

**Review of the Literature on the Settlement
of Refugees in Canada, 1980-1998**

Contents

A. Physical and Mental Health	5
B. Economic Integration	7
C. Education and Language Issues	9
D. Social and Community Integration.....	11
E. Service Providers and Service Utilization	14
F. Research and Policy Linkages.....	17
G. Conclusion.....	21

Since the end of the Second World War, Canada has been accepting refugees as part of its humanitarian obligation to the international community. The 1976 Immigration Act reinforces this obligation and identifies refugees as a special immigrant category. More recently, the 1997 report of the Immigration Legislative Review Advisory Group, *Not Just Numbers: A Canadian Framework for Future Immigration*, goes as far as to recommend the creation of a separate Protection Act focusing solely on those seeking protection (i.e., refugees) (Recommendation 2), thereby reinforcing Canada's humanitarian obligation on a global scale. In a similar vein, a subsequent Citizenship and Immigration Canada document, entitled *Building on a Strong Foundation for the 21st Century: New Directions for Immigration and Refugee Policy and Legislation* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada 1998), upholds Canada's humanitarian tradition of resettling refugees from abroad and seeks to strengthen the resettlement program. Given past and recent trends in the admission of refugees, as well as Canada's commitment to improve on its past record in this area, the flow of refugees to Canada is likely to continue into the foreseeable future.

"Refugees are people fleeing persecution and seeking Canada's protection, sponsored by the government, private groups, or who have claimed refugee status upon arrival and whose claims have been determined to be valid" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, November 1994). As such, refugees are a special kind of immigrant and their settlement in Canada must take account of the special circumstances surrounding their existence prior to their arrival in Canada as well as their unique social, economic and psychological needs.

In 1950, the Canadian government established the Department of Citizenship and Immigration to facilitate the development of settlement services for immigrants and refugees (M. Lanphier and Oleh Lukomskyj, Chapter 1, in Adelman et al., Vol. 2, 1994, p. 341). Over the years, the service providers (e.g., federal government, provincial and

municipal governments, and/or NGOs) shifted and recombined, as did the specific services involved. In general, however, the range of main services provided included language classes, instruction in citizenship, reception, family and employment counselling, and under certain conditions, skills upgrading. Typically, the beneficiaries of these settlement services were the principal immigrants or refugees and not their spouses. It is important to note that neither the elderly nor the children were part of these settlement services. With reference to the latter group, schools and/or school boards developed their own language and other services for immigrant children within their existing budgets (i.e. with no federal funding).

This review focuses largely on the recent research literature (1980-1998) dealing with the settlement and integration of refugees in Canada. Cognate studies or reports that focus solely on immigrants, rather than refugees, or that have been carried out in countries other than Canada are included in the attached bibliography, only to the extent that they may enhance our understanding of the settlement experiences of refugees.

A great deal has been written about refugees in Canada, both in terms of focus on specific groups and their unique needs as well as more general questions pertaining to their integration into Canadian society. The discussion to follow highlights aspects of uniqueness of selected refugee groups that have been studied more frequently than others, documents the actual experiences of refugees in the receiving communities, and identifies factors which may facilitate or impede the successful integration of refugees. The insights derived from this review have been utilized in the development of the interview schedule used here in the settlement experience of refugees in Alberta.

The present discussion is organized around six major areas which more or less summarize the current literature on resettlement of refugees. These areas are:

- A. Physical and Mental Health
- B. Economic Integration
- C. Education and Language Issues

- D. Social and Community Integration
- E. Service Providers and Service Utilization
- F. Research and Policy Linkages

Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

A. Physical and Mental Health

Newcomers to Canada, in general, face countless challenges which may entail stress. Some newcomers, however, such as refugees, may have had very stressful experiences and mental health conditions prior to arrival in Canada. Research evidence indicates that mental stress among newly arrived refugees is mitigated by a socially supportive environment such as might exist in a housing cooperative (Allodi and Rojas, 1988); by social support derived from the ethnic community; by social support derived from a strong marriage; and by avoiding references to stressful and depressive past experiences (Beiser, 1987; Beiser, Turner and Ganesan, 1991). Length of residence in Canada is found to be positively related to refugees' mental health (Beiser, 1988).

With reference to children and adolescents, a recent study of Yugoslav refugees in Sweden shows that the psychosocial adaptation of children is positively associated with their mothers' well-being. Thus, risk factors for mental ill health among children were neutralized in those situations where the mother was optimistic and perceived by her children to offer social support (Ekblad, 1993). In a similar vein, it has been shown that social support ameliorates the effects of chronic stress among Namibian adolescent refugees living in exile in Africa (Shisana and Celentano, 1985).

Length of residence in Canada surfaces again as an important factor in the psychological adjustment of refugees. For example, a study of Somali refugee women between 18 and 50 years of age, living in the Ottawa-Hull region, shows that an average of four years of residence in Canada is associated with preference for integration in Canadian society, while longer residence and stronger self-identification as Canadian tended to be associated with more anti-Somali sentiments (Young, 1996). In the same

study, “younger Somali women showed higher levels of depression. Dissatisfied with their expatriate life, refugees in Canada with political asylum indicated a desire to return to Somalia.”

Available evidence indicates that the psychological well-being of refugees is related to their resettlement experiences. For example, a study of Ethiopian refugees resettled in the Western United States shows that stress levels are higher among refugees resettled by agencies than among refugees resettled by volunteers (McSpadden, 1987). It is interesting to note that the stress levels among these Ethiopian refugees is negatively associated with the ability of either settlement approach to provide employment or access to education, even when proficiency in English is held constant.

Turning now to the delivery of health services, several studies have identified major health issues facing immigrant and refugee women in Canada and have argued that the existing health system should plan for the needs of an increasingly multicultural society (see, for example, Equal Opportunity Consultants, 1991; Stevens, 1991). It has also been argued that delivery of health care services should involve, among other things, the use of interpreters, education of health care professionals, and adaptation to clients’ cultural needs (Mattson, 1989; Nudelman, 1994).

In an interesting study of displaced families housed in a refugee centre in Zagreb, Croatia, it is noted that that sources of family stress during exile include: “(1) concern over family members and family completeness; (2) dependence on others; (3) marginalization, stigmatization, and diminished social position; (4) perceptions of social injustice; (5) acculturation; (6) perception and interpretation of current events; (7) helplessness; (8) uncertainty; and (9) problems with the organization of everyday life.” Sensitivity to these same issues in the Canadian context would probably help to ameliorate the effects of stress factors on refugees in Canada.

B. Economic Integration

Much of the existing research on economic integration does not differentiate immigrants from refugees. Often, the integration experience of refugees is subsumed under immigrants. Only rarely is the economic situation of refugees examined for its own merit. The main emphasis of existing research on refugees in the economic realm focuses on employment and income in comparison to immigrants and Canadian-born.

There appears to be conflicting evidence as to whether refugees experience long-term income deficiencies in comparison to immigrants and the Canadian-born. Deschamps' (1987, 1982) and Samuel's (1987) studies on the economic integration of Indochinese refugees in Canada, and Kibria's (1989) study on Vietnamese refugee women in the United States reveal that even though refugees themselves are generally satisfied with their progress toward economic integration, they have a long way to go to obtain equity with their Canadian-born and immigrant counterparts. Deschamps (1987) also notes that the sponsorship program has not been largely successful in helping refugees to become economically self-sufficient as some remain dependent on government or private support.

Neuwirth and DeVries (1994) affirm the above results, indicating that full economic integration of refugees has not been achieved. Using data from the 1986 Census, they argue that refugees are the new 'underclass' in Canada due to their low income levels in comparison to all other non-refugee groups. However, data provided by Samuel (1984) suggests that refugees, despite their initial difficulties securing employment, their earnings increase and, over time, begin to "catch-up" to those of Canadian-born and immigrants.

In terms of the employment rate of refugees, the majority of research originates from the United States. One exception is a Canadian study by Adams and Jesudason (1984) which found that Ugandan refugees were able to obtain employment shortly upon arrival in Canada but at a lower occupational level compared to what they enjoyed in their country of origin. English language proficiency has the greatest impact on obtaining employment

(Gold, 1992; Haines, 1987). Majka and Mullan (1992) add that the type of support services available to refugees also plays an integral role in obtaining employment.

There are other studies exploring the variables affecting the employment of refugees. Montgomery's (1986) research on Vietnamese in Alberta uses English language skill, education level on arrival, population size of municipality of current residence, and ethnicity to study employment rates and mean gross monthly income. He finds the employment rate and income of Vietnamese is similar to other groups of immigrants, but lower than Canadian-born groups. Other studies originating in the United States suggest that variables such as health, country of origin, length of residence, age, gender and ethnicity also affect the employment status of refugees (Tran and Nguyen, 1994; Potocky, 1996; Strand, 1984). This research also indicates that the effect of these variables on employment is greater for refugees than for immigrants.

Research focusing on ethnic enclaves, blocked mobility and foreign credential recognition are extremely sparse in the refugee literature despite their prominence in immigration studies. Lawrence Lam (1994) examines the link between the blocked mobility thesis and the emergence of small ethnic businesses of Chinese-Vietnamese refugees in Vancouver. The blocked mobility thesis states that ethnic business enclaves arise because certain ethnic groups, in this case Chinese-Vietnamese refugees, are unable to obtain employment in the mainstream economy due to various factors such as language deficiencies, insufficient level of skill to obtain certain types of employment and racial discrimination. The result of these barriers leads to the development of ethnic enclaves where workers who cannot obtain employment in the mainstream economy set up their own ethnic businesses in order to provide themselves with income and meaningful employment.

Lam finds that the largest barrier to employment is the non-recognition of foreign credentials. The result is two-fold: while some Chinese-Vietnamese refugees are forced to work in sweatshops, dead-end jobs and low-paying homework in the mainstream economy, others become "reluctant entrepreneurs" in ethnic enclave businesses (Lam,

1994). Cobas, Aicken and Jardine (1992) suggest that in addition to the variables outlined by Lam, the emergence of an ethnic enclave is also influenced positively by the number of relatives living in the same city as well as level of education upon arrival.

Despite the claims that refugees eventually “catch up” to other immigrant groups and to Canadian-born in terms of their economic integration in society (Samuel, 1984; DeVoretz, 1994; deSilva, 1996), the bulk of the evidence suggests that this is not so. It is clear that research on the economic situation of refugees per se is woefully limited. This is partially due to the fact that refugees are subsumed under general immigrant categories. The sparse economic research focusing solely on refugees suggests that while it is not agreed what variables affect the economic integration of this group, it is certain that their situation is often quite different from that of immigrants. This warrants separate examinations of the income and employment status of refugees.

C. Education and Language Issues

An examination of curriculum design, delivery and efficacy in teaching refugee children in North York by Coelho et al. (1990) suggests that certain teaching practices need to be changed. These include: modifying classroom language, development of alternative materials and an awareness of the linguistic demands of the subject. Recognition of these barriers may enhance the learning experience of refugee students. Kapriellian-Churchill (1996) and Yau (1995) build on these findings by examining the identification, assessment, placement and monitoring of the academic needs of refugee students. Both researchers recommend radical changes to the Canadian education system in order to accommodate the needs of refugee students.

Rousseau, Drapeau and Corin (1996) show that low academic achievements of refugee students are associated with emotional problems. They also find that even when their performance level is equal to or higher than that of Canadian-born students, refugee students are more often assigned to remedial classes than Canadian-born students. This presumes that refugees invariably encounter integration problems in the education system, thereby perpetuating a standardized treatment which may hinder their future education. Similarly, Henkin and Nguyen (1984) studied the self-esteem and academic achievements

of 147 Laotian refugees in the American mid-west. They find that self-esteem diminishes as refugee students progress through the education system, and when compared to native-born and immigrant students, Laotian refugees had the lowest self-esteem. Ima and Rumbaut (1989) warn, however, that not all refugee students have emotional problems. Some require extra initiatives, while others need few interventions.

In the UK, Banafunzi (1996) argues that the secularized education system there does not address the cultural and religious needs of many refugee groups. He argues for the creation of separate community schools where cultural maintenance is practiced and which would allow students a gradual introduction to British culture. Grundy's (1994) research in Australia is different. Although she also recognizes the assimilationist nature of the school system, she does not suggest a separate school system, rather, she suggests changes to the existing system, much like the aforementioned Canadian studies.

Tsui and Sammons (1988) used a group intervention method to help Vietnamese refugee adolescents to adjust to American culture. The group meetings involved helped to transmit American values and included assertiveness training, social skills practice and sex education. But some research goes beyond the integration problems of refugees. Here education is seen by some researchers as a tool for mutual integration. Zima's (1988) study of Ethiopian refugee boys in Israel focused not only on their integration in the education system, but the integration of mainstream Israelis as well. In this way, this study emphasized that the integration process is a two-way process, involving both the refugees and the host society.

The needs of refugee adults in the education system are significantly different from those of their children. Strom et al. (1992) have studied parents and their difficulties communicating with their children, the preservation of their culture and the pressure to conform to Canadian values and beliefs. They suggest that regardless of language acquisition requirements, all refugees should be provided with integrative education to help them deal with their trauma and to adapt to their new home.

Khasiani (1990), Bankston (1995) and Tran (1988) examined the effect of education on the integration of female refugees from Vietnam. All asserted that education provided these women with the freedom to pursue occupations that are traditionally unavailable to them. Tran (1988) also found an effect on the gender differences in the acquisition of language. More Vietnamese men than women participated in language training and this resulted in a slower integration and lower social participation of some Vietnamese women.

The literature on language acquisition focuses mainly on ESL training. Although touted as a 'new and improved' form of language training, Taplin (1987) discusses how ESL has been an integral part of settlement on the Canadian prairies for the past century. Derwing and Munro (1987) and Pham (1987) suggest that ESL training is more than language training, it is part of the integration process. Specifically, ESL training is valuable in providing citizenship education and an introduction to Canadian society for newcomers.

Kosaka's (1995) comparison of resettlement in Germany and Japan finds language to be the most important influence on integration. The effectiveness of language training depends on three factors: (1) personal factors such as individual willingness to learn a new language and experience with more than one language; (2) amount of assistance given by service organizations in providing easily accessible language training and; (3) the nature and quality of interactions between refugees and members of the host society. In Germany, better language assistance is available, but the Japanese culture is more accepting of Vietnamese culture. Kosaka suggests that a combination of both strategies would provide the optimum advantage for refugees in obtaining language and social integration.

D. Social and Community Integration

The social adaptation of refugees and their satisfaction with resettlement are influenced by a multitude of factors such as age on arrival, employment/financial status and opportunities, housing conditions, English language ability, receptivity of the host community, family support, and social support from the ethnic group (Tran and Nguyen,

1994; Bertheleu, 1995; Toronto Housing Department Policy and Research Section, 1992; Helwa and Birch, 1993; Yee, 1992). Janet E. Benson (1990) reports that Vietnamese and Laotian refugee households, consisting of extended families and nonnuclear families, have had a positive effect on refugee integration and resettlement. Interestingly, Benson further notes that refugee households were shaped by cultural values and by the social, economic and political conditions of the receiving community. Research evidence indicates that the success of refugee integration in the new environment is based on interaction of a multitude of variables in the community context (for more information on the significance of the context of refugee resettlement, see Breslow, Haines and Philipsen, 1997).

Refugee resettlement is a challenging process. However, its success in Canada, as well as in other countries, is contingent on the existence of facilitative institutional arrangements and government support (Mahmoudi, 1992). Both the refugees and the receiving country need to be active in this process.

In a major study of Vietnamese refugees in Western Canada, Montgomery (1991) shows that “education (academic and/or vocational) and length of residence are positively related to adjustment; whereas size of municipality of current residence is inversely related to adjustment, as are age (older refugees have more problems), extent of trauma in leaving Vietnam and single versus married status.” Policy recommendations resulting from this study place “emphasis on education, patience with new immigrants, directing refugees to nonmetropolitan areas and focusing more on older refugees.”

Gender seems to have a significant effect on refugees’ social adjustment in the new environment. For example, McSpadden and Moussa (1993) report that Ethiopian/Eritrean male refugees in Canada and the United States experienced a decline both in their traditional status and in opportunities after resettlement. These male refugees found it difficult to come to terms with the changes. In contrast, women refugees from this same group perceived more opportunities and possibilities for themselves in the new environment, as compared with the traditional country-of-origin environment

(McSpadden and Moussa, 1993). However, the reality of the labour market may not always correspond to perceptions. For example, in the work setting, working class refugee women from Vietnam living in a Maritime province often experienced segregation and exploitation (Phan, 1995). Phan's work suggests that gender, class, and race negatively influence the adaptation of working class refugee women.

Research evidence indicates that family coherence and support is critically important for successful integration in the new environment (Tran, Wright and Mindel, 1987; Haines, Rutherford and Tjomas, 1981). Contrariwise, adjustment problems and conflict within the family may occur when family norms in the host community are at odds with family norms in the home country and when economic factors in the host community undermine traditional gender relations (i.e., division of labour within the family) (Woon, 1986). Somewhat related to Woon's conclusion and probably applicable to the Canadian context, is the finding from a study of Indochinese refugees in San Diego County, California, which shows that the more the refugees understand US ways, the fewer adjustment problems they experience (Jones and Strand, 1986).

In a comparative study of Southeast Asian refugees in Canada, Australia and the US, it has been found that resettlement policy is more successful when it is ethnically and culturally sensitive, when tensions with the host community are contained, and when barriers to full participation in the host country are removed (Chabot, 1990). These principles, along with others, are also illustrated by the utilization of a community development approach to meeting the needs of Indochinese refugees who settled in the Kitchener-Waterloo area in Ontario (Elgie and Montgomery, 1985).

In line with much of the current Canadian research, a study originating from the US shows that the integration of Polish and Czech refugees in Boise, Idaho, is assisted by "English language skill, full-time employment, advanced education, occupational skills, youthfulness, and ethnic enclave"; and impeded by "older age, female sex, unemployment, cultural differences, and unrealistic expectations" (Baker, 1988). Under

favourable conditions, refugees are likely to experience upward social mobility (Stahlman, 1995).

Research evidence on the role of religious affiliation in social and community integration is rather limited. A Canadian study of 43 Laotian Hmong refugee women in Ontario, who converted to Christianity, shows that the Hmong Christian Church (Mennonite) was a significant resource in empowering them and in helping them to cope “more effectively with the constraints of gender and minority status” (Winland, 1992; 1994). It is probably safe to extend the results of this study by arguing that organizing for change, in the context of nonreligious voluntary associations, is also an empowering process.

E. Service Providers and Service Utilization

A preoccupation of much refugee research is the use of government and community services by refugees. The question often asked is whether government or local community organizations provide the best services for refugees. Another concern involves the lack of training of social workers who, it is believed, do not understand the special needs of some refugee groups.

The federal government and various community organizations are especially concerned with providing services that are beneficial to refugees. This has spawned a number of research projects evaluating existing services. In Edmonton, Seffeiddine (1997) analyzed the efficacy of refugee serving agencies. Seffeiddine's work is a longitudinal study looking at the ability of community organizations to facilitate the long term integration of refugees. She evaluated service agencies by asking refugees about their experiences with existing services and their suggestions for improvement.

Gingrich (1995) in Regina and Shearer (1989) in Vancouver have used similar types of examination in their respective cities and attempted to understand the complex process of resettlement by contrasting successful and unsuccessful cases of integration. Neuwirth and Eyton (1989) have identified several factors influencing the successful integration of immigrants and refugees in a Canada-wide context. As well, MacLeod and Shin (1993)

have produced a needs assessment of immigrant services in Canada in context to the needs of female refugees.

Ho (1996, 1997) finds that refugees are largely under-served by settlement agencies in Edmonton. This is due to two factors. First, many refugees are not aware of all the services available to them. This problem could be resolved by increased advertising and making social service workers aware of existing programs. Second, of the refugees that are aware of these services, many believe that such services are available only to immigrants because of the titles of organizations (for example, the Millwoods Centre for Immigrants), or that they are available only to refugees from certain countries. Ho also finds that immigrants experience similar problems in identifying with service agencies. They too misunderstand organizational titles as referring to services for particular groups of immigrants and refugees. She suggests these problems may be alleviated with additional training of social workers and possibly changing the names of certain programs to reflect their inclusiveness of all immigrants and refugees. In addition, the recruitment of social service workers from refugee communities could help the organization and operation of existing services.

Like Ho, Matsuoka and Sorenson (1991) and Gold (1989) agree that refugees should be included in the operation of service organizations for refugees. This is because the service needs of refugees are not the same as other groups. It is felt that intimate knowledge of the refugee experience can better facilitate their integration into society and this can be accomplished by hiring refugees as social workers and service providers. Matsuoka and Sorenson's research on Ethiopian refugees and Gold's interviews with Vietnamese and Soviet Jewish refugees reveal that the internal political and ethnic divisions of certain refugee groups must also be considered when providing community services. This is because there are different needs within a seemingly homogenous refugee community and in the utilization of services. According to Matsuoka and Sorenson, the most successful model for delivering services to diverse communities is the bridging approach, developed by Immigrant Access Service in Winnipeg. In this approach, agencies hire workers from different ethno-cultural and political backgrounds to serve clients from similar

backgrounds. This helps to provide more relevant services in a non-discriminatory manner.

Despite the emphasis in Canada on the control and active participation of refugees in the provision of services, there is some research to suggest that the hiring of refugees as community workers is not necessarily beneficial for service organizations. Hardy (1994) examines the under-organization of refugee services in both the government and community sectors. She indicates that organizations run by refugees are not necessarily the best organized or the best equipped to provide services. Although they may have more intimate understanding of other refugees, these workers are not in a position to direct other refugees to services that they require. Similarly, Lengyel (1989) finds in his study of a refugee-run resettlement camp in Wisconsin that refugee involvement can end in failure. The major flaws with this approach include: (1) treatment of the activities of certain individuals as though they represented the beliefs and ideas of all others in the camp; (2) that the real motive of the government is to reduce their costs in maintaining this resettlement camp, not to increase involvement of refugees; and (3) the relationship between refugees and administration were characterized by elitism.

Related to the debate of training of refugees as service providers is the training of social workers to handle the special needs of refugees. Cheung and Canda (1994) and Burgess and Reynolds (1995) describe a unique approach for preparing social workers to work with refugees. Instead of placing the emphasis on the refugee to integrate, social workers work with refugee families and the larger community so that integration occurs with both the refugee and receiving society. It is believed that this dual emphasis will better facilitate the integration of refugees.

As suggested above, the successful resettlement of refugees cannot be accomplished by social workers and refugees alone. Ryan and Epstein (1987) point out that although extensive training of social workers on the unique situation of refugees is important in providing services better suited for refugees' needs, this is not enough. Understanding from the larger community and other organizations is needed in order to aid the

integration process since it is a community-wide endeavor. McInnes (1986) agrees. Additional refugee-specific training for social workers can work if different institutional areas cooperate, including all government organizations, the education system, healthcare delivery services and commercial businesses.

There are other research areas in the service provision for refugees that are not as contentious. These include studies which focus on the needs of specific groups. In the United States, Jenkins' (1983) study on service utilization pays special attention to the needs of refugee children. The needs of children are often very different from those of adult refugees and existing services do not adequately address the situation of these children. Although Le Doux and Stephens (1992) do not focus specifically on the special needs of children, they also recognize the need for more diverse services targeted to specific immigrant and refugee groups.

Access to healthcare services by Vietnamese refugees in Victoria is the subject of Stephenson's (1995) study. The acquisition of healthcare by refugees in Victoria is characterized by a lack of understanding on the part of service providers of traditional remedies, problematic interpretations of patient symptoms and other language barriers. This problem may be even greater for refugees living in smaller urban centres. Healthcare services in rural and remote areas are often small-scale and the communities often lack a sufficiently large ethnic population to assist in the integration of new refugees. Stephenson suggests that healthcare providers in large and small centres should concentrate on the diverse needs of their clients and receive special training and interpretation services to eliminate some of these accessibility problems.

F. Research and Policy Linkages

This section reviews research and policy linkages raised in the literature under consideration. Some of the research/policy linkages are explicitly addressed, particularly in studies focusing specifically on one or more aspects of refugee policy, while others are implicit and hence they need to be culled from those studies that do not attend directly to policy relevance.

Research and policy linkages can be conceptualized in different ways. For example, in discussing Canada's refugee protection policy, Crepeau and Barutciski (1994) propose three foundational aspects to this policy, namely: (a) the right to work; (b) the right to social assistance; and (c) the right to health protection. Other accounts of research and policy formation in immigrant and refugee studies propose different conceptual schemes ranging from pre-migration orientation and language training (Richmond, 1998), to control of entry, to resettlement policies and programs. The present account of research and policy linkages organizes the discussion in two broad areas. The first area concerns policies that manage refugee access/entry to the country, including Canada's humanitarian commitments, while the second area draws attention to refugee resettlement policies.

Policy research that is exclusively centred on refugee management focuses on whether existing policies adequately deal with the international movement of refugees. Recent Citizenship and Immigration Canada documents (including the report *Not Just Numbers*, 1997; and *Building on a Strong Foundation for the 21st Century*, 1998) recognize that Canada's current refugee and immigrant policy requires revision in order to address the current situation of refugees and immigrants. A new and separate **Refugee Protection Act** has been proposed in conjunction with the new **Immigration Act**. The Refugee Protection Act would address the unique circumstances of refugees, in comparison to immigrants, by making a more concerted effort to facilitate the reunion of families, by ensuring the immediate entry into Canada of urgent protection cases, and by relaxing the requirement that refugees be able to settle within a year (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1998: 39). It is too early to tell if any or all of these proposed directions will eventually become an integral part of the new legislation. What is certain is that the current policy does not effectively address the context of refugees in Canada today.

A number of studies have described the current policy as inherently racist (Hyder, 1991; Howard, 1980). Howard (1980) suggests that although existing policy is not racially motivated, there is a bias against the entry of refugees from communist and socialist

regimes. Basok (1996) contends that the increase in xenophobia in Canada, coupled with fiscal constraints, has not only reduced refugee levels but also the quantity and quality of services available to refugees once they arrive. Mangat's (1995) and Dumas' (1995) theses examine the Refugee Backlog Clearance Program and its failure to fulfill its mandate. Fitzpatrick (1996) also criticizes the current legislation and suggests that its focus is more on specific groups of refugees and not on the situations of individuals. Citing women as an example, Fitzpatrick shows how it is more difficult for women to enter the country using pleas of gender-based persecution than it is for refugee claimants from the former Yugoslavia who enter because of the political disruption therein. Fitzpatrick argues that new refugee legislation should have better provisions for considering the situation of individuals rather than groups.

This argument is supported by recent work sponsored by Status of Women Canada (1998) which applauds the idea of making refugee policy more responsive to individual circumstances, especially in regard to women. Hinkson (1996) agrees and shows how women fearing gender-related persecution have largely failed to gain entry to Canada using the UN Convention's "membership in a particular social group" provision. She states that it is a weak attempt to recognize gender-specific persecution without providing substantial protection for women. It should be noted that while women and children make up over 70% of the world's refugees, they constitute only 44% of all refugees that enter Canada each year (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1998).

Other research on the entry of refugees is international in nature, as it compares the policies of Canada to those of other countries (Adelman et al., 1994; Abell, 1997; Hawkins, 1994). Adelman and Cox (1994: 281), Cox and Glen (1994) and Harris and Weinfeld (1994) suggest that refugee-receiving countries such as Australia and Canada need to work more closely with international aid agencies and refugee-sending countries to develop a "better control system to limit who can arrive at the border and claim refugee status." Furthermore, it appears that the refugee policies of Canada and Australia are somewhat ineffective. On one hand, each country is equally concerned about its humanitarian commitments, while on the other hand, each must deal with paranoia

associated with the spontaneous arrival of masses of refugee claimants. The authors suggest that each country should invest more money in refugee-sending countries to resolve conflicts before they become intolerable for their respective citizens. The balance of research in this comparative area looks at mandates set by the United Nations to see if Canada's refugee policy is maintaining standards (Nash and Humphrey, 1988; Purves, 1994). For the most part, this research suggests that although Canada does a good job in comparison to other countries, it could nevertheless do better.

Turning now to the issue of refugee resettlement, it is often the case that research and policy linkages in this area tend to be implicit and on occasion tenuous. Indeed, relatively few refugee resettlement studies had policy implications as a central research focus. Despite this limitation, a few assessments can be made.

The bulk of the literature summarized in the preceding five sections focuses on the adaptation of refugees and on factors that facilitate or impede their integration. The research/policy linkages in numerous studies are readily apparent. In the service areas such as education, healthcare, counseling and legal aid (see, for example, the Ontario Legal Aid Review, 1997), research findings emphasize the need to directly address problems faced by refugees, develop culturally sensitive and supportive institutions, deploy service providers who are also culturally sensitive, and refer clients to other service providers where appropriate.

To illustrate, Churchill and Kaprielian (1989) examined the educational policies of the Ontario School Board in terms of their efficacy for refugee and other minority students. They considered a wide range of areas (e.g., multicultural policies, heritage language acts, anti-racist policies, ESL and human rights education) and concluded that while there is recognition that refugee students require specific services, especially language training, the schools need to become more culturally sensitive and to integrate ESL students into the mainstream classrooms. Strom et al. (1992) looked at education from the point of view of parents from Vietnam and various Central and South American countries. The parents had a wide variety of concerns about the education of their children including:

difficulty in communicating with their English-only speaking children, preservation of cultural heritage and pressure to accept Canadian norms and values. The authors suggest that educational policies should reflect these concerns and accommodate the acquisition of heritage languages.

In the health area, a dissertation by Renee Porter (1996) examined the similarities and differences in the experiences of hospitalized Anglo-Canadian and immigrant and refugee patients. Her results revealed that immigrants and refugees had widely different health beliefs, values, practices and illness management than Anglo-Canadian patients and healthcare providers in general. She suggests that healthcare policies should reflect these differences and that nurses and other healthcare professionals should be taught culturally-sensitive practices. In the mental health field, an edited collection by Beiser (1991) outlines initiatives by researchers, service providers and policy makers designed to develop more culturally sensitive practices. Available evidence calls for increased funding for the healthcare of refugees, especially those with emotional problems caused by war and flight.

Refugee housing is one of the less researched areas, but mention should be made of a few investigations on the experiences of refugees in the housing market conducted by the Toronto Housing Department (1992). They found no coordination in programs for refugees, especially when it came to finding suitable accommodation. They also found evidence of discrimination in relation to rental housing in Toronto. The authors make numerous recommendations for overcoming these barriers as well as suggestions aimed at increasing affordable housing for refugees.

G. Conclusion

The preceding discussion shows that the adaptive experience of refugees in the new environment is influenced, positively or negatively, by a large number of factors. Generally speaking, young and better educated refugee men, with English language proficiency and well developed occupational skills, tend to integrate more readily into the host community. The recognition of the refugees' foreign credentials is often cited as an

important facilitator of integration. Where foreign credentials are not recognized, or where refugees are chronically underemployed or unemployed, refugee integration into the host community is correspondingly impeded.

At a more general level, the presence of facilitative institutions and government support tend to have a salutary effect on the integration of refugees. Studies in Canada and elsewhere show that the integration of refugees (and, more generally, immigrants) is facilitated by the availability of culturally sensitive (i.e., multicultural) services, and by sufficient provision of English language instruction. Finally, many studies acknowledge the positive contribution of ethnic enclaves to refugee integration in the new environment.