years of the Taliban, during which many Afghans fled to Pakistan or Iran, (Dupree, 2004) the family network once strong, began to erode. Dupree (2004) explains that the Taliban rule, a deteriorating economy and the drought contributed to changes in roles within the family. Despite the changes endured by Afghans over the years, Dupree (2004) claims that in today’s Afghanistan, “as shaky as it is, in some instances, the family is the only institution available...Amidst the confusion and the ambiguities, the basic integrity of the family survives” (p. 329).

Although Dupree’s statement refers to the state of the family network in today’s

Afghanistan, it is possible that this holds true for the Afghan families living now in Canada. They have endured immense change, hardship and loss, and it is possible the family is of crucial importance to Afghan people everywhere. The importance of family for Afghans may influence their lives in many aspects, including their leisure style.

Service providers from the YMCA/YWCA South Branch (charitable/community-based agency), the City of Winnipeg, and the International Centre of Winnipeg (non-profit immigrant-serving settlement agency) participated in the study. All representatives from their respective agencies were selected to participate due to their direct involvement in program planning and their knowledge of the agency's mandate and service delivery criteria. By examining agency perspectives with different mandates, a better understanding of the accessibility and inclusiveness of leisure services was expected to be achieved. As well, gaining perspectives from the leisure service providers themselves is essential, as no study has been conducted which has looked at the agency to determine barriers. Interviews with staff of leisure agencies examined their perspectives on how they influence the utilization of their services by recent immigrant community members. By contrasting the information generated in the interviews with newcomers to that from interviews with leisure service providers, a sense of whether service providers do in fact act as a barrier to leisure participation can be gained.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Leisure Experiences in Western Cultures

Leisure experiences of people residing in Western countries are better understood than those of people from other cultures. Focusing on the latter group is useful as a means of enhancing understanding of leisure. As the majority of Afghan participants were living with members of their immediate family research focusing on family leisure was reviewed. Family has proven to be an important influence on leisure style. Studies have shown that parents value family leisure and believed that family activities were related to family stability and cohesion (Shaw, 2001; Shaw & Dawson, 2001; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). Shaw and Dawson (2001) found that parents viewed leisure participation as a duty and not as something chosen out of free-will. Additionally, family activities were selected for extrinsically motivated reasons including enhancing family cohesiveness and teaching values. It was also found that family leisure did not necessarily involve enjoyment or satisfaction for the parents, but rather involved effort, frustration and lack of enjoyment (Shaw & Dawson, 2001). Although parents deemed family leisure important, a number issues relating to family leisure have been recognized including time constraints and the inability to find appropriate activities for families (Shaw, 2001).

Not only is leisure-style a function of family, studies have shown age to be an important influence on the frequency of leisure participation (Osgood & Lee, 1993; Iso-Ahola, Jackson & Dunn, 1994). Osgood and Lee (1993) found parenthood to be the most consistent determinant of leisure lifestyle, acting as a major constraint to leisure activities. Research has also demonstrated that frequency of leisure participation

decreases over the life-span with people seeking new leisure activities less as they age (Iso-Ahola et al., 1994). Therefore, the patterns in leisure participation in western cultures seem to be influenced by one's life-stage. During the life-stage involving parenthood a decrease in leisure participation is experienced.

Leisure Experiences in Islamic Cultures

Although the present study examined the leisure participation of Afghan newcomers in Canada, research on the leisure experiences of Afghans was extremely rare. However, studies have been conducted which have focused on the leisure experiences of individuals from other Islamic nations (Martin & Mason, 2003; Martin & Mason, 2004). A number of leisure patterns have been identified in the Muslim countries of Egypt, Iran and Turkey. First, sport and recreation is encouraged in the three countries (Martin and Mason, 2003). Islamic scriptures are positive in their teachings of recreation and leisure and acknowledge some forms of leisure, such as sport, are necessary for achieving healthy bodies and minds (Martin and Mason, 2004).

Another leisure pattern found in these countries is that leisure activities are linked closely to other aspects of life including socializing and eating with family and friends as well as with religious events (Martin & Mason, 2003). In these countries the celebration of religious events and holidays consisted of leisure qualities with some of the activities common during these times including, "eating meals and socializing with friends, relatives, visiting external eating and drinking places to socialize and watch television..." (Martin & Mason, 2004, p. 9).

A third leisure pattern discovered is the differing leisure experiences of those from urban middle-class and those in poorer economic situations. Leisure in the urban

middle class areas somewhat resembles that of Western societies which has resulted mainly due to individual ownership of media devices such as televisions (Martin and Mason, 2004). Other forms of leisure found in urban middle-class areas are active sports common in the West and traveling abroad. On the other hand, those inhabiting rural areas or consisting of the urban poor may not have television in their individual homes. For them, watching television is a social activity that takes place at a public venue, such as a coffee shop. Playing or watching soccer is the main sporting activity. A commonality for both the middle class and the poorer groups is the importance of spending leisure time with an extended group of relatives and friends. "Having leisurely meals together, sharing in the celebration of family and local events, visiting public baths, or just passing the time sitting and talking, have traditionally been very important ways of spending whatever free time was available" (Martin & Mason, 2004, p. 11). Socializing is generally done in gender segregated groups, with the men doing so outside the home and the women remaining in it.

Ethnic Minority Leisure Constraint Theories

Research on the constraints recent immigrants experience in regards to leisure opportunities is limited. However, researchers have examined constraints perceived by ethnic minorities in general. As the purpose of the present study is to explore the leisure constraints facing recent immigrants, it is essential to recognize the gaps in research and shortcomings of previous constraint theories. Therefore, a discussion of several racial minority constraint theories will be presented.

In the past, the underparticipation by ethnic minorities in leisure and the differences among ethnic groups in participation rates have been largely explained by two

contrasting theories. These theories may help in comprehending the possible leisure constraints facing recent immigrants. The first theory is that of marginality. This theory poses that ethnic and racial differences in leisure participation result from the marginal position in society held by many ethnic minority groups. The marginal status of these people is demonstrated by a lack of facilities, transportation, and resources relevant to them, just to name a few (Gramann, & Allison, 1999). It is generally believed that individuals of certain ethnic groups experience a greater economic disadvantage than do non-minority members of society. This disadvantage tends to influence where the individuals live, the means of transportation available to them, and how much they are able and willing to spend on leisure activities. Especially, it is assumed that socioeconomic factors influence the leisure of ethnic minority group members compared to majority group members.

The other major theory that has been used to explain the under-participation of ethnic minorities in leisure is that of ethnicity. This theory states that ethnic and racial differences in participation result from culturally based value systems, norms and leisure socialization patterns of particular groups, which may then shape their leisure preferences and styles and the leisure choices they make (Gramann & Allison, 1999). For example, this theory is useful to explain how certain ethnic groups place a very high value on participating in leisure activities as a family (Horna, 1980; Stodolska & Yi, 2003). In contrast, non-minority North Americans tend to enjoy participating in leisure activities with members of their peer groups or co-workers. This example demonstrates how one's culture can influence the way in which one chooses to experience leisure.

Research that has attempted to test these two theories has been very limited. Not only have there been very few studies conducted in this area, but the ones that have been conducted have produced inconsistent and inconclusive results (Floyd, Shiness, & McGuire, 1994; Washburne, 1978). Due to the inconclusiveness of these results, some researchers have chosen to focus on another concept in explaining participation differences between minority and non-minority members of society. Discrimination has recently been explored as a potential constraint to leisure participation. Although, still very few in number, studies examining discrimination as a way of explaining ethnic differences in leisure patterns have begun to emerge. West (1989) expressed concern over the fact that research has virtually ignored interracial relations and prejudice as a potential explanation for minority under-participation. He speculated that this oversight on the part of researchers may be due to the, "cognitive tyranny of the dominant paradigms in leisure research on minorities" (p. 12). He also offered the possibility that overt discrimination may be perceived as part of the history of the southern US, not a problem that is part of our present reality. The purpose of his study was to ascertain whether interracial relations influence urban park usage by black minorities in addition to the marginality and ethnicity (subcultural) factors. The major findings of his study indicated that both marginality and interracial relations seemed to play a role in the underparticipation of black Detroiters in the urban parks.

Floyd et al., (1993) examined under-usage of public recreation areas by Mexican Americans and criticized Washburne's (1978) marginality-ethnicity framework for not having progressed since it originated. An assimilation perspective was proposed instead, which, they state, has the added benefit of comprising the perceived discrimination

dimension as well as marginality and ethnicity. This perspective describes the concepts of assimilation and social distance. Assimilation is referred to as the reduction of boundaries between members of two or more societies or cultural groups. Social distance, on the other hand, is defined by Yinger as “the degree of intimacy found acceptable between members of two or more groups” (as cited in Floyd et al., 1993, p. 84). The assimilation perspective suggests that as the social distance between minority groups and the majority group narrows, recreational behavior becomes more similar.

Research conducted by Phillipp (1995) also advocated the importance of ethnicity as a crucial factor influencing leisure constraints. He contended that past constraint models, such as that of Crawford and Godbey (1987), do not take into consideration the factors that are unique and particular to minority groups. His study found that for African Americans lower comfort and appeal levels were associated with activities being located outside the community, and higher comfort and appeal levels with activities taking place within the community. Thus, it is reasoned that, lower levels of appeal and comfort may be associated with perceptions of present or historic patterns of discrimination and feeling unwelcome in these leisure areas (Phillipp, 1995, p. 118).

The aforementioned studies indicate that although research exists that focuses on understanding the constraints perceived by minorities, further research needs to be extended to recent immigrant groups. It is necessary to separate recent immigrants from the general ethnic minority categories, as their experiences and situations are likely to be unique. Stodolska (2000) argued the unlikelihood that leisure behaviour of immigrants does not differ from that of individuals of the same ethnic background born in the host country and from members of other ethnic backgrounds. She also claimed that by

studying the problems of recent immigrants, “not only can we broaden our understanding of leisure participation patterns of immigrant groups themselves, but we can also gain important new insights into the problems experienced by the mainstream population” (Stodolska, 2000, p. 40). By understanding the leisure behaviour of recent immigrants we may be better able to identify mechanisms used to cope with traumatic life experiences. Stodalska (1998) also argued that the constraints experienced by immigrants may differ from those experienced by mainstream populations based on their static and dynamic characteristics. Static characteristics relate to the nature of the constraints at a particular point in time. Immigrants may experience the same constraints as the general population in addition to constraints related to their minority status and the process of adapting to the host country. The constantly changing nature of the constraints (i.e. dynamic constraints) immigrants encounter also sets them apart from mainstream populations. Consequently, Stodalska (1998) suggested that the constraints of immigrants be explored with their constantly changing nature in mind.

Hierarchical Model of Leisure Constraints

Clearly, a wealth of research has been conducted on the development of theories meant to make sense of and explain leisure constraints. One way researchers have attempted to organize the literature on leisure constraints is by conceptualizing the data using a particular model. One such model is the hierarchical model of leisure constraints (Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991). This conceptualization amended their previously developed model which placed constraints into three categories – intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural (Crawford and Godbey, 1987 as cited in Crawford et al., 1991) but did not explain the, “dynamic process of how people might negotiate a series of

constraints through to participation and beyond” (Crawford et al., 1991, p. 313). The first proposition derived from this modified model states that each constraint level must be successfully negotiated in turn in order for leisure participation to occur. Secondly, it proposed that, “the sequential ordering of constraints represents a hierarchy of importance” (Crawford et al., 1991, p. 314) with intrapersonal constraints being the most powerful. Thirdly, social class may be a more powerful influence on participation or non-participation than initially believed. In addition to these three propositions, the model also offers insight into how constraining factors continue to influence other aspects of engagement such as frequency or specialization of activity, even after participation occurs (Crawford et al., 1991).

Leisure Constraints of Immigrants

A handful of studies examining the leisure of immigrants have offered some insight into this subject area. Horna (1980) examined leisure needs of immigrants and how they were expressed in the receiving society. Four main changes in the leisure of immigrants were discovered. First, the amount of time available to participate in leisure decreased. Second, a significant decrease in the content occurred in that there were fewer leisure activities available to them. Third, change in the meaning of and satisfaction with leisure activities occurred. It was found that although new social activities were perceived as enjoyable, they did not bring the same intrinsic reward as the activities engaged in while living in their previous country. Finally, changes occurred in the composition of their leisure groups. Prior to immigrating to Canada, friends and extended family members would compose their leisure groups. However, it was found

that married immigrants, with or without children, tended to withdraw into their nuclear family.

Other research focusing on the constraints to leisure participation indicated that lack of time and increased work obligations were major structural barriers to leisure participation for recent immigrants (Juniu, 2000; Stodolska, 1998). Studies (Juniu, 2000; Stodolska, 1998) found that newcomers placed a high value on success and improving either their own way of life, or that of their children. In order to achieve the level of success they value, working hard and committing long employment hours is absolutely essential, and experiencing leisure is viewed as secondary in importance. Other studies (Tsai & Coleman, 1990) examining leisure constraints for recent immigrants found additional constraints due to lack of time and increased work obligations. Tsai and Coleman (1999) identified six types of constraints of Chinese immigrants: resource constraints; interpersonal constraints; access constraints; affective constraints; social-cultural constraints; and physiological constraints.

Ruble and Shaw (1991) examined the constraints on leisure and community participation among immigrant women from El Salvador, Chile, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Inadequate English skills appeared as the major barrier to physical and social mobility. This barrier resulted in feelings of embarrassment and vulnerability, and in social isolation due to difficulty getting around. Insufficient orientation to the city and to life in Canada, lack of adequate child care and support from their own ethnic community were also identified as constraints to mobility affecting community and leisure participation. The inability of these women to participate in leisure and in their community resulted in a low level of well-being and a slower rate of integration.

Changes in leisure participation after immigration among Polish immigrants were examined by Stodolska (2000). She discovered that the causes for ceasing participation in previous leisure activities and for replacing them with new ones were related to the immigration experience. Environmental change was a contributing factor as many activities were no longer available. Other factors influencing the change included the expense of the activity, the perceived danger and time constraints. Shattered social networks were also a contributing factor to changes in leisure participation.

In the United States, changes in leisure behaviour among immigrant youth from Poland, Korea and Mexico has also been studied along with the role of leisure in establishing ethnic identity (Stodolska & Yi, 2003). Leisure activities of immigrant youth were found to have changed as a result of leisure items becoming more accessible than in their countries of origin and due to a loss of their social network. Therefore, there was an increase in leisure outings and activities engaged in with family members. The role of leisure in developing ethnic identity was found to occur in following three ways: 1) ethnic identity is shaped through the self-discovery of one's own cultural differences in relation to mainstream Americans; 2) immigrant youth discover their ethnic identity through comparing themselves with members of their own ethnic group; and 3) being labeled as "ethnic" and being seen as different. Although this research has created a foundation for understanding the leisure needs and constraints among immigrants, more research is needed to explore the nature of their leisure or recreation participation including barriers to such participation.

Use of Community Services by Immigrants

One area that has not been explored in leisure research is that of the role of the service provider in influencing participation in programs and services. One study that explored organizational barriers to inclusion was conducted by Allison and Hibbler (2004). The recreation professionals that participated in the study identified five potential barriers including; 1) inability to respond to changing communities being service, 2) staff and management did not reflect the changing face of the communities, 3) deferred program responsibility in that programs for ethnic minorities were often left for ethnic minority staff, or staff who enjoyed doing special programming to design, 4) language barriers and the politics of voice, and 5) management and staff attitudes and stereotypes. This study was important as the focus shifted from the individual barriers that influence leisure participation to the organizational barriers that discourage program accessibility.

While research examining the role of service providers in influencing the use of their services by immigrants is rare in leisure research, extensive research has been conducted in other disciplines. Leisure service providers may benefit from the research conducted in the health and community service fields to better understand the barriers faced by first generation immigrants in accessing services. One of the barriers facing recent immigrants is the type of services provided. Atkin, Cameron, Badger, and Evers (1989) describe this problem as the ethnocentricity of service provision. They define service ethnocentricity as providing community care that is discriminatory in that it targets the needs of the mainstream client groups. The authors state that a solid understanding of the needs and values of the entire community is essential to planning

services that will encourage utilization by all. A review of the literature examining barriers currently facing many recent immigrants, and suggested means to overcome them will now be discussed.

The most pronounced struggle faced by those who have immigrated to Canada is low proficiency in one of the two official languages (Chow, 1999; Atkin et al., 1989). This inability to communicate with the community results in a lack of information and knowledge of services available, thus leading to the low service utilization by this segment of the population. Atkin et al. (1989) found that Asian elders were less likely to make use of the community services available to them and were also less likely to know about the available services. The study revealed that 81% of the Asian sample did not know of the services, and that respondents were interested in using the services in the future after having the services explained to them (Atkin et al., 1989). Chow (1999) suggested that for a service to be successful in reaching new Chinese Canadians, it must adopt multiple means of communication such as, "street fairs, radio talk shows, local Chinese TV, and coverage in Chinese-language newspapers..." (p. 74). Truelove (2000) examined services for immigrant women and found that providing information on available services in ethno-specific drop-in centres will increase awareness, as immigrant women tend to seek help within their own communities and languages. The issue of language as a barrier to services was also discussed by Atkin et al. (1989) who recommended that agencies should maintain interpreters as well as leaflets in a variety of languages.

The language barrier experienced by many of the newcomers to Canada impacts their awareness level of resources and services available to them in the community.

However, this is not the only way that language acts as a deterrent to immigrants' accessing services. Even if they are aware of the services existing in their communities, they may choose not to utilize the services based on the fear of attempting to communicate with staff that are unable to speak their language. Research on the utilization of services by immigrants has been conducted in the health care field. Xueqin (1999) examined the use of traditional and western health services by Chinese immigrants in the United States. One of the major findings of her study was that Chinese immigrants seek the health services of Chinese physicians of the same ethnic background. When Chinese physicians were questioned as to why this was the case, they stated that, "Chinese patients are not satisfied with the American doctors because of their inflexibility of appointments, short visits, long waiting, distrust, and miscommunication" (Xueqin, 1999, p. 431).

Another factor that often hinders immigrant community members from utilizing services is location of the services. Truelove (2000) examined settlement services for immigrant women in Toronto. She found that recent immigrants tend to settle in various locations throughout the city, including the suburbs. This differs from earlier this century when immigrants were more likely to settle in the west end of the city. Although there are now settlement services dispersed throughout the city, a strong concentration still remain in the traditional reception area. She also indicated that agencies are facing the challenge of choosing the ideal location due to the fact that new immigrants are so dispersed throughout the city.

Research in the field of Social Work examined the need for services to be more inclusive of the needs of both immigrant and mainstream society members. Sherraden

and Martin (1994) stressed the importance of understanding the former lives of immigrants as well as their immigration experience. They argued that although these individuals have moved to North America, the influence from family and political developments in their home countries may still be strong. One of the areas they suggested social workers should learn more about is the importance of informal caregiving compared to formal services. A major difference in caregiving in the United States and the countries of origin of many first generation immigrants is that they are accustomed to receiving care and assistance from family members. On the other hand, in the United States, social welfare services are provided through large and impersonal formal institutions of which recent immigrants have very limited understanding and feelings of distrust (cited in Sherraden and Martin, 1994). The under-utilization of formal services has also been found in the mental health field for a similar reason. Vega, Kolody, Aguilar-Gaxiola, and Catalano (1999) explained the lower use of mental health services by Mexican Americans as, "the belief that emotional support systems partially displaced the need for formal care providers" (p. 8). As well, immigrants may refuse to utilize these services due to the fact that, for many services, one would have to identify oneself as 'poor', resulting in wounded pride and lowered self-esteem. It is suggested that service providers should encourage informal caregiving as an alternative to some of the services provided through formal means.

Xueqin (1999) emphasized the importance of collaborations in the health care field. She stated that the best way to increase the utilization of services by immigrants is to promote the usage of both Western and traditional Chinese health practices. It was noted that Chinese immigrants believed Western medicine to be effective for treating

acute, or a combination of acute and chronic disease. In order to create an effective alliance between the alternative healers and western doctors, both should be educated on the benefits of the other. They should also be made aware of why the immigrant population is seeking the services of the other. This is vital to providing the best care possible.

Another way in which the collaboration between traditional and western services can be used in order to ensure the best care possible for immigrant community members is to use the traditional service providers as a source of entry. In other words, traditional service providers should use the traditional healers as a medium for promoting their services. Immigrants would be more likely to trust the traditional healers and would also better understand the benefits of the services, as communication problems would not exist. Sherraden and Martin (1994) agreed that using more informal, or in some cases traditional services, as a point of entry is a useful way to reach immigrant community members. It is proposed that ethnic community centres serve not only as a place for members of that ethnic community to come together, but these centres may also deliver other services.

When designing formal services in order to make them more accessible to immigrants, it is crucial to understand the differences in formal services in immigrants' home countries, and those in the current country of residence (Sherraden & Martin, 1994). Matthiason (1974) and Salcido (1979) stated that, "lack of familiarity, fear of deportation and ineligibility for such services inhibit utilization, even as a form of temporary support" (cited in Sherraden & Martin, 1994, p. 373).

In addition to the lack of familiarity with western formal services, Weibrod (1988) posed that immigrants are often confused about the role of the non-profit sector (cited in Sherraden & Martin, 1994). There are few countries in the world that equal the United States and Canada in terms of involvement of voluntary agencies in the provision of services. Thus, immigrants are often unsure about accessing the services provided by these agencies. There is confusion around who qualifies for the services, how to register, and what types of benefits can be derived from utilizing the services.

Finally, learning about the social welfare system in immigrants' home countries may reveal alternative models of social welfare (Sherraden & Martin, 1994). James Midgely (1991; 1996) argued that social workers in developing countries may be more accustomed to finding creative service delivery models and also have experience in delivering culturally sensitive services (cited in Sherraden & Martin, 1994). This is also very important for leisure service providers to do. By examining the types of leisure activities preferred by immigrants in their home countries, they will be better able to plan services and activities that meet their specific needs.

It is not only important for service providers to understand the differences in services in immigrants' countries of origins and North America, but it is also essential for them to be made aware of the immigration experience (Sherraden & Martin, 1994; Delgado & Tennstedt, 1997). Some of the factors that service providers must consider are 'push' factors, those that cause immigrants to migrate, such as poverty, as well as 'pull' factors such as higher wages and/or freedom. Other factors said to influence the decision to migrate include, "household composition, education, gender, age, family, community networks, labor recruitment and immigration policies..." (Arizpe, 1982;

Portes, 1979; Suro, 1991, as cited in Sherraden & Martin, 1994, p. 375). Therefore, it is crucial for all types of service providers, including those in the leisure field, to understand the reasons why immigrants have chosen to migrate. This comprehension will assist them in better recognizing the needs of ethnic community members, as well as how they promote the available services in the communities. Furthermore, it is important to examine not only the constraints perceived by recent immigrants, but also to investigate the policies, programming and structure of leisure service providers in order to determine whether accessible, inclusive services are being provided.

Chapter III: Method

Participants

Members of the Afghan community living in Winnipeg who have come to Canada as refugees within the last five years were selected to participate in this study. Nine of the eleven participants had lived in Iran for up to 5 years before immigrating to Canada as Government Assisted Refugees. Two of the men had lived in refugee camps in Pakistan and arrived in Winnipeg 2 to 3 years after their wives and children. The participants consisted of both males and females ranging in age from 19 to 60 and included 2 single women living alone, 1 single young woman living with her 2 siblings and her mother, 1 young single man living with his 2 siblings and mother, 2 two-parent families with 2 children, 2 two-parent families with 1 child, and 3 single mothers with children. Children ranged in age from 1 year old to late teens. Only one of the participants had employment which was part-time. Two participants were registered in employment related training programs and were hoping to obtain work upon completion of their training. One adult participant was taking high school course and 5 were enrolled in government ESL classes. When families were interviewed it was either the mother or father from that family who participated in the interview. 2 of the participants did not work and did not attend ESL or work related training. All of the participants lived in apartments, most in the city centre and received government assistance. Interpreters were used to interview three of the participants who had low English comprehension and communication skills. Both interpreters were other Afghan participants of the study with very high English skills.

Some Afghan participants were referred by the International Centre of Winnipeg, a non-profit settlement agency which provides support and help for many newcomers when they first arrived, as well as throughout their integration process. A staff member of the Centre was contacted and asked if he would be willing to refer individuals from the Afghan community. Once he agreed to assist in referring his clients, a letter was delivered to him explaining the purpose of the study and the criteria for potential participants. The snowball technique (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998) was also used once the researcher interviewed some of the participants introduced by the International Centre. This recruitment technique involved asking some of the participants referred by the International Centre to introduce other Afghan newcomers who fit with the selection criteria of the study to the researcher. The participants who were referring them to the researcher made the initial contact with the potential participants. When this occurred, the purpose of the study was explained to them and if they agreed to take part, they were asked permission for their names and contact information to be passed on to the researcher. They were given the researcher's name and told to expect a call within a week in order for an interview to be set up.

Service providers from the YMCA/YWCA South Branch, the City of Winnipeg's Community Services Department, and the International Centre of Winnipeg participated in the study as well. The Coordinator of Volunteers was interviewed as the representative of the International Centre of Winnipeg as she organized many of the programs newcomers took part in at the Centre including the social events, conversation circles and computer classes. Three employees of the City of Winnipeg's Community Services Department participated in an interview including the Administrative

Coordinator of Social Support and Development Services, the Program Initiative Coordinator of Community Development and Recreation Services and the Community Development and Recreation Initiative Administrative Coordinator. The Program Director from the YMCA-YWCA South branch represented that organization. The downtown branch was originally contacted to participate in the study as they provide more programming specifically for newcomers. However, after several telephone and email contacts were not replied to, the South Branch was approached.

An email was sent to each of the respective agencies outlining the purpose of the study and announcing the need for appropriate staff to participate in an interview. The service providers replied by email with the names and contact information of the staff who would be best suited to participate. The researcher then contacted these individuals to arrange a date and time for the interviews.

Research Design

A qualitative research approach was used for this study. This approach is common in exploratory research as it attempts to create an understanding of the lived experiences of individuals or groups (Merriam, 1998). Studies of this nature typically result in the identification of recurring patterns or themes, and do not attempt to build a theory or test a hypothesis. This type of study, “seeks to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved” (Merriam, p. 11). The qualitative approach is often equated with naturalistic research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Expanding on this notion, Patton (2002) describes one of the themes of qualitative inquiry as naturalistic in that the researcher does not manipulate the phenomenon being studied. Instead, research takes place in a real-world setting with

participants being interviewed in a place and situation comfortable to them. In the case of the present study, little is known about the leisure and lived experiences of a small, under-researched group of Afghan immigrants. As such, a qualitative approach was selected as a means of discovery by examining the perspectives and experiences of Afghan immigrants in Winnipeg.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected using semi-structured one-on-one interviews with recent immigrants, as well as interviews with one or more employees of the participating leisure service providers. A semi-structured interview technique allowed the researcher to develop an initial structure, but also allowed freedom in additional probing (Berg, 1989). Whereas a structured interview would require the same wording and sequence of questioning for all participants, a benefit of the semi-structured approach was that it allowed the researcher to manipulate the wording and order of the questions depending on the interviewee (Berg, 1989; Merriam, 1998). This was especially important in the present study as the English ability of the interviewees varied. Additionally, the approach allowed the researcher to clarify answers in order to ensure that the responses were understood in the manner in which they were intended. The approach was also selected for interviews with service providers as it provided some consistency with interviews with the three agencies, but also allowed the researcher to probe for more in-depth responses. The researcher was also able to tailor questions making them specific to each particular agency. The interview questions for the newcomer participants were consistent with all three of the research questions. The interview questions for the leisure

service providers focused on the third research question relating to the service providers' role in influencing service utilization by recent immigrants.

Depending on which discipline a researcher is associated with there are varying forms of interview approaches with varying terminology that describe them. The previously described semi-structured approach stems from the sociological perspective whereas as the interview guide approach was generated from an anthropological perspective. Although similar to the semi-structured approach, the interview guide approach begins with a list of questions of issues to be explored during the interview with no question wording or order being determined ahead of time (Patton, 2002). This type of interview format allows the interviewer to build a free conversation with those being interviewed but ensures that the same issues are addressed in each interview. The reason the semi-structured approach was selected over the interview guide approach was that more detailed, pre-determined questions would assist the interview remain focused. This was especially important for the interviews with the Afghan newcomers whose responses sometimes drifted off topic and away from the area of inquiry.

Despite the advantages of the semi-structured interview approach for this particular study, the approach is not without certain disadvantages. First, the approach requires a skilled and experienced interviewer in order to know how and when to use probes. As the researcher in the present study was a master's student conducting her first academic interview, she may have lacked the knowledge of being able to ask prompt questions resulting in being unable to gather all relevant information from the interviewees. Another potential disadvantage to this approach is that it may inhibit the

respondent from discussing other important issues that the researcher may not have foreseen.

A script of instructions and open-ended questions was used during the interviews with recent Afghan immigrants. One-on-one interviews were used in order to understand the individual experiences of the participants. Interview questions were divided into three sections: 1) Questions about the leisure needs and interests of recent immigrants; 2) Explorations of the constraints to recreation participation perceived by recent immigrants; and 3) Questions about the role of recreation agencies in leisure participation of recent immigrants (see Appendix A for interview guide). Probes were also used by the interviewer as is consistent with the semi-structured interview approach (Table 1).

Table 1.

Sample Probes for Afghan Respondents

1. How long have you been in Canada?
 2. Did you have any leisure time before coming to Canada?
 - a) If so, what did you do in your leisure time before coming to Canada?
 3. Are the people you spend your leisure time with in Canada different than those you spent leisure time with before coming to Canada?
 4. If you were to participate in more leisure programs in the future, what types of programs would you be interested in?
 5. Where do you go to participate in leisure activities?
 - a) What types of leisure programs do you do there?
 6. How did you become aware of the programs that you know about or participate in?
 7. What do you think is the best way for an agency to advertise their programs to newcomers?
-

Data were also collected from leisure service providers through the use of interviews with one or more staff members. In this study, interviews with service providers focused on better comprehending the service providers' role in encouraging or discouraging the leisure participation of recent immigrants. It was decided that interviewing employees involved in program planning and policy development would be the best way to achieve this. The intent of the questioning was to determine: agency perspectives and attitudes; the vision for future planning; the scope of the programs offered for recent immigrants; advertising techniques; staffing information including representativeness of the community, education, languages spoken; as well as agency awareness of the leisure interests and constraints to service utilization perceived by recent immigrant community members (see Appendix B for interview guide). Once again, probes were used in the interviews with agency staff in order to allow for in-depth questioning and responses (Table 2).

Table 2.

Sample Probes for Service Providers

1. Do you offer programs for adults as well as youth?
 2. Do you have and programs that target immigrants specifically?
 3. Do you keep track of what types of clients utilize your programs?
 4. Are needs assessments conducted with community members in order to decide what type of programs to implement?
 5. Do you have any partnerships with other agencies or community groups in order to reach out to less mainstream community members?
 6. Do you offer any staff training or workshops on diversity or cultural sensitivity?
-

Immigrant interview format. Members of the Afghan community referred by the International Centre of Winnipeg were contacted and asked whether they wished to participate in the study, and before the interview occurred they signed a consent form (see appendix C). The interview was semi-structured in order to ensure consistency in questioning across all respondents, as well as to allow for some flexibility in responding to the answers given by respondents.

The one-on-one interviews took place at the participant's home, and were approximately 30-45 minutes in duration. The researcher began each interview session by providing the respondent with an overview of the interview (e.g., length, questioning style). The purpose of the study was also explained to the respondent at that time. As well, participants were informed of their right to cease participation in the study at any time if they chose to do so. Conversations during the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed at a later time in order for the data to be analyzed. Results were mailed to those who indicated an interest in learning the outcome of the study.

Service provider interview format. Interviews were conducted with three types of service providers. Each interview with the service providers lasted between 30 minutes and one-hour and was conducted in an office or meeting room at their place of work. Interviews began with an explanation of the format and structure of the session. Before the interviews were conducted, service provider participants read and signed a consent form (see Appendix D). Again, the purpose of the study was relayed to the participants, along with information regarding their right to withdraw from the study at any point. Conversations occurred during the service provider interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed at a later time. As with the recent immigrant participants, results of the study

were mailed to those agencies indicating an interest which was all three of the service providers.

Data Analysis

An analysis of qualitative data strives towards achieving a deeper understanding of research questions (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). This study used a data analysis technique called pattern analysis, common in qualitative research, in order to identify underlying patterns or themes in the interview data (Patton, 2002, Stake, 1995). Generally speaking, pattern analysis refers to the process involved in the search for patterns or themes in the data (Patton, 2002).

The search for meaning of the data began early on, while transcripts were being reviewed for familiarity with the data. Once transcripts were reviewed the search for patterns or themes became more formalized. To identify patterns in the data a coding scheme was developed (Patton, 2002). First, units of data consisting of important experiences or ideas contained within the interviews were identified. Next, it was necessary to decide which of the units of data fit together into categories through a process called constant comparison (Merriam, 1998). The constant comparison process (Merriam, 1998) involved comparing each meaning unit with the others and then assigning those with similar characteristics to the same category. Those with different characteristics were assigned to other categories. This process continued until all meaning units were placed into a category and when no new categories could be formed. After this process was completed with the first interview transcript, it was repeated with the others using the same groupings created from the first transcript and adding to it if new categories emerge. Once constant comparison was completed, categories names

were generated and assigned a code which was an abbreviated form of its name. Next, the units of data fitting within each category were retrieved from the interview transcripts and placed together in groupings (Creswell, 1998). More specifically, these units were taken out of the context in which they were stated and placed under the heading of their assigned category with other units belonging to the same category. The units in the categories were therefore removed from any association with the person stating the ideas allowing them to become one level more abstract. Thus, the emphasis shifted to the categories themselves, rather than the interviews where the comments were stated. Once this was complete, the categories were compared and contrasted for similarities or differences with one another. This allowed for important meanings to become more obvious due to reappearance of certain data (Stake, 1995). Patterns and themes emerged from the exploration of relationships between the categories.

In order to better identify relationships or common themes, the data collected from the interviews with the Afghan participants were visually displayed in a data matrix. This was important for identifying connections between themes and categories (Patton, 2002). This technique involved inserting a list of all categories down one side of a table, then inserting the list once more along the top of the table. The grid then allowed for each category to be compared with the others. Within each cell in the grid it was documented how each category either related, or did not relate with another.

The data obtained from the interviews with the leisure service providers underwent the same data analysis process. It was important to examine the data in connection with the respective agency in order to compare and contrast the programs and

policies of three agencies (i.e., the City of Winnipeg, International Centre of Winnipeg and the YMCA-YWCA South Branch).

Efforts to Address Credibility and Dependability

A journal was used throughout the data analysis process as a way of establishing credibility. The journal recorded the researcher's notes on her own experience working at a settlement agency for immigrants to Winnipeg. Employment experience as the Coordinator of Volunteers for the agency consisted of recruiting and training volunteers to assist newcomers through programs such as conversation classes, computer classes, tutoring and social activities. The researcher's expectations as to what might be found in the results as well as assumptions held about the subject group prior to the interviews were recorded as a way to counteract the potential for researcher's bias when interpreting the results (see appendix E). The journal also contained the researcher's notes on the process involved in identifying key themes and sub-themes. Not only did the journal produce an audit trail, which helps others clarify the data analysis process, but it also assisted the researcher in ensuring consistency throughout the data analysis process.

Member checking was used to increase the trustworthiness and credibility of the study's findings. At the time of the interviews, participants were asked to provide their contact information if they wanted the opportunity to be a part of the ongoing research process by providing feedback once the analysis and interpretation of the data were completed. It was explained to them that this would help the researcher verify whether the interpretation of their responses was accurate. Unfortunately, none of the newcomer participants expressed an interest in being a part of this process. A possible reason for this was their inability to see the importance of the opportunity to verify the interpretation

of their responses due to their unfamiliarity with the research process. Additionally, they may have been less eager to participate in member checking because of the time required of them to review the information and meet with the researcher a second time. As nearly all participants expressed time as being a key factor in their ability to participate in leisure, this factor may be a likely influence on their willingness to participate further in the research process. Another possible reason for their disinterest in member checking is that they knew their responses would be anonymous and there would not be any repercussions for what they revealed during their interviews. Conversely, all three of the participating service providers responded favourably to giving their feedback. They seemed to value the opportunity to ensure their responses were interpreted accurately. The participants were contacted and presented with a summary of the study findings and conclusions through email and asked to comment on it. Their insights were incorporated into further revisions of the findings.

Chapter IV: Results

Major Theme 1: Purposeful Leisure

The examination of interview data from the Afghan participants revealed their notion of purposeful leisure. Much of what participants discussed related to their leisure activities before immigrating to Canada, their activities when they initially arrived in Winnipeg, and what their current leisure entailed. All participants indicated that their leisure activities underwent some changes throughout the immigration process, however it appeared that the meaning of leisure for them remained relatively unchanged. By examining the interview data at various stages during the immigration process it seemed as though leisure was always integrated into various aspects of Afghan life.

Sub-theme 1: Importance of family, friends and community. The family and social network appeared to be extremely important for Afghans. One of the main ways Afghans viewed leisure throughout the entire immigration and settlement process was as an opportunity to spend time with family and friends. Examining the leisure activities of Afghan newcomers revealed that prior to immigrating to Canada, common leisure activities included spending time with their immediate and extended family, and with their friends. The majority of leisure activities took place in their own home or the home of a friend or relative and for some included preparing and eating meals together. When asked about what they did in their free time in Afghanistan comments included, "I go their (friend's) house...they come my house...cook something, eat together, watching movie," "On the weekend I was at home or going some places with my friends" and, "There was my sister, cousin and we went visit...family things, that was good." From

these responses it appears that socializing with family and friends was a major part of leisure for the Afghan respondents.

The arrival to Winnipeg, Canada, with its new culture and language, had an obvious effect on leisure participation of the immigrants. The first several months after immigrating to Winnipeg appeared to be the most difficult for Afghan newcomers to access activities that would satisfy their need for meaningful leisure. It was found that most participants stayed indoors and did not take part in any form of leisure. Single adult newcomers knew no one and the families interacted with only each other. Visiting friends and family was no longer a possibility. These points are illustrated in a series of comments: "The first time I would look out the window and look around. Just go to the library and pick the books to read English. I didn't have friends," "...When we first came to Winnipeg we were just staying at home, nothing else. Just staying and home and talking to each other. We didn't know lots of places or something," "...When we came here we didn't know about Canada and we didn't have any friends," "When I came to Winnipeg the first year, I wasn't happy because I came to Winnipeg in January and too cold. Snow and cold," and "When we first came we were in Welcome Place (a settlement agency) and we didn't know anyone a lot and we were so alone for a while." These statements demonstrate that the Afghan immigrants experienced a decline in leisure during the first few months after immigrating to Winnipeg. The activities they missed the most involved interaction with family, friends and their community.

After the first several months of living in Winnipeg, the activities Afghan newcomers participated in revealed once again the importance they place upon family, friends and a sense of community. Most of the leisure time was spent visiting other

Afghan families, going to parks with family, shopping, and participating in programs offered through their local community centre. While some newcomer children did homework, played outdoors, or watched TV after school, others took part in activities at a local community centre, soccer or swimming at the YMCA-YWCA, or participated in the after school program at IRCOM House where they lived. When asked about their current leisure activities, families responded with the following comments: "Just on the weekends we take children sometime when the weather is good to Forks, City Place, Portage Place," "Sometimes now we go to my community center, some place where we can do activities. In the summer, my family go to park and walking and everything," "Sometimes we go with some friends to a picnic and then we can play..." "Sometimes we spend time with other Afghans in the building. There is about six or seven families. Sometimes they visit us. Sometimes we go shopping together. We have in this building (IRCOM House) a program to take care of them (children)" and "Sometimes we have after school in this building [IRCOM House] a program to take care of them [children]. They take them outside playing and they take them roller skating, things like that". From these statements it is clear that the leisure activities preferred by Afghan participants allowed them the opportunity to connect with their community and socialize with others. This concept demonstrates a strong connection between the social aspect of leisure and the meaning it holds for Afghans.

In addition to getting together at community centres, many of the participants mentioned that they knew about and often used settlement agencies and programs for newcomers. Some comments that support this include, "Just I participate at the International Centre", I think the International Centre has the best programs for

newcomers...” and “...now sometimes we go to my community centre [Marlene Street Centre]. They [Marlene Street Centre] have a computer lab where they can help learn computers...It is mainly newcomers that go to that Centre”.

In addition to examining the leisure activities of Afghan immigrants, identifying who their main leisure companions were was equally important to understanding the meaning of leisure in their lives. Both Afghan single adults and families spent most of their leisure time with family members or relatives prior to immigrating to Canada. However, once they arrived in Canada, the single adults no longer had family around to spend time with. Therefore, these single adults spent more time studying or in a hobby at home than they did previously. One single woman spent time with other Afghani families, but commented that they were often busy with their children and therefore didn't have much time to visit. She indicated, “My friends, they have children. They are living very far, for example, Pembina Highway. Sometimes they call me and ask me, “are you ok” and I say I'm ok. So, just by myself... and I do my house chores and hobbies like knitting and drawing pictures”. Another woman stated that she spends time with her new Canadian friends by saying “I meet some friends and try to spend my free time with my friends, my friends Canadian. And sometimes my friends invite me in house and sometimes I invite her in my place”. She also occasionally takes part in the activities or meetings of the Afghani association and stated, “Afghani people have an association. Sometimes we celebrate something from our country. I participate when sometimes they have a meeting on how to solve a problem or something”. Both single women participated with other newcomers in the programs they joined at the settlement agencies: “I have conversation class at the International Centre and I have before

computer class, and I have art class”; “Ya, and I spend time with my tutor (assigned by the International Centre) and I spend time to learn computer in my spare time”. One single male lived at home with his family, but spent some free time outside the family with Afghani friends and commented, “I play sports because at home I feel tired and bored. When I go outside to play sport or some place I enjoy. I have a lot of friends from Afghanistan”.

The Afghan families had an advantage of having their immediate families intact after immigrating to Winnipeg and therefore their main leisure companions. They did not, however, have their friends and relatives nearby for frequent visits as they did before. This lack of a social network seemed to affect them greatest during the months immediately following their arrival to Winnipeg, as they were not yet able to establish friendships with other newcomer Afghani families. Some comments that support this are: “So from our community we didn’t know any Afghan persons and at first it was hard for us. After two or three month we meet some other Afghan people”, “...when we came here we didn’t know about Canada and we didn’t have any friends. Now we found some friends”, and “When I came here in Canada I didn’t know any friends, Afghani or other countries”.

Once families were connected with other families leisure time was occasionally filled with visits and/or outings with one another as illustrated by the following comments. A male participant stated, “Sometimes we go to park or visit our friends here, some Afghani friends or some Canadian or other friends”. Female participants commented, “We go to their house, they come my house, cook something, eat together, watching movies...”. Sometimes we spend time with other Afghanis in the building.

There are about 6 or 7 families. Sometimes they visit us, sometimes we go together shopping". Therefore, the post immigration leisure companions of the Afghan newcomers strongly resembled those they had prior to immigration demonstrating another similarity in leisure participation pre and post immigration to Canada.

Sub-theme 2: Leisure for self-development. Another important meaning that leisure appeared to have for Afghans was as an opportunity for self-development. Interview data indicated that after the first few months in Canada the Afghan newcomers were eager to enroll in classes and participate in training programs. Interestingly, overlap occurred between the current leisure activities mentioned by newcomer adults and their education and training activities. When asked about their current leisure activities newcomer responses focused on accessing meaningful, purposeful leisure activities and indicated that opportunities for learning were of particular importance. Involvement in ESL classes and other training courses were the main leisure activities mentioned while those that were less prevalent included housework and hobbies at home (i.e. knitting).

While discussing the benefits of leisure participants revealed the opportunity for self-development as a main advantage of leisure activities. Some of the advantages listed by participants included the opportunity to improve English skills, to learn about Canadian culture and other cultures and share their own with others, to meet people, and as something to do. Statements that support this notion include, "The good thing is when I have free time I can meet some new people, or Canadian people. I can learn the culture, we can share our culture," and "There are lots of benefits because first we can improve our language, our English. We can learn lots of different stuff and we can show something that we know and we can learn something from somebody else." Some of the

benefits mentioned, such as learning the English language and learning about Canadian culture, seemed to relate to their which types of leisure activities participants desired for the future.

The importance of self-development was also evident when Afghan participants discussed the leisure activities they desired for the future. The majority were interested in joining programs relating to education or training such as more English classes, job training, workshops on settlement issues (i.e. how to shop), and learning more about Canada and its culture and customs. Although these programs were focused on education, they did offer the participants the opportunity to informally socialize after class as well as a reason to get out of their apartments. Participants made comments such as, "We don't know English or Canada well, so we want to know more about Canada," "...a training program is good for the people and for the immigrant people because they will learn something with English...If someone can't go to university but have some training course, that would help go find a job," and "I like to participate around some persons who like to discuss issues about how to help refugee people." Other activities that participants wanted to engage in, but haven't yet done so, included going to beaches and parks and shopping. Therefore, although participants appeared to show some satisfaction with their current leisure repertoire, they also indicated an interest in and desire for certain programs and activities in the future. The main motivation for future participation appeared to be the desire for furthering their education and training as well as advancing their English skills.

Although participants expressed a lack of interest in recreational activities, apart from those related to education and training, they did appear to understand the benefits of

participating in these types of activities. The majority noted good mental health and physical health as the main benefit gained from leisure. Some statements from participants about leisure benefits included, "Good benefits because...for healthy body, also for mental and physical health," "...it refreshes your mind and it is also good for your health". These statements indicate that once again, leisure was viewed as purposeful. In this case the purpose appeared to be maintaining or improving one's physical or mental health.

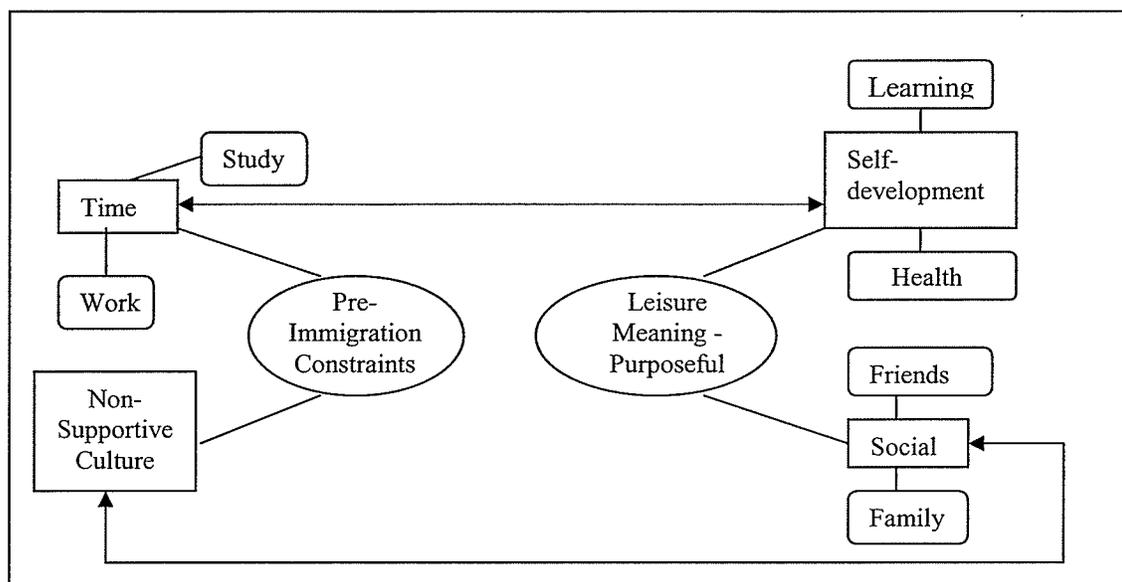
For a couple of participants it seemed as though leisure time was used as a means of assisting others and their community rather than for personal development. Before immigrating to Canada a couple of the single female participants were involved in helping with community programs or organizing events in a manner similar to the western concept of volunteering. This notion is supported by the statements, "I worked full-time and after that I helped with people who need. I worked with persons who had a difficult and hard life, like they have no family and need to have a good listener. I like to help and it's my pleasure to do something for others," and, "There is some event that they had some program. We join them and help with that program and stuff like this." For these single Afghan women leisure again seemed to serve a purpose. Leisure assisted them in connecting with their community and sharing their interests and skills with others.

Major Theme 2: Adaptability to a New Environment

While the first major theme focused on several aspects that depict the meaning of leisure for Afghan newcomers, the second major theme focused on their adaptability to the leisure constraints they encountered. The perceived constraints of Afghan newcomers

were examined as well as how those constraints interacted with and impacted their meaning of leisure.

Figure 1. Interaction between Pre-Immigration Leisure Constraints and Meaning of Leisure.



First, the perceived pre-immigration leisure constraints were examined in terms of their impact on leisure meaning (Figure 1). Participants did not reveal many types of pre-immigration leisure barriers, however, those mentioned appeared quite common. Before arriving in Canada many participants reported lack of time as the main barrier to leisure participation. Some of the comments that support this include, "Just I was working, I made shoes," "Because I was employed I was really busy and I had children and didn't have lots of free time," "In Afghanistan I was a student and then I went to university. Then go to work. When I was a student in high school I was playing basketball. But I didn't have another activity in my country because just study and study," "I didn't have time to go to school or do things," "...I didn't have another activity in my country because just study and study," and "...up to 1993 I worked as a pharmacist. There wasn't

really time to participate in socializing or leisure...just working.” One participant also mentioned that the concept of *time* in Canada is very much different from that in his culture. He felt the Canadian work-week is arranged to allow time for leisure pursuits, whereas in his culture work dominated much of people’s lives. They did not have time off on weekends, but rather squeezed leisure activities in whenever time allowed them to do so. When asked how leisure time in Afghanistan differed from that here in Canada, the following statement was given, “Here we have organize our time and before Canada people actually don’t worry about time. They don’t think about time. If they go to work and for example one day they want to go a party, they can go to a party. They don’t have exact time like here. For example, in Canada Saturday or Sunday they have free time. It’s totally different”. Therefore, the concept of time for leisure and time for work were quite interwoven. It was difficult to distinguish between the two as they often occurred simultaneously, not as separate entities as is common in Western societies. This notion may have formed as a result of how Afghans adapted to the long standing leisure barriers experienced prior to immigrating to Canada. Although it is suspected that lack of time may have affected the way Afghans viewed various forms of leisure, participants made no mention of the impact of lack of time on health or socializing with family or friends on a daily basis for cultural or religious events.

Another leisure barrier perceived by participants was the culture they were living in, as most had been immigrants in Iran for several years before coming to Canada. In Iran they maintained busy work schedules and found Iranian culture less accepting of immigrants than Canadian culture. Therefore, they found it difficult to participate in

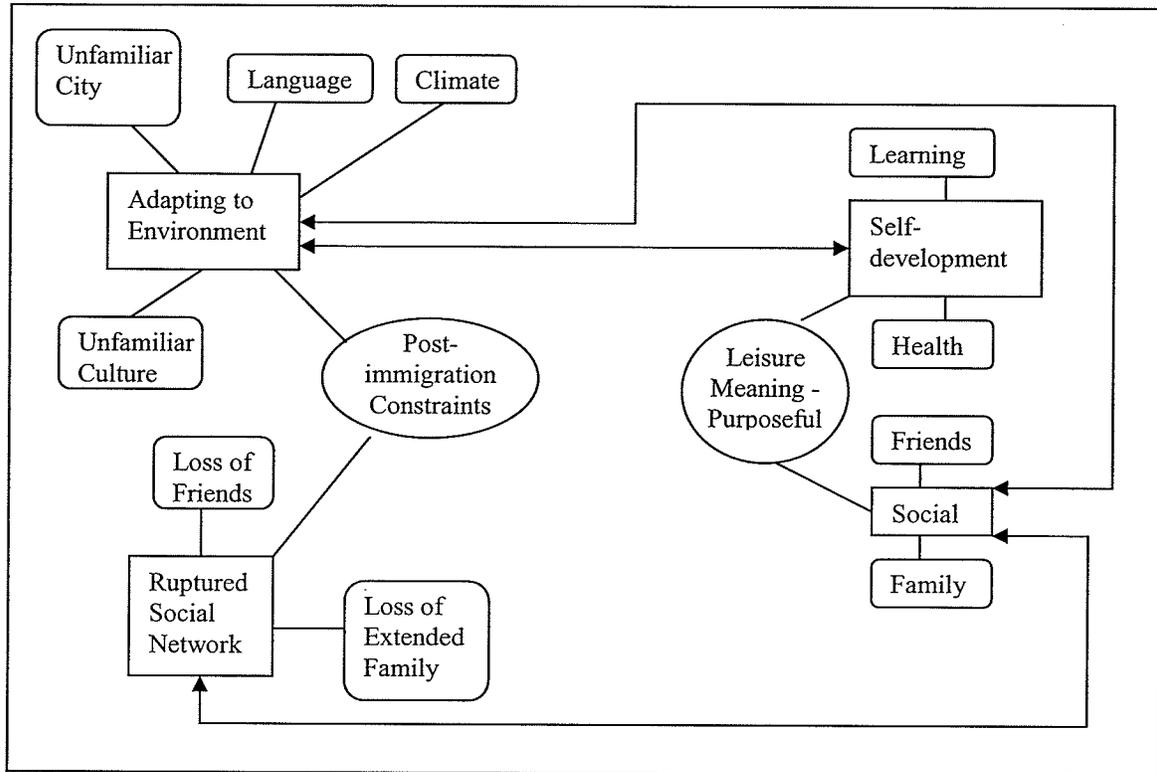
many aspects of Iranian society outside of work, including leisure. One woman commented,

I think Canadian people are most friendly. Because I was immigrant in Iran too I was from Afghanistan but living in Iran. Iranian people don't like immigrants. It was very hard there for immigrant people. Very emotional. But when I came to Canada I found that people are friendly. I was happy.

The unwelcoming culture in Iran towards Afghan immigrants impacted the ability of Afghanis to expand their social networks and socialize with others. However, as was mentioned previously, Afghan participants indicated that they spent the majority of their leisure time with family and friends prior to immigrating. Therefore, it may be assumed that they were able to adapt to the situation of living in a non-supportive environment by connecting to those close to them both in terms of family and culture (other Afghanis).

After arriving in Winnipeg initially, most of the Afghan participants experienced an alternate set of leisure barriers. These leisure barriers produced different affects on the leisure of Afghanis than did the barriers experienced prior to coming to Canada (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Interaction between Post-Immigration Leisure Constraints and Meaning of Leisure.



Lack of time was no longer the main leisure barrier for Afghan newcomers due to the fact that they were not working or enrolled in training programs. Instead, the majority of the respondents expressed lack of familiarity with their new environment as the main barrier. Included in their unfamiliarity with their environment was not knowing the city, the culture as well as needing to adjust to the harsh winter climate. One participant expressed, “We didn’t know a lot of places or something, but now we are more familiar with the places.” These constraints would have impacted many aspects of the meaning of leisure for Afghans. Language was also a major constraint perceived by most participants in their new and unfamiliar environment. Comments that supported this included, “When you don’t know the language of the people, that is the main barrier. And also you don’t know the environment of the city,” and, “When I came to Canada I

had language problem and I saw different culture, different people,” Difficulty with the language and the culture impacted the leisure of Afghan newcomers by inhibiting them from rebuilding their social network with English speaking Canadians once they arrived in Canada. This was a difficult adjustment for the Afghans who had not yet been able to meet other Afghan families. It appeared that the ability to adjust to the new environment at this stage was still quite difficult for the newcomers.

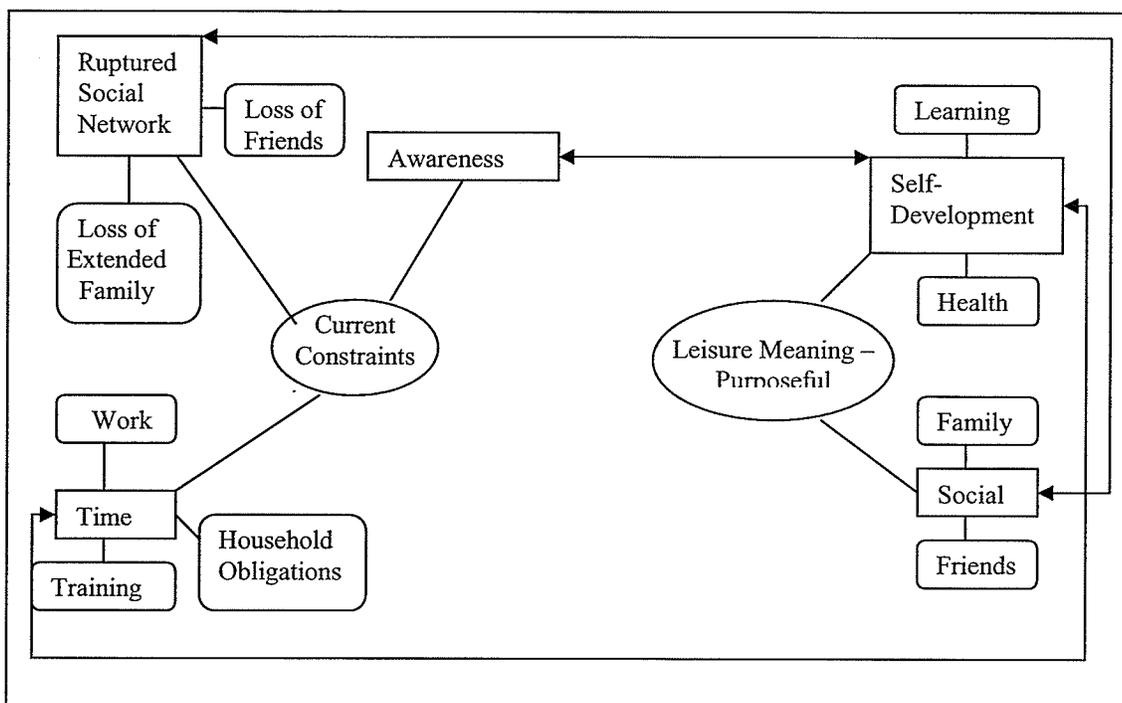
Many participants perceived lack of awareness about leisure opportunities offered through established facilities within the community as a barrier to leisure participation. Although most indicated they knew about, but did not necessarily use, the YMCA-YWCA in their neighborhood, they were not familiar with any other centres or programs that provided leisure programming. When asked which community centres or recreation clubs they knew of, responses included, “Except YMCA, we are not aware of any. My son is going to YMCA after he is coming home from school”, “I don’t know anything. Only my daughter at YMCA for swimming”, “I go to YMCA sometimes...”, “We don’t know exactly what kind of clubs or centres there are....If I had enough time I would go to YMCA”, “After two or three months we meet some other people...They told us that there is something like YMCA that we have to join. You have to get a membership then you can use everything that they have” and “I know about that YMCA but I don’t participate there...”. Another participant responded, “Maybe when we get more knowledge we will know more activities and will start looking for schedule of different events”, when asked if he was aware of any programs or centres besides YMCA. These responses indicate that the constraint of being unfamiliar with the programs available would have impacted the newcomers’ ability to access opportunities for self-

development, both in terms of education or health. This appeared to be a difficult adjustment for the Afghan newcomers who had always been busy with work or studies prior to immigrating. Overall, Afghan newcomers needed to spend the first few months after their arrival in Canada adapting to their new environment. Adjusting to the city, the culture, the language and the climate would allow them once again experience leisure in a way that was consistent with its meaning for them.

Another leisure constraint mentioned by participants was the rupture of the social network that played such an integral role in their previous leisure experiences. Many of the participants came to Canada with their immediate families, but left behind their large extended families and many friends with whom they had previously spent much of their time. Comments from participants that support unfamiliarity with their new environment as a constraint include: "When we first arrived we didn't do anything because we were at Welcome Place and because we come new and didn't know anyone," and "I didn't have friends. Now I have friends and now I have company." The shrinkage of their social network immediately after immigrating to Canada had an obvious influence on the leisure participants engaged in after coming to Canada. As the quotations indicate, participants spent more time at home with their immediate family members that they did prior to immigrating. This ruptured social network was incredibly difficult for the newcomers to adapt to, as it had always been a key part of their lives and their leisure in the past.

After the first few months in Canada some of the initial leisure barriers evolved into a new set of barriers. Some of the barriers experienced immediately following immigrating to Winnipeg persisted beyond the first few months (see Figure 2 and Figure 3) however, the main barrier was once again lack of time.

Figure 3. Interaction between Current Leisure Constraints and Meaning of Leisure.



Most of the Afghan newcomers spent their time in ESL classes, attending other training programs and/or caring for young children. When asked about what they perceived as preventing them from participating in leisure activities, participants responded as follows: “Really we don’t have free time,” “Actually we don’t have much free time. From morning until 3 o’clock we are busy with school,” and “It’s just time really.” As well, participants felt that their main priority was concentrating on their future. Lack of time resulted from their focus on finding work and improving their financial situation. This is supported by the following set of statements: “When I get a job I’ll plan my whole future, but while I’m not working I don’t have my economic freedom and I can’t make any plan,” and “I feel like finishing my course in June, that is the main barrier. After that when I get work I will be able to set a time. Of course I want to participate in leisure activities, but when I have the time I will start to think, what can I do, where can I go for leisure activities.” This lack of time as a constraint indicates that

the Afghan newcomers were successful in overcoming, to a certain extent, the unfamiliarity with the new city, as they were able to search out available programs to enroll in. Most were incredibly busy with classes and training programs demonstrating that, as had been the case prior to immigrating, work and leisure were once again intertwined. Therefore, it appeared that the participants were successful in attaining a state of leisure similar to that which they knew before arriving in Canada.

Unfamiliarity with leisure opportunities was a barrier that also persisted after the first few months of arriving in Winnipeg. Although the barrier remained an issue, it was evident that Afghan newcomers were beginning to navigate their way to various programs that they were beginning to gain awareness of. The majority of the participants who were aware of an opportunity credited Afghan friends or acquaintances for informing them of it. One respondent heard of the programs and classes she participated in at the International Centre of Winnipeg from her settlement worker at Welcome Place. Another heard of the Marlene Street Centre because one of their outreach workers had conducted door-to-door visits in her area in order to inform community members of the Centre's services. This newcomer found this method of outreach very effective as she was able to obtain useful information regarding community clubs from this worker. "A woman came here. She came to my house and talked about if I had any problems I could go there [Marlene Street Centre]. My daughter and my son were interested in soccer game, so I asked to the lady where they could play and she said the price they could play thirty dollars [at Glenlea Community Centre]". Therefore, most newcomers learned of leisure opportunities available to them through fellow Afghan newcomers, newcomers in general, or from settlement agencies. None of those interviewed stated that they heard of

a leisure program or service, whether they participated in it or not, through advertising methods initiated by the agencies or centres delivering programs.

It is obvious that these newcomers did become somewhat more aware of programs after the first few months. However, they also expressed that they continued to feel as though they were unaware of many of the opportunities available to them in their communities. Many of the participants offered suggestions as to how they saw information from service providers better reaching their communities. More specifically, respondents suggested a number of advertising methods they felt would be appropriate and better reach their community. Some felt connecting with immigrant serving agencies (i.e. International Centre of Winnipeg and Welcome Place) was critical in reaching more newcomers. Others suggested that the service provider send someone to visit the homes of newcomer community members to explain and answer questions regarding their services. They felt that this method would be effective because of their language difficulties in fully understanding written material. If someone were in their home, they could take their time listening and formulating questions and/or concerns. Other respondents suggested that posters or mail-outs in various languages would be effective. Some responses provided by participants in supporting the above ideas included: "The first time I think someone coming to talk to us is a good idea. But later they can send a letter...", "Because we don't know English if someone come to their house is good," "The people could make a paper and put at the International Centre or at Welcome Place because every newcomer goes here. And if they don't know English at first they can put in their own languages," and "I would want someone to visit".

Although lack of time was stated as being the key barrier to current leisure participation, participants expressed difficulty with English as the most difficult barrier to overcome after arriving in Canada. This is supported by the following responses from participants when asked which constraint was the most difficult: "Oh, English. The language, ya. It was difficult," "The most difficult thing was the English really. They did not give us place for English and we could not decide what to do," and "...the most difficult is language, but here are very polite people." Most of the respondents believed their language skills had improved during their time in Canada, but did not yet feel their skills allowed them to participate comfortably in everyday situations. One comment that demonstrates this is, "...we cannot express ourselves when we are with other people. We have to work harder to make somebody to listen to us. We say something and then they can't understand us you know? It's a kind of problem because totally I don't feel very relaxed when I speak with somebody because I know they feel tired when I speak". Not only was difficulty with English perceived as the most difficult leisure barrier to overcome, it was also perceived to impact many aspects of newcomers' lives. When asked how English affected other aspects of life, responses included, "Shopping, I had trouble. All the things in a can. I need to find in a can the things I need. I just buy something if I see a picture", "I had language problems. And from my children's school when came some paper I couldn't read, I had a lot of problems", and "For her (his wife), she has not been able to go and get some job because of her English. And also because of English I have not been able to go and find some job".

One of the common leisure barriers experienced by the respondents after arriving in Winnipeg was the lack of a social network. Despite this being one of the most

challenging adjustments when they first arrived, they also found it to be one of the easiest barriers to overcome. When asked about the easiest barriers to overcome, comments included, “The people because after two months we found some of them so we feel like we have friends”, “Finding some friends”, and “I made some Canadian friends...”. Not only were they able to make friends within a relatively short period of time, some of the participants were also able to form friendships with Canadians. Another leisure barrier respondents were able to overcome quite easily was gaining an understanding of and feeling comfortable with Canadian culture. One respondent commented that, “Culture is not very big problem”. The ability of the Afghan newcomers to adapt to their new environment by reassembling a social network for themselves was critical for them to experience leisure in a way that was consistent with its meaning for them. The purposeful meaning that connecting with family and friends provided them through leisure was achieved in a way that closely emulated that which they experienced prior to coming to Canada.

Overall, recent Afghan immigrants were successful in navigating their way through the leisure constraints they experienced in order to achieve meaningful leisure in Canada. Although their leisure activities had a different focus, they remained purposeful by providing opportunities for socializing with family and friends as well as for self-development through educational programs.

Major Theme 3: Newcomer Participation in Organized Leisure Programs

Interviews with some employees from the City of Winnipeg’s Community Services Department (CSD), the International Centre of Winnipeg, and the YMCA-YWCA South Branch provided insights into the participation, or non-participation of

recent newcomers in leisure programs. Sub-themes relating to participation in organized leisure programs described the relevancy of the programs offered to newcomer needs and interests and what service providers did to attract the immigrant community.

Sub-theme 1: Relevancy of leisure programs to newcomer needs and interests.

Understanding whether or not a program is relevant to a community's needs and interests will probably provide a good indication of whether that community will participate in the program. The City of Winnipeg, Community Services Department offers free programming for children and youth including arts and crafts programs, special excursions, free swim timeslots and various sports programs at various sites throughout the city. As well, they offer paid programming, for children, youth and adults such as aquatics, sport, fitness, and cultural programs. Fee Waivers or subsidies are provided based on financial need.

The City also partners with organizations which target minority community members such as the Lighthouse for Newcomers at the University of Winnipeg Program, a social, recreation program for children and youth in the Spence Neighbourhood, Boys & Girls Clubs of Winnipeg Inc., General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC) and IRCOM (Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba Inc.) an organization that offers recreational services to recent immigrants, through the provision of either financial or human resources in order to provide additional programs. The Community Services Department believes partnerships are very important in delivering services to possible participants. Library Services of the City of Winnipeg is committed to ensuring quality of life for recent immigrants and plays a fundamental role in the overall "wellness" of immigrants by providing materials in 38 languages,

computers for individuals to access news from home, and providing the opportunity to email family and friends back home. The Library offers various resources for newcomers to Canada and has co-sponsored "For the Love of Reading" program with Victor Major School and a grant from the Department of Labour and Immigration, Adult Language Training. This program assists new immigrants with reading and learning English with their families, teaches them how to utilize the library and helps build social connections. Of the programs available through the City, those targeted specifically at the immigrant community are most relevant to the Afghan newcomers. Programs offering an opportunity for purposeful leisure through learning or settlement assistance are more consistent with the leisure interests expressed by the Afghan participants.

The International Centre of Winnipeg is mandated to serve immigrants by providing client-centred programs and services. The Centre offers mainly adult programming, but has recently developed a youth program as well. The youth program teaches newcomer children in Grades four through six about cultural diversity, respect for teachers and their parents, and various aspects of what it's like to live in Canada. The program, which combines educational and recreational components, also familiarizes youth to leisure activities within the city through excursions such as bowling and swimming at the YMCA-YWCA. The Centre's programs for newcomer adults usually involve opportunities for learning as they believe this is what their clients are needing. Cooking classes are offered as well as conversation circles, computer familiarization workshops, and driver's education workshops. Social activities, which occur several times throughout the year, are also offered and include a Thanksgiving dinner, a holiday party in December, and a summer barbecue. These activities offer newcomers an

opportunity to experience Canadian traditions, share their own customs, and extend their social network by meeting new people. Due to the International Centre being a settlement agency its focus is to provide programming that responds specifically to the needs of the immigrant community. The types of programs offered by the Centre are geared largely towards providing opportunities for skill development and learning, consistent with the interests of the Afghan participants. Therefore, the programs and services offered by the International Centre are relevant to the leisure needs and interests of recent Afghan newcomers to the city.

The YMCA-YWCA South Branch also provides leisure programs in the communities for newcomers. The programs at the YMCA-YWCA focus on health, fitness and recreation and consist of an adult department, an aquatics department, and a children's program. The adults program is comprised mainly of fitness and aqua-fitness classes, and a number of drop-in programs such as basketball and volleyball. The children and youth programs include registered swimming classes and drop-in craft and sporting programs. The Aquatics department focuses mainly on swim instructions for children and youth, but provides some instructions for teens and adults as well. Their programs do not target newcomers specifically, although a considerable number of newcomers do become members. It should be emphasized that the information represented is specific to the South branch. The Program Coordinator at the South branch stated that the, "downtown location has more recreation opportunities specifically for newcomers, and they work with the newcomer communities to ensure recreational programming is culturally appropriate, and to see what they want in terms of programming".

Although many of the Afghan participants knew of the YMCA-YWCA the majority said they did not have time to participate in their programs. The focus of the “Y” is to provide health and fitness programs. Although health was mentioned as being an important aspect of leisure, it appears that Afghan newcomers were focused on other aspects of purposeful leisure such as education and training which they would not receive through the “Y”. Therefore, it can be determined that the fitness programs offered through the “Y” are not as relevant to the leisure interests and needs of recent newcomers as the City’s or to a larger extent, the International Centre’s.

Relevancy of a program to the needs and interests of the immigrant community is not only influenced by the focus of the agency, but also by the processes implemented by the agency in order to determine which programming is offered. The City of Winnipeg appeared to be somewhat successful in developing programs that meet the interests and needs of recent newcomers. Interviewees from the City of Winnipeg, Community Services Department suggested that many factors are involved in the process for implementing a new program or program changes. When one of the partnering agencies, such as IRCOM makes a decision regarding what types of programs to offer, it is usually initiated by the workers of that specific agency, and is based upon the needs observed in the community. The Community Services Department is advised on the programming initiatives by the partnering agency.

The composition of the community often influences what will be offered and where. For example, free programming is offered mainly in lower socio-economic communities. However, prior to implementing a program change, the City researches what is already offered because they do not wish to compete with existing programs, but

rather complement them. If there is a gap in services in a community they could initiate plans to implement a new program, or help identify possible partnerships if a need was demonstrated. A door-to-door survey has also been utilized as a means of determining which types of leisure programs would be welcomed by a community. A survey was conducted in an area with a growing immigrant population in order to discern their limitations and needs. The results of the survey were used to implement summer programming in Sir John Franklin Community Center and the military base in St. James.

The City also strives to be constantly aware of the trends and what is happening within the immigration population by networking with immigrant service providers. The Administrative Coordinator of the City of Winnipeg's Community Services' Social Support and Development Unit for example is a member of the Manitoba Settlement Group which consists of immigrant and refugee service providers and government representatives who meet regularly to address issues related to settlement. This assists in keeping knowledgeable about "trends and what is happening within the immigrant population." Networking with providers of immigrant and refugee settlement services also provides an opportunity to disseminate information about city services and increase awareness of opportunities within the City of Winnipeg for newcomers. In order to determine the success of existing programs and whether the program should be offered again, evaluations are conducted and attendance records are examined. Therefore, it can be determined that much of the reason for City's programs experiencing some success in attracting newcomer participation is their relevancy to newcomer needs and interests. It appears that relevant programs are resulting from the methods used by the City to determine which programs should be offered.

Interviews with the International Centre of Winnipeg indicated that their programs are client-driven in that common needs or challenges faced by their clients are identified and programs are implemented accordingly. Once a program is established the decision to maintain or discard it depends mostly on the attendance as an indicator of needs and/ interests. When asked how the International Centre decides what programs will be offered, the Centre's Coordinator of Volunteers responded, "Basically, what we've done so far is what is our numbers? Is it something the clients want? If it isn't, then that's something. We try it two or three times and if the clients don't show up, that's telling us they don't want to take part in it." Evaluations are also conducted during and after each program session to determine if changes are necessary. The client-centred approach to program development has assisted the Centre in ensuring programs are designed to meet newcomer interests and needs.

Programming at the YMCA-YWCA appeared to be relatively stable and did not include extensive plans to incorporate new programming or programming specific to immigrants and refugees. Registration for current programming was reported to be very high, demonstrating a demand for existing programs. The Program Director of the South Branch of the YMCA-YWCA commented, "We're really limited in what we can offer in new programming. It's not something that we're able to do right now because we don't have any space. So...new programs, not a lot. We run generally the things we know work...For the fall...each department is going to try to come up with one new class." Due to their size limitations and evidence that their current program itinerary is very popular, they simply don't have the room to expand programming. However, they do take into consideration waiting lists of programs in order to ascertain which ones are

popular and discard those that are not. When they do decide to create a new program, it's mainly based on member evaluations collected through comment cards. The "Y" did not put a lot of their time and resources into developing new programs that accommodated and attracted newcomer community members. Therefore, it is not surprising that their programs do not tend to be those focused on immigrant needs and interests.

Sub-theme 2: Attracting newcomers to leisure programs. Whether or not an agency makes an effort to reach out and attract newcomer community members will impact newcomer participation in its programs. Important ways an agency can attract recent immigrants is through advertising and the offering of incentives. The City of Winnipeg uses a very multifaceted approach to advertising its programs and services. One of the main methods for advertising fee programs is through the Leisure Guide, a booklet containing information on all programs and workshops offered by the City and is distributed to City libraries, pools, community office locations and the internet at www.city.winnipeg.mb.ca. The Leisure Guide is distributed three times per year. Some free play programming is also presented in this guide, but is mainly listed in specific free play brochures available at pools, libraries, schools and the internet.

One of the goals of the Community Services' Social Support and Development Branch (SSD) is to assist in increasing awareness and access to city services and programs for vulnerable populations, including recent immigrants. SSD is not involved in direct service provision of recreation and/or leisure services, rather they are another source in, "helping vulnerable populations to access City services." One method used is to provide information directly to immigrant service providers regarding city programs and services by sitting on various committees in the community, and ensuring various

publications intended for newcomers have current information on department programs and services. Staff of the Community Services Department also actively participate in various diversity fairs where community members are invited to visit displays of a range of information including information on city libraries and recreation services.

Additionally, Community Services staff may go directly to where they know many immigrants are, for example department staff have made presentations regarding library and recreation services to ESL classes. Networking with community individuals and groups also proves to be a useful technique in relaying information. A new initiative is being undertaken in partnership with the City's Equity and Diversity Committee which is the development of a newcomer information booklet. The booklet will contain key city service information, and this information will be displayed on the website as well. The Administrative Coordinator SSD described that this booklet will contain "information on libraries, on recreation, how to ride the bus... any kind of civic information that seems relevant to newcomers."

Furthermore, the City emphasizes that certain incentives are in place in order to encourage newcomers' involvement. The most obvious incentive is free programming, but they also market their programs in a way that encourages people to join. The Community Development and Recreation Initiative Administrative Coordinator commented that it is "the type of programming that's welcoming, a safe haven and knowing the staff have a lot of training." Therefore, the fact that programs are safe, friendly and lead by qualified staff is portrayed as some of the advantages and benefits of participating in their programs. This may appeal to newcomers if they are not able to obtain this type of environment at home, in school, or elsewhere. Despite their extensive

efforts to effectively reach newcomers and all potential participants through advertising, they acknowledge that they are always open to alternative, more culturally appropriate methods. When asked whether they feel that their methods of advertising are effective in reaching all community members, the Community Development and Recreation Initiative Administrative Coordinator responded, "Do we think we could improve in it? Quite possibly. But I do believe that folks are seeing the information. One of the interesting things with the new immigrant population...we've been finding that first and foremost is getting food and clothing."

The International Centre uses a couple of methods to advertise programs to their clients. The Centre's staff is updated regularly on what opportunities are available within the Centre itself so that they are able to pass information onto their clients. As well, a schedule of events is prepared monthly and distributed to all newcomers passing through the Centre, all libraries within the city and various ESL schools. The Centre's website also maintains a current listing of programs being offered. Networking with community groups proves to be a useful tool in ensuring that community members are aware of the Centre's programs.

Incentives for newcomers to join programs offered by the International Centre include free programming, and marketing that focuses on educational and social aspects of their programs. The Coordinator of Volunteers also identified a unique incentive for newcomers to participate in their programs by stating, "I've noticed...that someone will come in as a client in one of the programs, and become a volunteer, and as a volunteer has applied for staff openings." Therefore, a newcomer client comes to the Centre initially to obtain new skills and training for their new life in Canada. Once they have

certain skills, they are encouraged to gain work related experiences and use their new skills by assisting other newcomers. Once they are ready to utilize their skills and knowledge in a work environment, the Centre hires some of them by recognizing the advantages of having staff who have been through the immigration experience themselves to help the agency's clients. As with the City of Winnipeg, the International Centre is aware that they may be missing certain areas or ethnic groups through their current means of advertising and are constantly looking for ways to rectify this.

As previously mentioned, the City of Winnipeg and the International Centre of Winnipeg use a range of advertising methods to communicate their services to newcomers. The YMCA-YWCA, on the other hand, does not feel the need to advertise a great deal as expressed by the Program Director saying that "We don't really need to advertise at all. Again, the "Y" as a whole doesn't really do advertising... We generally go by word of mouth." One reason the "Y" doesn't need to advertise is that it's been around for many years and appears to have a very positive image. The Program Director commented, "Most people who talk about the 'Y' talk really positively about it, so even though we are full way past capacity right now we still have people coming in every day. So, we don't need any more advertisement."

However, one incentive to join the YMCA-YWCA is their membership assistance program, which adjusts membership costs according to earned income. The Program Director explained, "This is probably the one big thing that people hear word of mouth... And we don't hide that we have it, we promote that we have it and we really want people to be able to use it." The Program Director added, "Probably 75% of our membership assistance program are for people like newcomers who have come within the

last couple of years. Therefore, it appears the YMCA-YWCA's longstanding reputation in the community as well as their ability to extend memberships to lower income community members are effective in encouraging participation of a wide range of community members, including recent immigrants. Partnerships within the community, such as with the Youville Centre, are also maintained in order to reach beyond the mainstream community. Certain staff members sit on inter-agency committees in their areas as a means of remaining up to date on the happenings within their community and to network with other service providers including those for immigrants.

Despite the fact that only the International Centre of Winnipeg is mandated to provide programs specifically for the immigrant populations within the city, the other two service providers made efforts to extend their programming to non-mainstream community members. Approaches taken by service providers included: examining community needs when contemplating new programs, implementing ongoing evaluations of existing programs, offering incentives to newcomers and other lower-income community members such as free programming or membership assistance, and various methods of advertising.

Another strategy that can assist service providers in attracting the immigrant community is by being aware of the constraints they are facing. If a service provider is more aware of the issues facing their community members, it seems logical that they would be better equipped to remove the barriers to leisure participation. One of the factors identified by the City of Winnipeg impacting newcomer participation in their programs was the value newcomers place upon leisure opportunities when they first arrived in Canada. Community Service staff mentioned that while recreation and leisure

is important, often it is not one of new immigrant and refugees initial priorities. Initial priorities tend to be focused on housing, employment and language training. Once they are settled and have these very basic needs met they may start to think more about leisure and recreation activities and opportunities for the family. However, the City did acknowledge that such opportunities are important for social inclusion, and the importance of reaching out to this group so that when they are ready to start thinking about participating, they will know how to access the programs they desire. They recognized the need to incorporate flexibility into their programming in order to make them more accessible. An example of this was to allow a larger age group into a program because they were finding older siblings caring for younger sibling during the day, while their parents were working or attending ESL classes. They also realized that newcomer families preferred to participate in leisure activities together (rather than independently), and allowing older and younger siblings to do so together would encourage them to attend.

Beyond leisure simply not being an initial priority in the lives of recent immigrants, the other constraints the City perceived for newcomers were language, transportation and the location of programs. The City felt, however, that they do an adequate job of communicating their programs to all community members, and felt that newcomers will access programs when they are ready. In terms of language barriers, the Community Development and Recreation Initiative Administrative Coordinator stated, "Where there is a language barrier the parents may not understand what their children are getting involved in." They were also aware that a program's proximity to a newcomer's home is important. The Program Initiatives Coordinator added, "If it's walking distance,

that makes a very big difference and not crossing a major street, especially for younger children.” The City’s partnerships with various community groups are one way they attempt to reduce the location and language barrier.

The International Centre of Winnipeg also provided their perspectives on the factors influencing newcomers’ participation in leisure programs. The Centre believes that newcomers prefer to participate in programs that offer a learning experience, whether it is in a computer class or at a Thanksgiving dinner. Therefore, much of their programming was designed to offer them training opportunities rather than a lot of leisure opportunities. When asked about the types of leisure programs she felt newcomers would want to participate in, the Coordinator of Volunteers stated, “If they had a preference they want to learn something. I think that’s the basics. They want to learn how to do what we do and what other Canadians do in Canada...They want to learn Canadian life. They want to learn.”

The Centre felt that the costs associated with leisure programs in the city were a major constraint to leisure participation. Difficulty with English was also recognized as a leisure barrier. They felt they could reduce some leisure constraints facing newcomers by offering their programs in various areas of the city, publishing information in different languages, and simply passing on more information regarding leisure opportunities within the city to their clients.

The awareness of the YMCA-YWCA about the factors influencing newcomers’ participation in leisure was also examined. Although the YMCA-YWCA felt confident that their programming met the needs of newcomers, (since appointments for their membership assistance program were booked a month ahead), they did acknowledge the

importance of continuing to reduce the leisure constraints of newcomers and recognized the role their community partnerships played in facilitating this process. When asked which barriers newcomers would encounter when accessing leisure opportunities, the Program Director stated, "Working for the "Y" it's kind of hard to say because we don't put up a lot of barriers. I would say probably proximity to a facility that has the programs you want and the cost of the programs."

It appeared that all participating service providers had a fairly accurate sense of what newcomers were facing, including their interests and constraints. Not only are they aware of the situation facing newcomers, but they are also searching for more appropriate ways to attract more newcomers to their programs. The City of Winnipeg and the International Centre of Winnipeg believed that leisure was not an initial top priority for those who had recently immigrated to the City, but continued to work to make their programs accessible. The Community Services Department strives to ensure that the services offered are community based, reflective of the needs of the various neighbourhoods. The YMCA-YWCA did not appear greatly concerned with their programs appeal to newcomers. However, they did strive to ensure that their programs attracted minority community members, although they did not systematically monitor whether they were serving recent newcomers well.

Not only does the agency's knowledge of the immigrant situation as a whole impact how they attract recent immigrants to their programs, the awareness and understanding of individual employees is also important. It is these individuals who decide which programs are implemented and it is they who interact with the community members when they do participate. Interviews with three City of Winnipeg staff revealed

that current City employees undergo cultural diversity training in which the goal is “to increase City of Winnipeg employees’ sensitivity to the fact that Winnipeg is very culturally diverse and to get them to question and look at their services and ensure that their services are welcoming.” Not only does the City recognize the need to sensitize existing employees on diversity issues, but they also wish to further diversify their already diverse staff. As more and more employees are near retirement, the City acknowledges the opportunity to establish a more diverse workforce. They are currently working towards this by updating policies (including hiring) by incorporating inputs from those they serve. The Administrative Coordinator SSD commented that the Equity and Diversity committee consisting of community representatives (including immigrants) was implemented “to get the immigrant community to identify existing barriers to accessing City services...so basically they were looking at all City policies...and they came up with... recommendations in terms of what the City can do.” The Administrative Coordinator SSD also added, “The City...has goals to get a more diverse workforce because they’re saying that’s one of the ways to be welcoming and have people that look like you in the places that serve you.” A diversity report card monitors the progress made on transforming the committee’s recommendations into practice, which is available on the City’s website www.winnipeg.ca.

The Community Services Department operates a work experience project, for employment disadvantaged individuals, many of which are recent immigrants lacking Canadian work experience. The project provides participants with up to six months of paid work experience in community centres throughout the city, which increases participants’ awareness of community centre programming and acts as a stepping stone to

future employment. As well, the Community Development and Recreation Initiative Administrative Coordinator commented that one of the City's hopes is, "As children who participate get older, we hope that they've enjoyed their experiences and would think about working for the City."

The composition of staff at the International Centre of Winnipeg was also examined. Since the Centre is an immigrant-serving agency, the diversity among its staff was quite evident and an important factor taken into consideration when hiring. The agency feels it is important for their clients to be able to relate to the individuals who are providing them with guidance and services. Not only do the staff vary in ages and educational backgrounds, but the staff are also diverse in terms of ethnic backgrounds. Eleven of the twenty-five staff are immigrants themselves and collectively the staff speak ten different languages fluently in addition to English. This has proven critical to the agency's ability to provide services to their clients. The Coordinator of Volunteers feels that the Centre "has a fairly good representation of new immigrants, and people can see people that have gone through the same situation as them. They may not be from the same ethnic background or from their country but they can see that there are other people here."

Like the International Centre of Winnipeg, the YMCA-YWCA also employs a diverse team of staff in who are diverse in terms of age, gender, and ethnicity. When asked about the composition of the staff at the south branch of the YMCA-YWCA, the Program Director stated, "We have quite a diverse group of people who work here. We have...whatever demographic you want to look at like age, gender, ethnicity...there is quite a good mix here." Diversity awareness training also exists for their staff in order to

ensure that they are more sensitive to the needs of all community members, including newcomers.

Overall, all three agencies believed in offering diversity awareness or sensitivity training. The City and the International Centre were quite clear about recognizing the importance of a diverse staff to represent the community they are serving. The City has been pro-active in setting up policies to ensure that diversity is maintained and even increased in future years, while the International Centre sees the importance of staff diversity as a means of better meeting client needs.

Chapter V: Discussion

A qualitative approach was used to explore three research questions and understand the essence of the leisure interests and perceived constraints of newcomers, as well as the role of service providers in encouraging or inhibiting newcomers' usage of their programs and services. Interviews were conducted with 11 Afghan newcomers and 3 leisure service providers. The study revealed some of the leisure preferences and perceived constraints of the newcomers and offered some important insights and implications for those who provide leisure services for new immigrants to Canada.

Leisure Interests of Recent Immigrants

An important finding derived from the study was that leisure activities engaged in by participants tended to be family oriented. Newcomers' main leisure activities included spending time with their immediate family at home, or visiting with other Afghan families while only a couple of the families had children participating in various programs offered by the "Y" or a local community center. Other families knew of the programs but did not feel it was important for their children to engage in such programming. Several adults participated in conversation circles or computer classes offered by the International Centre of Winnipeg, while none took part in any leisure program in their community. This finding may be explained when considering the history of the family institution in Afghanistan. Although it has changed over time, family has remained one of the most important and stable parts of Afghan lives (Dupree, 2004). Traditionally in Afghanistan, several generations would reside together resulting in very close knit families and close bonds between siblings. Women would rarely work outside the home. Instead, while gathering to engage in handicrafts to help supplement

their households' income, the women would socialize (Dupree, 2004). Therefore, it is possible that the Afghan preference for family based leisure stems from their customs which involved socializing in the homes.

The preference for spending leisure time with their family and visiting other Afghan families may also be explained by the patriarchal customs of Afghan culture. Moghadam (2002) states that there may be some Afghan women who "find security in family life and prefer not to have to negotiate in the public sphere" (p. 28). It is possible that because Afghan women were restricted from the public sphere for so long, they do not consider it, or do not take advantage of it even in the current new situation. The participants' current preference for family oriented leisure has likely been formed by their original culture. Whether it be the strength of families or the concept of public space for women, it seems likely that Afghan culture plays a role in the participants' preference for home based, family oriented leisure. If this is the case, the ethnicity theory would best explain why Afghans prefer family oriented, home based leisure.

Another possible explanation as to why the Afghan newcomers preferred family based activities within their homes is, simply, that having a family influences the types of leisure activities one engages in. A study by Osgood and Lee (1993) examined changes in leisure participation across the lifespan and found that an individual's situation in life, in terms of family, work, etc. often varies according to age. The present study confirmed that age does, in fact, affect the leisure activities one engages in. An interesting finding of the study indicated that parenthood reduced participation in leisure activities, but as children get older, leisure participation increases and resembles that of non-parents. The study also found that having full-time employment increased the participation in leisure

activities outside the home and decreased leisure time spent in the home. Therefore, it is possible that the Afghan participants' preference for family based leisure can be explained by their situation as parents. Their leisure then, may not dramatically differ from non-immigrant families, although unique cultural influences should not be underestimated.

Shaw and Dawson (2001) have also conducted research supporting that leisure, in general, is influenced by family. Their research revealed that parents' main goal for leisure was extrinsically motivated as their desire was to "develop a sense of family and to teach children about values and healthy lifestyles" (Shaw & Dawson, 2001, p. 228). For Afghan families it may also be that their choice to spend time at home with their family is extrinsically motivated. Family based leisure would allow them the opportunity to enhance the family bond and to pass on the values and traditions they value. By doing this, the Afghan parents are able to ensure that their children learn about their culture and remain connected to it. This notion of leisure as a method of preserving culture is consistent with the findings of a study by Heinonen, Harvey, and Fox (2005). Therefore, for Afghan families, as well as North American ones, leisure activities seem to be extrinsically motivated and serve as a means of teaching values.

Another key finding of this study relates to the Afghan participants' preference for educational activities in their leisure time. Afghanis interviewed viewed educational activities, such as computer classes and conversation classes, as valued forms of leisure. Most also indicated that, if they eventually did have more leisure time, the types of programs they would be interested in pursuing would involve training opportunities. The use of leisure time to pursue educational activities is a concept that is not unique to the

participants of this study. For Aristotle, (as cited in Arnold, 1989, p.136) leisure “meant being engaged in intellectually worthwhile activities for their own sake...Education was seen ideally in terms of leading a life of cultivated leisure by choosing to spend time at those activities which have intrinsic worth or merit.” Therefore, Aristotle saw leisure as an end in itself. However, the Afghanis participants in the current study chose to spend their leisure time pursuing educational activities as a means to an end. Their primary goal was to gain the skills necessary to assist them in finding employment or meet entrance requirements for education programs. A study by Roberson (2005) examined how older adults used self-directed learning in order to accommodate the changing needs in their lives. Her study discovered that the learning activities are not randomly selected, bur rather chosen for the purpose of helping older learn to adjust to changes in their lives. These activities assisted older adults in adjusting to aging related changes in their lives. The idea that activities of learning can assist older adults in such adjustment may explain why the recent Afghan newcomers used much of their leisure time to pursue educational activities. These activities provide them with the skills necessary to adjust to their new lives, a new country, and a new culture. Therefore, this finding may indicate that the chosen leisure activities of recent newcomers are determined less by constraints and more by intention and preference to better themselves.

Perceived Leisure Constraints of Recent Newcomers

An important finding of the study revealed lack of time as one of the main perceived leisure constraints for recent newcomers. Afghan participants indicated lack of time as one of the main barriers to leisure participation at least three to six months after immigrating to Winnipeg. Lack of time, as a barrier to leisure, mirrored what Afghan

participants identified as the main leisure barrier prior to immigrating to Canada. The finding was also consistent with other research that found time to be a leisure constraint for immigrants (Stodolska & Yi-Kook, 2005). Chick and Dong (2005) state that the amount of free time someone has is related to the environment they live in and the methods they use to sustain themselves within that environment. Most of the time available to the Afghan participants in the present study was spent working or in training. It is possible that if a surplus of time was available to them after their work or training they would consider more leisure activities. Other barriers reported by participants included difficulties learning English, unfamiliarity with the city and what is available, and lack of a social network. The leisure constraints identified by participants in this study are consistent with some of the constraints discovered in other studies which have examined the leisure of immigrants (Ruble & Shaw, 1991; Stodolska, 2000; Stodolska, 1998 & Horna, 1990 & Juniu, 2000). Although lack of time appeared to be the major constraint influencing the leisure participation of newcomers, it is also one of the most common constraints experienced by the mainstream population (Stodolska, 2002; Stodolska & Yi-Kook, 2005).

Another major finding of the study suggests that leisure participation was simply not a priority for recent newcomers. Instead, once newcomers were able to obtain a leisure repertoire similar to that which they experienced prior to immigrating they did not tend to seek out additional leisure endeavors. Their main priorities were to receive training and find employment. The priorities they set for themselves and their families upon arriving in Winnipeg may be influenced considerably by their culture and past. Prior to immigrating to Canada their lives consisted of much turmoil and unrest. Some

participants were living under Taliban rule, while others lived in Iran or Pakistan where they had gone to flee Taliban rule (Dupree, 2004). It is quite likely that there were few opportunities for leisure during this period as their time was probably consumed by providing food and safety for their families. Once they arrived in Canada, participants expressed the desire to stabilize their lives by improving their English skills and, eventually, obtaining employment. For the male Afghan participants the perception that they must provide for their families would have been especially important. Afghan patriarchal customs place men as the head of the household and responsible for all those within, (Dupree, 2004; Stabile & Kumar, 2005). This may explain why findings indicated that obtaining employment or accessing work related training were their main priorities.

Female Afghan participants also indicated that they were satisfied with their current leisure activities and that leisure was not a priority for them. Here again, culturally prescribed gender roles and responsibilities may be acting as a constraint to leisure participation. . Traditionally, Afghan women were expected to perform domestic activities and were viewed as central to the family (Dupree, 2004). Family, for these women, was their priority in the past, and it appears that their focus has remained largely unchanged. Therefore, it seems quite possible that the opinion of most participants that leisure was not a priority in their present life may have been culturally determined. The concept that leisure preferences are shaped by culturally based values is consistent with the ethnicity constraint theory (Gramann & Allison, 1999).

Service Providers Role in Influencing Participation

Another critical finding related to the service providers' role in encouraging or discouraging leisure participation in their programs. It appeared as though all three of the

service providers acknowledge the increasing immigrant population in various communities within the city, and have actively attempted to make their services known and accessible to them. The service providers have also partnered with other agencies or organizations in order to expand their programming and/or to increase newcomers' knowledge of their programming. The International Centre of Winnipeg has an ever-increasing client base and high registration levels in all of their programs including social events such as the Thanksgiving dinner and holiday parties. Their other programs are intended to meet the needs and interests of their clients and offer the opportunity for skill development or settlement support, both of which participants expressed as important aspects of their leisure endeavors. The YMCA-YWCA also has an increasing membership base including noticeably many more newcomer members in recent years who participate in their drop-in programs. For those newcomers who participated in the present study, it was the children of newcomer families that participated in the "Y's" programs more so than the adults. The City of Winnipeg has found that many newcomers like to participate in programs that have partnered with other organizations such as IRCOM House. They have not found a significant number of newcomers registering for the "Pay to Play" programs, which require payment and are advertised through their publication, "The Leisure Guide."

An assumption that may be drawn from this is that newcomers may find the programs at immigrant serving agencies/organizations to be more relevant to their situation, particularly in the first few years after immigrating to Canada. This is the time when they are more inclined to spend leisure time in programs that assist them in adjusting to the city and the culture, improving their language skills, and acquiring the

training necessary for employment. As several of the newcomers themselves had expressed, they see the value in recreational activities, but will seek out opportunities once they have stabilized their lives by completing training programs or obtaining employment. Consequently, it may not be until several years after immigrating that they will be interested in participating in other, and possibly more intrinsically motivated, forms of leisure activities such as those offered through the City of Winnipeg's community centres. The City recognizes that leisure is not necessarily a priority when newcomers first arrive, but nevertheless, promotes their services to this population so that they may choose to participate at a later time in their lives. Therefore, service providers who provide leisure programming seem to encourage newcomer participation in their programs. Whether newcomers participate or not appears to depend more on their interests and priorities at a particular time in the settlement process than on the service providers' lack of encouragement.

Contrasting the perceived leisure constraints expressed by newcomers with those service providers believed existed for newcomers lead to several findings. Newcomers expressed lack of time as their main leisure barrier followed by poor English skills, lack of familiarity with the city, and lack of familiarity with leisure opportunities. The City of Winnipeg and the International Centre of Winnipeg both seemed aware of the leisure constraints perceived by newcomers. Both acknowledged that leisure participation was not a priority in newcomers' lives as they spent the majority of their time studying English, in other training programs, or caring for their families. They also identified language difficulties as another major barrier to leisure participation. The YMCA/YWCA, on the other hand, perceived that newcomers faced financial constraints

and were restricted by the location of the programs. Although these may in fact be constraints for some newcomers, they were not the key ones identified in the study. This suggests that YMCA/YWCA is aware that constraints do exist for newcomers in accessing their programs, but they may not know precisely what the constraints entail. However, the YMCA-YWCA does do a good job of linking themselves with other community programs, such as those at Youville Centre, in order to keep abreast the issues facing newcomers in their community. The YMCA-YWCA primarily provides health and fitness programs which are not viewed as a priority of newcomers. The lack of newcomers' interest in their programming is a constraint that YMCA/YWCA is less able to accommodate. However, they are still dedicated to meeting the needs of newcomers as much as they can. They identified financial factors and proximity to programs as major constraints experienced by newcomers, and they have best attempted to deal with these constraints and extend their programs and services to immigrant community members. The City of Winnipeg and the International Centre, on the other hand, have more flexibility with the types of programs they offer and, therefore, it is more critical for them to be aware of the needs and interests of the community (including newcomers) and plan programs accordingly. Overall, findings suggest that the leisure service providers are aware that constraints to participation exist for newcomers. It is not their lack of ability to identify the constraints that inhibit newcomers from accessing their services. Instead, low participation among newcomers seems to stem from other factors such as other priorities and different leisure preferences (e.g., cultural differences).

Findings in Relation to Constraint Theories

Overall, findings seem to indicate that the leisure constraints of Afghan newcomers cannot be explained by a single constraint theory. The assimilation theory, which combines aspects of the marginality, ethnicity, and discrimination theories, suggests that as the social distance between minority groups and the majority group narrows, recreational behavior becomes more similar (Floyd et al., 1993). Unfortunately, due to the short period of time that Afghan newcomers have lived in Winnipeg, it is not possible to determine whether their leisure behavior will change over time. It is possible that more recent theories may be more relevant in explaining the leisure of newcomers. For example, the selective acculturation theory, developed by Keefe and Padilla (1987) (as cited in Stodolska & Yi-Kook, 2005) states that newcomers more readily assimilate in terms of behaviors related to bettering their economic situation, but do not assimilate entirely in all respects. They preserve some aspects of their culture, such as leisure behavior. This theory seems more consistent with the findings of this study as most participants were eager to better their skill sets in order to obtain work, but seemed less interested in accessing leisure programs not related to learning. However, whether this will change over time and Afghan leisure behavior will become more similar to that of mainstream society remains unknown. It is possible that cultural differences will persist, even after years of contacts and association with mainstream society which would be consistent with the boundary maintenance theory developed by Barth (1998) (as cited in Stodolska & Yi-Kook, 2005).

The hierarchical model of leisure constraints (Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991) is a useful way of conceptualizing and explaining the results of this study. The

model accurately depicts the dynamic process of how the Afghan newcomers negotiated a series of constraints. It also proposed that order in which constraints are negotiated represents a hierarchy of importance (Crawford et al., 1991, p. 314) with intrapersonal constraints being the most powerful. Findings indicated that a major intrapersonal constraint that Afghan newcomers faced was their concept of the meaning of leisure. Findings indicated that Afghan participant viewed leisure as purposeful when it involved spending time with family or friends or an opportunity for learning. These preferences may have been formed by their culture or past experiences with leisure prior to immigrating to Canada. Interpersonal constraints also influenced the leisure of the Afghan newcomers as most mentioned that after their arrival they did not know anyone and consequently did not participate in any leisure. This would have been especially difficult for Afghan newcomers considering their preference for family and social based activities. However, after several months participants were able to reconstruct a social network for themselves. Structural barriers were also identified by Afghan participants including lack of time, unfamiliarity with available opportunities, climate and family life-cycle as most had children. It seems logical that these structural barriers would become relevant only after the participants had negotiated through barriers that had impacted their leisure preferences. Interpersonal constraints affecting whether the newcomers were able to form a new social network also appeared to be negotiated through before newcomers would deal with structural barriers.

The model also proposed that social class was thought to be a more powerful influence on participation or non-participation than initially believed. (Crawford et al., 1991). The main constraint identified by the newcomer Afghan participants was lack of

time. Most stated that they were very busy in educational programs ranging from ESL to job-related training and that they were motivated to take part in these programs in order to obtain employment. As previously mentioned, several participants claimed they would consider more leisure activities once they had secured a job and a better economic situation. Therefore, it appears that social class does have an influence on the leisure participation of recent newcomers.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

Limitations

Several limitations of the present study should not be ignored. First, this study only examined the interests and constraints of Afghan immigrants in relation to programs offered by leisure service providers. Not only may this cultural group have different leisure interests and constraints compared to much larger immigrant communities in Winnipeg (e.g., the Chinese), but this group may also differ from other new immigrant communities that have not yet been researched extensively (e.g., the Iraqis). Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to other immigrant groups. Those from other countries and without a large support network in Winnipeg may identify many other constraints to leisure, or may have a completely different idea regarding the concept of leisure.

Another limitation of the study is the sample size. The time needed to collect, transcribe, and analyze data through a qualitative means used in this study made it difficult to include a large number of participants, both newcomers and service providers. A third limitation was the Afghan participants' difficulty communicating in English. Despite the use of an interpreter and echoing the response to ensure it was heard correctly, some cases of misunderstood or misinterpreted responses may have occurred. Additionally, the use of interpreters who were also participants with higher levels of English may also be a limitation of the study. These participants/interpreters may have had their own biases as to what types of responses the researcher desired, and may have interpreted the questions in order to elicit certain responses. They may also have led participants in their response to questions based on their own bias as to what types of responses were required. It is

also possible that that the interpreters misunderstood the interview questions and consequently, misinterpreted them for the other participants.

Recommendations for Practice

Several implications for service providers resulted based on findings of the study. One such implication would be for service providers to include programming with a family focus. Eliminating assignment to programs based on age categories may make programs more family friendly to newcomers who may prefer to participate as a unit or with other families. The option to engage in an organized leisure activity or program may be more attractive for newcomers if they are able to do so as a family, rather than individually. Programming for families would assist newcomer families in maintaining and/or enhancing their sense of family and would offer parents an avenue to share values with their children.

Another practical implication for leisure service providers may be to include more educational type programming for recent newcomers. This may involve combining aspects of learning and education into existing programs so that newcomers could gain skills while also benefiting from social interaction and improved health. Service providers could also promote other already existing leisure programs to recent immigrants by emphasizing the educational aspects.

Although newcomers may have different leisure interests and preferences during the first few years after immigrating to Canada, service providers should continue to seek out more appropriate and effective methods of attracting and encouraging newcomer participation. Findings from this study suggest practical ways service providers can reach out to recent immigrant community members. Most newcomer participants felt

that having someone visit their home to explain available services and programs would be the most effective method of advertising to their community. Understandably, this may prove difficult for many service providers due to a lack of available human resources and time constraints. However, this form of advertising and outreach may be provided through the use of trained volunteers and possibly even those who have been recruited from the Afghan community once they have settled in the city. Another method that newcomers identified as an effective means of reaching their community is to provide written material in their language. Consequently, an implication for service providers may be to increase their marketing budget and restructure their marketing strategies in order to target non-English speaking immigrant groups. Marketing leisure programs by promoting the benefits newcomers identified in the study may also prove useful. These benefits include improving English skills, learning about Canada, and leisure as a stress reliever.

Recommendations for Future Research

Since only a few studies have examined the leisure of recent immigrants, especially those that focus on immigrant groups that are fairly new to Canada such as the Afghans, further research in this area is strongly recommended. The Afghans, as well as other immigrant groups that do not have a large, organized, and supportive community in Canada may experience unique leisure constraints. They may also be less able to communicate their experiences to service providers, as they may not have yet found a united voice. Future research on other recent and under researched immigrant groups, such as the Iraqis, would allow comparison with the results from the present study. This may provide a better sense of whether the current findings are specific to Afghan

participants, as a result of their culture, or if they may be indicative of other recent newcomer groups.

It would also be interesting and useful to conduct a follow-up study to determine whether newcomers would actually become more involved in various types of leisure endeavors after they have found stability in their Canadian lives. Furthermore, follow-up research would deepen our understanding of the dynamic nature of newcomers' leisure constraints and experiences. For example, it is important to examine whether leisure constraints are stabilized after the first few months of immigration and then remain consistent, or whether they will change again once the immigrants are more settled.

Overall, the present study shed light on the leisure preferences and constraints of recent Afghan immigrants as well as on the role of service providers in influencing their participation. Although it appears that many of the recent Afghan immigrants who participated in the study are satisfied with their current level and form of leisure participation, leisure constraints are perceived. As well, service providers were knowledgeable of the constraints facing recent immigrants in the community and continually attempt to erase any barriers that may affect their participation in programs. In order for service providers to better understand the leisure motivations, constraints and preferences of recent newcomers, it is critical that they understand their unique cultural requirements and preferences with regard to leisure programming during the entire settlement and integration process.

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Interview Guide for Immigrant Participants
(Appendix A)

Thanks so much for agreeing to take part in this interview today. As you may know, I am a graduate student at the University of Manitoba and this interview will generate data that will be used for my research project. The purpose of this research is to determine your leisure interests, what constraints to leisure you may perceive, and what aspects of recreation agencies may inhibit you from using their services? All of the information you provide is considered confidential and no one will know which responses acquired throughout this process were provided by you. Please be advised that you have the choice of not answering specific questions if you do not want to and you may stop the interview at any time. This interview will be audio-recorded and will be transcribed at a later time. Do you have any questions or concerns about this study before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

Section 1: Leisure Interests of Recent Immigrants

1. Can you describe the activities that you enjoy doing in your free time?
2. Are the activities that you enjoy doing now different from those when you first arrived in Winnipeg?
3. What do you find interesting or appealing about the leisure activities that you participate in most often?
4. Do you feel that there are benefits to leisure activities? If yes, what do you think the benefits are?
5. Who do you usually spend your leisure time with (i.e. family, friends, co-workers, alone, etc.)?

Section 2: Perceived Leisure Constraints among Recent Immigrants

1. What are the things that prevent you from taking part in leisure activities?
2. Do you feel that you are able to participate in leisure activities as often as you would like? If not, why?
3. When you arrived in Canada, what were the things that made it difficult for you to take part in leisure activities and programs in Winnipeg?
4. Which of these things were the most difficult to overcome? Which things were the least difficult to overcome?

Section 3: The Role of Recreation Agencies in the Leisure of Recent Immigrants

1. Where do you often go to participate in your leisure activities? Why?
2. Has this changed from when you first arrived in Winnipeg? Why?
3. Do you or any members of your family participate in any recreation/leisure programs offered through recreation centres/community clubs? Why or why not?
4. Which recreation centre/community club programs are you and your family aware of in your community?
5. What things prevent you from taking part in the programs and other services offered by the recreation centres in your community? Please explain.
6. Is there anything else you wish to add or comment on regarding your leisure interests and constraints?

This concludes the interview. Thank you very much for your participation. If you are interested in being a part of the ongoing data analysis process of this study and receiving a summary of the findings, please write down your name, address, and phone number. This information will be discarded following the completion of the study. If you have any questions or concerns at a later date please feel free to contact me at .

Interview Guide for Leisure Service Providers
Appendix B

Thanks so much for agreeing to take part in this interview. As you may know, I am a graduate student at the University of Manitoba and this interview will generate data that will be used for my research project. The purpose of this research is to determine what leisure interests recent immigrants have, what constraints to leisure participation they may perceive, and the role of the service provider in the utilization of leisure services and programs. These interviews will generate data on what aspects of leisure service providers programs and services may encourage or inhibit them from using the services. All of the information you provide is considered confidential and no one will know which responses acquired throughout this process were provided by you. Please be advised that you have the choice of not answering specific questions and you may stop the interview at any time. This interview will be audio-recorded and will be transcribed at a later time for research purposes only. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Are you ready to begin?

1. What types of clients utilize your leisure programs and services?
2. What types of leisure programs does your agency offer?
3. How does this agency decide what programs will be offered?
4. How are the programs/services advertised to the community?
5. Are these methods effective at reaching all segments of the community? Explain.
6. In what ways are staff at this agency representative of the community?
 - a) How do you feel your agency's staff represent the diverse nature of our society in terms of age, gender, ethnicity, etc.?
7. Can you describe any programming that strives to meet the needs of immigrant community members?
 - a) Are there incentives in place to attract immigrant community members?
8. Do you feel there are an adequate number of recent immigrants participating in your programs?
9. What types of leisure activities do you feel recent immigrants like to participate in?
10. What types of constraints do you feel recent immigrants may encounter when trying to access leisure opportunities?
11. What suggestions do you have for reducing the leisure constraints experienced by

recent immigrants?

12. Is there anything else you wish to add?

This concludes the interview. Thank you very much for your participation. If you are interested in being a part of the ongoing process of this study and receiving a summary of the findings, please write down your name, address, and phone number. This information will be discarded following the completion of the study. If you have any questions or concerns at a later date please feel free to contact me at

Newcomer Consent Form
Appendix C

Research Project Title: Policy, Programming, and Structure: Factors Influencing Recent Immigrants' Use of Leisure Services

Researcher: Julie Rhymer

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.

I am a graduate student in the Master's of Arts in Recreation Studies program at the University of Manitoba and this research is for my thesis. The purpose of this study is to determine your leisure interests, what constraints to leisure you may perceive, and what aspects of leisure agencies may inhibit you from using their services? Your participation in this study may benefit you and other recent immigrants in Winnipeg by raising the awareness needed to make changes in the leisure services offered to recent immigrants. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes. All of the information you provide is considered confidential and no one will know which responses acquired throughout this process were provided by you. The information you provide will only be heard by the researcher. This interview will be audio-recorded and will be transcribed at a later time for the purpose of data analysis. All data will be stored securely on paper and disk in a locked filing cabinet in my home office, which only I will have access to. Following the completion of the study in October of 2005, all information obtained will be discarded and/or deleted.

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 as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, 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. You may contact Julie Rhymer at (204) 284-9124 with any questions or concerns.

This research has been approved by the Education/Nursing REB. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122 or e-mail ethics@umanitoba.ca. 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

If you wish to be contacted following the data analysis process to verify, refute, or provide feedback on the interpretations made by the researcher, please indicate your contact information in the space provided below. The researcher will mail a copy of the data analysis section to your home address, and will follow-up with a telephone call in order to arrange a time to meet and obtain your feedback.

Participant's Name

Street Address

City

Postal Code

Phone #

AND / OR

If you wish to receive a copy of the findings of the study please indicate your contact information in the space provided below. Upon the study's completion in October, you will be sent a copy to your home mailing address.

Participant's Name

Street Address

City

Postal Code

Leisure Service Provider Consent Form

Appendix D

Research Project Title: Policy, Programming, and Structure: Factors Influencing Recent Immigrants' Use of Leisure Services

Researcher: Julie Rhymer

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.

I am a graduate student in the Master's of Arts in Recreation Studies program at the University of Manitoba and this research is for my thesis. The purpose of this study is to determine the leisure interests of recent immigrants, what constraints to leisure participation they may perceive, and the role of the service provider in their utilization of leisure services and programs. These interviews will generate data on what aspects of leisure agencies may encourage or inhibit them from using the services. Your participation in this interview will not only benefit recent immigrants in Winnipeg by raising the awareness needed to make changes in the leisure programs if necessary, but will benefit you by bettering your understanding of this growing segment of our community, allowing you to be leaders in providing programming for them. The session will be approximately 30 minutes in duration. This interview will be audio-recorded and will be transcribed at a later time for the purpose of data analysis. All data will be stored securely on paper and disk in a locked filing cabinet in my home office, which only I will have access to. Following the completion of the study in October of 2005, all information obtained will be discarded and/or deleted.

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 as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, 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. You may contact Julie Rhymer at (204) 284-9124 with any questions or concerns.

This research has been approved by the Education/Nursing REB. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122 or e-mail _____ . 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

If you wish to be contacted following the data analysis process to verify, refute, or provide feedback on the interpretations made by the researcher, please indicate your contact information in the space provided below. The researcher will mail a copy of the data analysis section to your home address, and will follow-up with a telephone call in order to arrange a time to meet and obtain your feedback.

Participant's Name

Street Address

City

Postal Code

Phone #

AND / OR

If you wish to receive a copy of the findings of the study please indicate your contact information in the space provided below. Upon the study's completion in October, you will be sent a copy to your home mailing address.

Participant's Name

Street Address

City

Postal Code

Appendix E
Excerpt from Researcher's Journal

Experiences with Afghan Newcomers:

Having previously worked with newcomers as the Coordinator of Volunteers at the International Centre of Winnipeg, I have had the opportunity to learn about Afghan newcomers through means other than reading existing research on the group. My two and a half year position with the International Centre of Winnipeg involved working with newcomers from a variety of countries and cultures including those from Afghanistan. Clients were referred to me in order to assess which of the Volunteer Services programs would best suit their needs. The centre offered conversation classes, computer familiarization classes, drivers' education classes, tutoring and social events.

Impressions and Observations:

They struck me as a very quiet and gentle people. They were emphatically grateful for whatever assistance they were given. I expected them to be more depressed and sad, but was astounded by how positive they were about their situation. Those with young children were happy their children were growing up in Canada.

The majority of the clients I worked with were not working in their fields as dentists, doctors, bricklayers, etc. The first couple of years for most consisted of taking ESL classes. I know of only a couple who were taking another form of employment related training, unrelated to their previous work experience in Afghanistan or elsewhere.

I worked with both male and female Afghan clients. I knew some mothers who arrived in Winnipeg with their children, but still searching for their husbands who remained in refugee camps in Pakistan. Those families were eventually reunited.

Pre-Interview Assumptions:

- Afghans are not participating in leisure activities outside the International Centre, Welcome Place and IRCOM House.
- Afghan newcomers are trying desperately to learn English. They wish to find work and provide for their families.
- Afghans are very friendly and want to learn about their new culture. They would be happy to have more opportunities for social interaction.
- Afghans spend a lot of time at home with their families.
- Afghans are not satisfied with their current leisure experiences.

Expected findings related to Afghan participants:

- Leisure preferences include social outings, family activities, programs for their children, and any opportunity to use and learn English.
- Leisure constraints include: money, lack of information, unfamiliarity with the city, language, lack of programming to suit their leisure interests. Service providers do not program for the newcomer segment of the population. Existing

programs are geared towards mainstream interests. Advertising of existing programs does not reach newcomers.

- Afghans would express a great desire to become more involved in more leisure programs. They would express dissatisfaction with their current leisure repertoire.