

*Refugee Youth in Western Canadian Cities:  
Perceptions of, Identification with, and Affinity to Canada*

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*I would like to express my gratitude to the managers and staff members of community-based organizations who kindly offered to promote the survey among refugee youth in various cities as part of the challenging task of recruiting respondents.*

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### ***1. Purpose, Objectives and Research Questions of the Study***

*The central purpose of this research project is to shed light on the perceptions of, identification with, and affinity to Canada among refugee youth based on an online survey involving a non-randomized sample of self-selected respondents from several cities in four Canadian provinces.*

*The central objectives are to ascertain the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the following matters: their social engagement and social relationships; living in Canada; the nature and effects of public opinion regarding refugees; how they and their families are treated by Canadians; whether Canada and Canadians are welcoming, accepting, and inclusive; and their bonding with Canada and Canadians. In keeping with that purpose and those objectives, this study addresses the following set of research questions:*

- 1. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding their social engagement and social relationships?*
- 2. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding being in Canada, and what were the major institutional and non-institutional entities that influenced those perceptions?*
- 3. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the nature of Canadian public opinion about refugees and immigrants at the national, provincial, local, and sub-local levels, and what were their perceptions regarding its effects on them, their families and their friends?*
- 4. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the way they, their families and their friends were treated by Canadians?*
- 5. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the extent to which they, their families and their friends were bonding with Canada and Canadians?*

*This research report is based on a survey of refugee youth in seven Canadian cities (i.e., Vancouver City region, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Brandon) in the four western Canadian provinces (i.e., Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia). More specifically, it is based on an online survey of 52 refugee youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who had lived in Canada for one to five years from 2014 to 2018.*

## **2. Overview of Survey Findings**

### **Research Question 1:**

#### ***What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding their social engagement and social relationships?***

*The data related to Research Question 1 provided insights on the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the following three aspects of their lives since arriving in Canada:*

- *Involvement in sports activities, recreational activities, and hobbies;*
- *Involvement in social activities (i.e., parties or special events); and*
- *Number and types of friendships and relationships.*

#### ***Involvement in Sports, Recreation, and Hobbies Since Arriving in Canada***

*The survey revealed that the majority of respondents were socially engaged not only in terms of their involvement in sports, recreation, and hobbies but also in terms of their friendships. In the case of sports, recreation, and hobbies the results revealed that a substantial number of them were involved after their arrival in Canada. This included males and females. The major difference between them was that males were more likely to be involved in sports and recreation and females more involved in hobbies.*

#### ***Involvement in Private Social Events & Special Public Community Events***

*The survey results also revealed that most of them were involved in two major types of social activities, namely, private social events (i.e., parties) and special public community events (e.g., festivals). They also indicated that whereas approximately three-quarters had participated in special public community events, only approximately one-half had participated in private social parties. Moreover, in response to the questions of the heritage profile (i.e., Canadian or non-Canadian) of those with whom they attended either private social parties or special public community events, the respondents indicated that generally it primarily one or the other, or primarily a relatively equal mix of the two.*

#### ***Number and Types of Friendships and Relationships***

*The survey revealed some notable differences regarding the number and types of friends based on respondents, particularly based on the gender and age of respondents, which are discussed in turn below.*

#### ***Number of Friends for All Respondents***

*The responses regarding the number of friends reveal that half of the respondents indicated that they had a lot of friends or many friends, and the other half indicated that they did not have many friends. Furthermore, a larger percentage of respondents indicated that their friends were mostly of non-Canadian heritage rather than Canadian heritage or an equal number of Canadian heritage and non-Canadian heritage.*

#### ***Number of Friends by Gender of Respondents***

*The survey results revealed a difference between male and female respondents regarding the number of friends they had. Whereas 56.7% of female respondents indicated they did not have very many friends, only 37.5% of male respondents indicated they did not have very many friends. Similarly, whereas 31.25% of males indicated they had a lot of friends, only 13.3% of females indicated they had a lot of friends.*

#### ***Number of Friends by Age of Respondents***

*The survey results revealed a difference between the younger cohort of respondents (i.e., 16 to 18 years old) and the older cohort of respondents (i.e., 19 to 24 years old). Whereas 63.2% of the younger cohort indicated they had either many friends or a lot of friends, only 42.3% of the older cohort of respondents indicated they had either many friends or a lot of friends.*

#### ***Types of Friends by Gender of Respondents***

*The survey responses reveal some significant differences between males and females regarding types of friends. Whereas 44.5% of males indicated their friends were mostly of Canadian heritage compared to 9.1% by females; 48% of females indicated their friends were mostly of non-Canadian heritage compared to 38.9% for males; and 42.4% of females indicated they had a relatively equal number of friends of Canadian and non-Canadian heritage compared to 16.7% for males.*

#### ***Types of Friends by Age of Respondents***

*The survey responses also reveal some significant differences between younger (i.e., 16 to 18 years old) and older respondents (i.e., 19-24 years old) regarding types of friends. The differences between them are as follows:*

- 26.1% of younger respondents indicated their friends were mostly of Canadian heritage compared to 18.5% for older respondents;*
- 47.8% of younger respondents indicated they had a relatively equal number of friends of Canadian heritage and non-Canadian heritage compared to 22.2% of the older respondents; and*
- 59.3% of older respondents indicated their friends were of non-Canadian Heritage compared to 26.1% of the younger respondents.*

*Whereas the largest percentage of younger respondents (48.7%) indicated their friends consisted of a relatively equal number of those of Canadian heritage and those of non-Canadian heritage, the largest percentage of the older respondents (59.3%) indicated their friends were mostly of non-Canadian heritage. Furthermore, 47.8% of younger respondents indicated they had a relatively equal number of friends of Canadian heritage and non-Canadian heritage compared to 22.2% of the older respondents. Moreover, 59.3% of older respondents indicated their friends were of non-Canadian Heritage compared to 26.1% of the younger respondents.*

#### ***Types of Relationships***

*In response to the question of whether they were or had been in a special relationship 80.4% of respondents indicated that they had not been in such a relationship and 19.6% indicated that they were or had been in such a relationship. Moreover, most respondents indicated it was simply a special or very special friendship; and only very few were either dating or married.*

## **Research Question 2:**

***What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding living in Canada, and what were the major factors that influenced those perceptions?***

### ***Perceptions of Living in Canada***

*Most respondents said that they liked living in Canada because it was a stable, peaceful, and multicultural democracy, with an expedited citizenship acquisition regime, and with good social programs and services. Many of them said that what they did not like about living in Canada included the distance from family members and friends living in other countries, loneliness, feeling they are strangers, and experiencing some racism and discrimination, the challenges of economic and social integration, and the high cost of living. Respondents indicated that the factors that would make them feel better about living in Canada included greater efforts to help them deal with those challenges by adopting and implementing more progressive immigration policies that increased and expedited family reunification in Canada; and better services and supports to meet their settlement, economic integration, and social integration needs.*

### ***Perceptions of Influences on Perspectives Regarding Canada***

*Respondents rank-ordered two sets of factors that influenced their own perceptions as well as those of their respective families and friends regarding being in Canada. Whereas one set consisted of institutional and non-institutional factors, the other consisted of the experiences of various groups or clusters of individuals.*

### ***Perceptions of Influences on Perspectives Regarding Being in Canada***

*There was a very high degree of consensus among respondents in their rank ordering of various institutional and non-institutional entities that influenced their own perceptions and those of other members of their families regarding being in Canada. The highest-ranked influences on them personally were their family, school, friends, and community, and the lowest-ranked were internet, tv/radio, and workplace. The ranking of influences on family members was essentially the same except in the case of the latter workplace was ranked higher than community, tv/radio, and the internet. In the case of experiences of groups of people, respondents indicated that the most influential were their own experiences, and those of their families and friends, and the least influential were the experiences of acquaintances and people they did not know.*

### **Research Question 3:**

***What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the nature and effects of Canadian public opinion at the national, provincial and local levels on them, their families and their friends?***

#### ***Perceptions of Public Opinion***

*The vast majority of respondents perceived public opinion toward refugees and immigrants very positively. More than 90% indicated that such public opinion in Canada was either good or very good. Moreover, the vast majority believed that such public opinion was better in Canada than either in the United States of America or in the world as a whole. Furthermore, approximately 90% or more of respondents indicated that public attitudes towards refugees and immigrants were generally good or very good in their respective, provinces, cities, neighbourhoods, schools, colleges/universities.*

#### ***Perceptions of the Effects of Public Opinion***

*The vast majority of respondents also indicated that public opinion in Canada had positive, rather than negative, effects on them, their families and their friends with respect to the following matters:*

- *Their happiness;*
- *Their sense of being welcomed and belonging in Canada;*
- *Their desire to become involved in community activities;*
- *Their identities as members of the national, provincial, and local mainstream communities in Canada; and*
- *Their identities as members of refugee/immigrant communities in Canada.*

### **Research Question 4:**

***What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the way they, their families and their friends were treated, welcomed accepted and included by Canadians?***

#### ***Perceptions of Treatment by Canadians***

*The vast majority of respondents (i.e. approximately 84% to 86%) reported that generally they, their family members and friends who were members of their ethnocultural community were treated well or very well by Canadians. Only a few indicated that sometimes they had all been treated well and sometimes they had been treated badly. Crosstabulations of two variables (i.e., gender and age) for the question regarding how the respondents perceived that they had been treated by Canadians revealed that the vast majority indicated that generally they had been treated either well or very well. More specifically, based on gender, a slightly higher number of females than males indicated that generally they had been treated badly or very badly by Canadians*

*On a related question of whether they or their families had been treated badly or very badly ever or occasionally, a substantial majority ranging from 68% to 78% indicated that neither they nor their family members or friends had ever been treated badly by Canadians, and a minority ranging from 21.6% to 28.8% indicated that they, their families and their friends had been treated badly or very badly occasionally by Canadians. The survey results also revealed some differences, albeit relatively minor ones, in the perception of treatment by Canadians based on gender and age group of refugee youth.*



*In the case of gender, the difference between males and females was 10.2% both in the case of their perception that they had never being treated badly or very badly, and their perception that occasionally they had been treated badly or very badly. Whereas 77.8% of males versus 67.6% of females indicated they had never been treated badly or very badly by Canadians, 22.2% of males versus 32.4% of females indicated that occasionally they had been treated badly or very badly by Canadians.*

*In the case of age group, the difference between the younger age group was only 2.2%. Whereas 69.6% of the younger age group versus 71.4% of the older age group indicated that they had never been treated badly or very badly by Canadians, 30.4% of the younger age group versus 28.6% of the older age group indicated that they had been treated badly or very badly occasionally by Canadians.*

### ***Perceptions of Being Welcomed by Canadians***

*The vast majority of respondents indicated that they, their family members, and friends who were members of their ethnic or cultural communities perceived Canada as a welcoming place for refugees and immigrants. The respondents indicated that their own perceptions and their ascription of the perceptions of members of their families, friends and cultural or religious communities were essentially the same and ranged from approximately 82.7% to 88.5%.*

### ***Perceptions of Being Accepted by Canadians***

*A large majority of the respondents feel that Canadians accept them, members of their families, and their friends from various ethnocultural communities. The indication of a high level of acceptance by Canadians of each of those three clusters of people was evident in the fact that more than 90% felt that Canadians generally accepted each of those three clusters of people.*

*The sense of being accepted by Canadians was also very high by gender and age. In the case of gender, 100% of males and 94% of females indicated that they had a sense that they were accepted by Canadians. Similarly, in the case of age 100% of the younger age group (i.e., 16 to 18 years old) indicated that they sensed that they were accepted by Canadians compared to 92.6% of the older age group (i.e., 19 to 24 years old)*

### ***Perceptions of Being Included by Canadians***

*The majority of respondents felt that they, as well as their friends and their families, were included in activities and events by Canadians. However, their respective sense of being included by Canadians was not as high as their sense that they were accepted by Canadians. Although a high percentage of respondents indicated they felt included, there was a gender difference; males (94.4%) were more inclined than females (76.5%) to feel included. Whereas there was a gender difference, the age group difference was almost negligible as there was only a 0.5% difference between the younger age group (82.6%) and older age group (82.1%) in terms of their sense of being included by Canadians.*

### **Research Question 5:**

***What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the extent to which they, their families and their friends were bonding with Canada and Canadians?***

*The survey findings suggest respondents felt that they, their family members and their friends were all bonding with Canada and Canadians. The responses of respondents on their national identities and affinities suggest that a vast majority of them had what might be termed dual national or ethnocultural identities and affinities, but for a substantial majority of them their strongest attachment was to the Canadian nation.*

#### ***Perceptions of Canadian Citizenship***

*The vast majority of respondents indicated that although a very large majority of them and their families, along with a smaller majority of their friends from their ethnic community, were not Canadian citizens, they all valued such citizenship and all of them aspired to acquire it. Likewise, the vast majority indicated that they, their families and their friends all regarded ‘becoming Canadian’ as a positive ideal to which they should aspire. Moreover, the vast majority also indicated that they, their families and their friends were already “becoming” Canadians.*

#### ***Perceptions of Identities and Affinities to Various Nations***

*The respondents were divided in terms of whether they felt they were members of a particular country or nation. Whereas 59.6% indicated they were members of a particular nation, 40.4% indicated they were not. Furthermore, of the 21 respondents who answered an open-ended question regarding which nations they were members, only 5 (23.8%) listed the Canadian nation, and 16 (76.2%) listed an array of other nations. However, when asked an explicit ‘forced-choice’ question regarding whether their strongest attachment was to the Canadian nation or to some other nation, 74.5% (38) indicated the Canadian nation, and only 25.5% (13) indicated some other nation.*

#### ***Perceptions of Strength of Identification with, and Affinity to, Canada***

*Furthermore, the strength of the refugee youth’s identification with, and affinity to, Canada was essentially the same as the strength of the identification with, and affinity to, Canada that they ascribed to their families. Whereas a substantial majority (82.4%) of respondents indicated that their identification with, and affinity to, Canada was very strong (37.3%) or strong (45.1%), an even greater majority (84.6%) indicated that their respective families had strong (52%) or very strong (34.6%) sentiments of identification with, and affinity to, Canada.*

### **3. Conclusions**

*Three major conclusions are proffered in this study.*

*First, the study reveals that refugee youth had positive perceptions of Canada and Canadians. They perceived Canada as a peaceful and prosperous country that was governed by various liberal democratic principles including the rule of law and the recognition and protection of minority rights. They perceived Canadians as welcoming, accepting and, albeit to a lesser extent, also inclusive vis-à-vis refugees and other newcomers.*

*Second, the study reveals vast majority of refugee youth felt a strong sense identification with, and affinity to, Canada and the Canadian nation. Indeed, the vast majority indicated not only that they felt they were 'becoming Canadian', but also that they valued and had a strong desire to acquire Canadian citizenship.*

*Third, the study reveals a very high degree of commonality among respondents on most issues addressed in the survey, including their perceptions of Canada and Canadians, and their identification with, and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation. The high degree of commonality was clearly evident on the following matters:*

- *They felt happy about being in Canada;*
- *They felt that public opinion toward refugees and immigrants relatively positive and problematic; indeed, they were more likely to be positively affected than negatively affected by public opinion;*
- *They felt that Canadians generally treated them well or very well, welcomed them, accepted them, and, albeit to a lesser extent, included them;*
- *They valued Canadian citizenship and felt that becoming Canadian citizens was a very important goal for them;*
- *They felt they were integrating and 'becoming Canadian'; and*
- *They identified with and felt an affinity both to Canada and to the countries in which their parents were born, but their identification with, and affinity to, Canada was stronger than to the countries in which their parents were born.*

## **4. Recommendations**

*The report concludes by profiling the following recommendations made by respondents for improving several facets of the following three spheres of the refugee system:*

- *Resettlement and Settlement*
- *Economic Integration*
- *Social Integration*

*Their recommendations on improvement in each of these three spheres are listed below.*

- ***Recommended Improves for Resettlement and Settlement***

*In the case of resettlement and settlement they suggested the following improvements in services and supports:*

- *Facilitating resettlement or immigration of family members;*
- *Financial support to pay for the cost of airfare;*
- *Language training;*
- *Access to post-secondary education programs;*
- *Finding employment;*
- *Establishing friendships in mainstream and ethnocultural communities; and*
- *Financial subsidies or supports to cover living costs (e.g., high housing costs).*

- ***Recommended Improvements for Economic Integration***

*In the case of economic integration improvements were suggested for the following services and supports:*

- *Greater access to language training programs for them and their family members;*
- *Starting educational and training programs;*
- *Completing educational and training programs;*
- *More scholarships and student loans; and*
- *Securing employment, especially well-paid employment.*

- ***Recommended Improvements for Social Integration***

*In the case of social integration they suggested the following improvements*

- *Increasing awareness among Canadians of the challenges refugees face prior to and after their arrival in Canada;*
- *Increasing number and types of refugee and immigrant support groups;*
- *Increasing opportunities to meet and befriend other newcomers;*
- *Increasing opportunities to meet and befriend persons within their ethnocultural groups;*
- *Increasing opportunities to meet and befriend persons beyond their ethnocultural groups;*
- *Increasing opportunities to be engage in ethnocultural community groups and activities;*
- *Increasing opportunities to engage in mainstream community groups and activities;*
- *Increasing the welcoming spirit of communities (e.g., less racism & discrimination);*
- *Increasing community safety; and*
- *Improving community plans to create more public spaces where newcomers can meet and socialize with others.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

In recent years Canada has received a relatively large influx of refugees. The influx has been the product of various social, political, and military conflicts in a substantial number of countries on various continents around the world. This is particularly true of the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. The increases in the number and types of refugees have fostered increased questions among members of the public and academics regarding various facets of refugees individually and collectively. Such questions tend to revolve around the factors or forces that produce refugees and the factors and forces that either facilitate or inhibit their reception, settlement, and integration in various countries. In the case of their settlement and integration, substantial attention is often devoted to public discourses and academic analyses to their inclusion, exclusion, marginalization, and radicalization. Such discourses and analyses tend to focus either on refugees collectively, or various sub-groups who are differentiated based a range of demographic variables, such as country of origin; racial, ethnocultural, or religious background; economic status; gender; age; and places of settlement, and integration, and the strategies and support services for the reception, settlement and integration of refugees. Notwithstanding the growing body of research related to various aspects of the refugee migration phenomena, including the related factors and forces, more research is needed to develop a fuller and up to date understanding of these matters. Such research should focus on all categories of immigrants and refugees with a special focus on demographic variables such as age, gender, places of origin, and places of settlement.

### **1.1 Purpose, Objectives and Research Questions of Research Project**

The overarching purpose of this research project is to contribute to that larger research agenda by examining several aspects of the perceptions and experiences of refugee youth living in seven of larger cities or city regions of the four western provinces in Canada. This includes British Columbia (Vancouver City region), Alberta (Calgary and Edmonton), Saskatchewan (Regina and Saskatoon), and Manitoba (Winnipeg and Brandon). The central objectives are to ascertain the perceptions of refugee youth, and to some extent also the perceptions that they ascribe to their family members and their friends from within their ethnocultural community, regarding: their social engagement and social relationships; the nature and effects of public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants; their treatment, reception, acceptance and inclusion by Canadians; and their bonding with Canada and Canadians. Accordingly, the central research questions of this research are:

1. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding their social engagement and social relationships?
2. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding being in Canada, and what were the major institutional and non-institutional entities that influenced those perceptions?
3. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the nature and effects of Canadian public opinion at the national, provincial and local levels on them, their families and their friends?
4. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the way they, their families and their friends were treated, welcomed, accepted and included by Canadians?

5. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the extent to which they, their families and their friends from their respective ethnocultural communities were bonding with Canada and Canadians?

## **1.2 Methodology of Report**

### ***Survey Sample:***

More specifically this research project focuses on refugee youth between the ages of 16 and 24 years old who lived in the larger cities of Western Canada (i.e., Vancouver city region, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and Brandon) for approximately 1 to 5 years from approximately 2018 to 2019. The total number of respondents was 52, with a range of 2-13 respondents for each city. The number of respondents for each of those cities is listed in Table 2.

### ***Foci of Survey Questionnaire:***

The survey questionnaire consisted of twelve major sections organized as listed in Table 1. The full survey questionnaire is attached as Appendix A at the end of this report.

***Table 1: Key Foci of the Survey***

<b><i>1. Perceptions of Participation in Social Events</i></b>
<b><i>2. Perceptions of Number and Types of Friends</i></b>
<b><i>3. Perceptions of Being in Canada</i></b>
<b><i>4. Perceptions of Influences on Perspectives Regarding Being in Canada</i></b>
<b><i>5. Perceptions of Public Opinion Regarding Refugees and Immigrants</i></b>
<b><i>6. Perceptions of Effects of Public Opinion Regarding Refugees and Immigrants</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Effects on Sense of Happiness of Youth &amp; Family</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Effects on Sense of Being Welcomed and Belonging</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Effects on Desire to Become Involved in Activities of Canadian Community</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Effects on Identity as Member of Canadian and Provincial Community</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Effects on Identity as Member of Local Community</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Effects on Identity as Member of the Refugee/Immigrant Community</i></b></li> </ul>
<b><i>7. Perceptions of Treatment by Canadians</i></b>
<b><i>8. Perceptions of Being Welcomed by Canadians</i></b>
<b><i>9. Perceptions of Being Acceptance by Canadians</i></b>
<b><i>10. Perceptions of Being Included by Canadians</i></b>
<b><i>11. Perceptions of Canadian Citizenship</i></b>
<b><i>12. Perceptions of National Identities and Affinities</i></b>

### ***Administration of Survey Questionnaire:***

In exploring the aforementioned issues among refugee youth in the larger cities in the four Canadian Western provinces a survey was conducted using a self-administered online questionnaire contained in Appendix A of this report. The online survey was formatted, posted, and managed by the Social Sciences Research Laboratory (SSRL) at the University of Saskatchewan. The SSRL also aggregated the responses of the participants and conducted some crosstabulations some key variables and the responses to some key questions. All the data was anonymized to respect the commitment made to respondents to safeguard their anonymity and confidentiality.

### ***Recruitment of Survey Respondents:***

The recruitment of respondents was facilitated by settlement service agencies that either provided services to or, at least, interacted with refugee youth and their families. They did so by using recruitment posters and by making potential respondents aware that participation in the survey was voluntary. In encouraging potential respondents to participate in the survey a \$20 coupon to be used at any one of three different popular and accessible fast food outlets were provided as a token of appreciation to those who completed the survey questionnaire and indicated that they wanted a coupon mailed to them. Anonymity was assured to the participants both with respect to the survey questionnaire and the coupons. With the assistance of various agencies, fifty-two respondents participated in the survey. The demographic profile of the respondents is provided in Table 1.

### ***1.3 Organization of Report***

In addition to this introductory section, this report consists of the following two major sections.

Section 2 provides an overview of the actual survey findings related to each of the key questions in the questionnaire. Consequently, this section has several major sub-sections that correspond to the major sections and sub-section of the survey identified in Table 1.

Section 3, which is the conclusion, consists of five subsections:

- The first subsection provides a summary of the findings in relation to the five major research questions noted above.
- The second subsection provides some conclusions regarding the perceptions of, identifications with, and affinity to, Canada by refugee youth.
- The third subsection provides some alternative explanations of what accounts for the perceptions, of identification with, and affinity to Canada by refugee youth.
- The fourth subsection proffers some recommendations on strategic directions for further research on refugee youth that build on this particular research project and some of the extant literature.
- The fifth subsection proffers some policy recommendations based on the findings and the suggestions made by refugee youth.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Demographic Category	Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>	16 years old	12	23.5
	17 years old	2	3.9
	18 years old	9	17.6
	19 years old	6	11.8
	20 years old	6	11.8
	21 years old	5	9.8
	22 years old	5	9.8
	23 years old	3	5.9
	24 years old	3	5.9
		(N=51)	
<b>Length of Stay in Canada</b>	1 Year	13	27
	2 Years	18	37.5
	3 Years	11	22.9
	4 Years	2	4.2
	5 Years	4	8.3
	(N=48)		
<b>Religion</b>	Islam	30	57.7
	Christianity	19	36.5
	Buddhism	2	3.8
	Hinduism	1	2.0
	(N=52)		
<b>Continent of Origin</b>	Middle East & Central Asia	31	60.8
	Africa	16	31.4
	Southeast Asia	4	7.8
	(N=51)		
<b>Language</b>	English	45	90.0
	French	5	10.0
	Middle Eastern Languages (e.g. Arabic)	35	70.0
	African Languages (e.g. Tigrinya)	23	46.0
	Asian Languages (e.g. Bengali)	6	12.0
	*(N is large due to multiple possible responses)		
<b>Skin Colour</b>	Brown	41	80.4
	White	5	9.8
	Black	5	9.8
	(N=51)		
<b>Place of Residence</b>	Vancouver City Region	8	15.4
	Calgary	9	17.3
	Edmonton	5	9.6
	Saskatoon	13	25.0
	Regina	12	23.1
	Winnipeg	3	5.8
	Brandon	2	3.8
	(N=52)		



## **2. SURVEY FINDINGS**

### **2.1 Perceptions of Participation in Social Events**

The responses to questions regarding social engagement provide some important insights on how active and socially engaged the respondents were the following three areas:

- Involvement in sports activities, recreational activities, and hobbies
- Involvement in social activities (i.e., parties or special events)
- Number and types of friendships and relationships

The responses regarding each of these three aspects of their social engagement and friendships are presented in summary form below. The responses indicated that all survey respondents were engaged socially and all had friends in each of the areas listed above, albeit not to the same extent. Indeed, there were some notable differences in terms of gender, not only between males and females but also among males and females.

#### **2.1.1 Involvement in Sports Recreation, and Hobbies**

Between one-half and two-thirds of respondents indicated that they had participated in at least one sport, recreation activity or a hobby since arriving in Canada (Table 3).

***Table 3: Participation in a Sport, Recreation Activity or Hobby Since Arriving in Canada***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Yes (N= 52)</b>	<b>No (N=52)</b>
Sport	65.4%	34.6%
Recreation	55.8%	44.2%
Hobby	55.8%	44.2%

The survey results revealed some gender differences in terms of participation in a sport, recreational activity or hobby since arriving in Canada. Whereas the difference in the percentage of males and females was very small in the case of recreation, it was substantial in the case of sports where the percentage for males was much higher than for females, and also in hobbies where the percentage of females was much higher than males (Table 4).

***Table 4: Participation in a Sport, Recreation Activity or Hobby by Gender***

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Male (N= 18)</b>	<b>Female (N=34)</b>
Sport	88.9%	52.9%
Recreation	50.0%	42.2%
Hobby	38.9%	64.7%

### 2.1.2 Participation in Private Social Parties and Special Public Events

Approximately one-half to three-quarters of respondents indicated that they had participated in social parties or special public events (e.g., sporting events, festivals, concerts, or movies) since their arrival in Canada. More specifically, 46.2% indicated they had attended social parties, and 75% indicated that they had attended special events (Table 5).

**Table 5: Socializing Since Arriving in Canada**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Yes (N= 52)</b>	<b>No (N= 52)</b>
Private Social Parties	46.2%	53.8%
Public Community Events	75.0%	25.0%

This differential may be attributable to several factors. One factor may be the greater acceptance on their part and on the part of their family members to participate in public events at public venues, rather than private events at private venues due to a combination of social norms and personal comfort and preference. Another related factor, of course, may be the limited scope and access to social or friendship circles or networks of refugee youth that, invariably, results from a combination several factors, including, for example, either the reticence of Canadian youth to include them, their own reticence to be included, or any family- imposed restrictions prohibiting them from participating in such parties.

In response to the questions of the heritage profile (i.e., Canadian or non-Canadian) of those with whom they attended either private social parties or special public community events, the respondents indicated that generally, it was primarily one or the other, or primarily a relatively equal mix of the two (Table 6).

**Table 6: Heritage of People with Whom Respondents Attended Parties & Special Events**

<b>Private Social Parties</b>	<b>N=24</b>	<b>Special Public Events</b>	<b>N=39</b>
Mostly Canadian Heritage	25.2%	Mostly Canadian Heritage	41.0%
Mostly non-Canadian Heritage	29.0%	Mostly non-Canadian Heritage	23.1%
Equal Number of Canadian and Non-Canadian Heritage	45.8%	Equal Number of Canadian and Non-Canadian Heritage	35.9%

## 2.2 Perceptions of Number and Types of Friends

The responses regarding the number of friends revealed that half of the respondents indicated that they had a lot of friends or many friends and the other half indicated that they did not have many friends. Furthermore, a larger percentage of respondents indicated that their friends are mostly of non-Canadian heritage rather than Canadian heritage or an equal number of Canadian heritage and non-Canadian heritage (Table 7).

**Table 7: Number and Type of Friends**

<b>Number of Friends</b>	<b>N=46</b>	<b>Type of Friends</b>	<b>N=51</b>
A Lot of Friends	19.6%	Mostly Canadian Heritage	21.6%
Many Friends	30.4%	Mostly non-Canadian Heritage	45.1%
Not Very Many Friends	50.0%	Equal Number of Canadian and Non-Canadian Heritage	33.3%

### 2.2.1 Number of Friends by Age

The survey results revealed a difference between the younger cohort of respondents (i.e., 16 to 18 years old) and the older cohort of respondents (i.e., 19 to 24 years old). Whereas 63.2% of the younger cohort indicated they had many friends or a lot of friends, only 42.3% of the older cohort of respondents indicated they had many friends or a lot of friends (Table 8).

**Table 8: Number of Friends by Age Group**

<b>Friends of 16 To 18 Years Old</b>	<b>N=19</b>	<b>Friends of 19 To 24 Years Old</b>	<b>N=26</b>
A Lot of Friends	26.4%	A Lot of Friends	15.4%
Many Friends	36.8%	Many Friends	26.9%
Not Very Many Friends	36.8%	Not Very Many Friends	57.7%

### 2.2.2 Number of Friends by Gender

The survey results revealed a difference between male and female respondents regarding the number of friends they had. Whereas 56.7% of female respondents indicated they did not have very many friends, only 37.5% of male respondents indicated they did not have very many friends. Similarly, whereas 31.25% of males indicated they had a lot of friends, only 13.3% of females indicated they had a lot of friends (Table 9).

**Table 9: Number of Friends by Gender**

<b>Male Respondents</b>	<b>N=16</b>	<b>Female Respondents</b>	<b>N=30</b>
A Lot of Friends	31.3%	A Lot of Friends	13.3%
Many Friends	31.3%	Many Friends	30.0%
Not Very Many Friends	37.4%	Not Very Many Friends	56.7%

### 2.2.3 Types of Friends by Gender of Respondents

The survey responses revealed some significant differences between male and females regarding types of friends. Whereas 44.5% of males indicated their friends were mostly of Canadian heritage compared to 9.1% by females; 48% of females indicated their friends were mostly of non-Canadian heritage compared to 38.9% for males; and 42.4% of females indicated they had a relatively equal number of friends of Canadian and non-Canadian heritage compared to 16.7% for males.

*Table 10: Types of Friends by Gender of Respondents*

<b>Male Respondents</b>	<b>N=18</b>	<b>Female Respondents</b>	<b>N=33</b>
Mostly Canadian Heritage	44.4%	Mostly Canadian Heritage	9.1%
A Relatively Equal Number with Canadian & Non-Canadian Heritage	16.7%	A Relatively Equal Number with Canadian & Non-Canadian Heritage	42.4%
Mostly Non-Canadian Heritage	38.9%	Mostly Non-Canadian Heritage	48.5%

### 2.2.4 Types of Friends by Age of Respondents

The survey responses also revealed some significant differences between younger (i.e., 16 to 18 years old) and older respondents (i.e., 19-24 years old) regarding types of friends. Whereas the largest percentage (48.7%) of younger respondents indicated their friends consisted of a relatively equal number of those of Canadian heritage and those of non-Canadian heritage, the largest percentage (59.3%) of the older respondents indicated their friends were mostly of non-Canadian heritage. The other differences between them are as follows:

- 26.1% of younger respondents indicated their friends were mostly of Canadian heritage compared to 18.5% for older respondents;
- 47.8% of younger respondents indicated they had a relatively equal number of friends of Canadian heritage and non-Canadian heritage compared to 22.2% of the older respondents;
- 59.3% of older respondents indicated their friends were of non-Canadian Heritage compared to 26.1% of the younger respondents.

*Table 11: Types of Friends by Age of Respondents*

<b>Friends of 16 to 18 Years Old</b>	<b>N=23</b>	<b>Friends of 19 to 24 Years Old</b>	<b>N=27</b>
Mostly Canadian Heritage	26.1%	Mostly Canadian Heritage	18.5%
A Relatively Equal Number with Canadian & Non-Canadian Heritage	47.8%	A Relatively Equal Number with Canadian & Non-Canadian Heritage	22.2%
Mostly Non-Canadian Heritage	26.1%	Mostly Non-Canadian Heritage	59.3%

### 2.2.5 Types of Relationships

In response to the question on whether they were or had been in a special relationship, a total of 80.4% of respondents indicated that they had not been in such a relationship and 19.6% indicated that they were or had been in such a relationship. For most respondents who indicated it was simply a special or very special friendship; and only a few were either dating or married (Table 12).

*Table 12: Types of Relationships*

<b>Involvement in Special Relationship</b>	<b>N = 46</b>	<b>Type of Relationship</b>	<b>N=11</b>
Yes	19.6%	Special Friendship	36.4%
No	80.4%	Very Special Friendship	27.3%
		Dating Someone	27.3%
		Married	9.0%

## 2.3 Perceptions of Being in Canada

### 2.3.1 What They Liked About Being in Canada

Respondents indicated that there were things they liked and things they did not like about Canada. Most said that they liked Canada because it was a very good country in which to live. Specific things they liked about Canada included the following:

- It is a stable, peaceful, and multicultural democracy that provided them with the opportunity to get away from the conflicts and instability in their country of origin and the hardships of living in refugee camps;
- It is a democratic country that operates according to the principles of the “rule of law”, and equality insofar as all residents, regardless of citizenships status, had rights and freedoms;
- It is a safe country in which people generally respect each other;
- It provides access to educational opportunities;
- It has a lot of housing, even if it is not in good condition or easily accessible;
- It has public funding for various types of essential programs, services, and facilities in various sectors (e.g., education, health, etc.); and
- It offers newcomers the opportunity to become citizens in a relatively short time.

### 2.3.2 What They Did Not Like About Being in Canada

The notable dislikes regarding being in Canada were the following challenges and conditions:

- The emotional challenges of moving away from family members to a new community;
- The loneliness of living in communities where they have few, if any, family members or friends or any other social connections;
- The loss of mother tongue and culture;
- Racism and discrimination;
- Feeling like they are strangers;
- The language barriers;
- Inadequate resources to pursue post-secondary education; and
- The difficulties finding employment and housing that is adequate and affordable; and
- The high cost of living.

### **2.3.3 What Would Make Them Feel Better About Being in Canada**

Respondents identified several factors they believed would make them, members of their families, and their friends feel better about being in Canada. Not surprisingly, of course, such factors were generally related matters identified above that would either help mitigate the effects of what they did not like regarding being in Canada or would augment the effects of what they liked about being in Canada. Most of the specific factors they identified fall within four general categories:

- Resettlement and Immigration Policies
- Settlement Services and Supports
- Economic Integration Services and Supports
- Social Integration Services and Supports

#### **2.3.3.1 Resettlement and Immigration Policies**

In the case of resettlement immigration policies, respondents indicated that Canada should adopt more progressive and proactive policies. More specifically, they indicated that Canada should adopt policies that would make it possible for their family members and friends and even members of their respective ethnocultural and geographic communities either to travel with them or to come to Canada subsequently with much greater ease than what had been possible to that point in time. Moreover, they indicated that more financial support should be provided to pay for the cost of airfare.

#### **2.3.3.2 Settlement Services and Supports**

In the case of settlement, respondents indicated that they, their families and their friends needed more and easier access to settlement services and supports that facilitated their settlement. They expressed a desire for greater assistance from the government and newcomer settlement agencies in the following areas:

- Language training;
- Access to post-secondary education programs;
- Finding employment;
- Establishing friendships in mainstream and ethnocultural communities; and
- Financial subsidies or supports to cover living costs (e.g., high housing costs).

#### **2.3.3.3 Economic Integration Services and Supports**

In the case of economic integration, respondents indicated that several factors would make them feel better about being in Canada. The most notable factors included:

- Greater and easier access to language training programs for them and their family members;
- Starting educational and training programs;
- Completing educational and training programs;
- More scholarships and student loans; and
- Securing employment, especially well-paid employment.

#### **2.3.3.4 Social Integration Services and Supports**

In the case of social integration, respondents indicated they would feel better about being in Canada if they had more opportunities to meet other newcomers, to make friends within and beyond their ethnocultural groups, to be members of ethnocultural cultural and mainstream community groups, and to engage in community activities. Numerous respondents also indicated that they would feel better about being in Canada if the following things were done:

- Creating more welcoming communities (e.g., less racism & discrimination) through various means, including increasing awareness among Canadians of the challenges refugees face before and after their arrival in Canada;
- Creating safer communities;
- Better-designed communities to create more public spaces where they could meet and socialize with others;
- More culturally robust and dynamic communities;
- More immigrant support groups;
- More opportunities for involvement in community groups and activities;
- More opportunities to make friends;
- More opportunities to meet other newcomers;
- Increase equity between women and men; and
- More opportunities to improve and retain their mother tongue.

The following three quotes capture the essence of some important points regarding how refugee youth feel about their situation in Canada. More specifically, they capture the essence of what they like and do not like, and what would make them feel better about being in Canada.

#### ***Quote on what they like about being in Canada***

*“The things that I feel have affected my happiness, and identity with Canada is that I found a home to live in, study, work and feel finally belonging to somewhere. I started a new life and that is exactly what makes feel happy with my new Canadian identity.”*

#### ***Quote on what they do not like about being in Canada***

*“When the system isn't in your favor and sees you as less than or as 'other', you don't feel too connected or happy about being in a new place.... We are either too exotic, or too backward, or we are an exception, etc. [We are] not accepted as we are.... Being in Canada [is] for survival, not for 'fun' or because I really want to be here - I just have to survive, make a living - and be safe.*

#### ***Quote on what would make them feel better about being in Canada***

*“I guess not having the savior complex present in institutions, workplaces, education, news, etc. ... [Give] us the opportunity to express our culture and have spaces for our culture to thrive and be celebrate. ... [Increase] awareness of refugees and their challenges and deconstructing stereotypes.”*

## **2.4 Perceptions of Influences on Perspectives Regarding Canada**

Respondents were asked to identify the relative importance of a variety of factors that they believed influenced both their own beliefs as well as those of their families regarding whether Canada is or is not a nice and welcoming place for refugees and other newcomers. More specifically, they were asked to identify the relative importance of two broad sets of factors:

- (a) Various institutional and non-institutional entities; and
- (b) Experiences of various groups of people.

Their rankings for (a) and (b) are listed below.

### **2.4.1 Influences of Institutional and Non-Institutional Entities**

The respondents' rank ordering of various institutional and non-institutional entities was essentially the same for factors that influenced their own beliefs and those of their families. Indeed, the most notable difference was in the ranking of workplace. Whereas for the respondents it was ranked of least importance, for their families for whom it was ranked fourth. The ranking of the influence of the media in the form of TV/radio and the internet also varied. Whereas the internet was fifth for them, it was the lowest for their families (Table 13).

***Table 13: Most Important Institutional & Non-Institutional Factors Influencing Beliefs Regarding Canada As a Nice and Welcoming Place for Immigrants and Refugees***

<b>Factors that Influenced Their Beliefs</b>	<b>Factors that Influenced Their Families' Beliefs</b>
Family	Family
School	School
Friends	Friends
Community	Workplace
Internet	Community
TV/Radio	TV/Radio
Workplace	Internet

### **2.4.2 Influences of Experiences of Various Groups of People**

The respondents' rank ordering of the experiences of various groups of people (e.g., family members, friends, acquaintances, etc.) that influenced their own perceptions of Canada as a nice and welcoming country was essentially the same as the rank ordering they attributed to the experiences of various groups that influenced the perceptions of their families regarding Canada as a nice and welcoming (Table 14).

***Table 14: Most Important Experiential Factors of Various Persons on Beliefs Regarding Canada as a Nice and Welcoming Place for Immigrants and Refugees***

<b>Influential Factors on Their Beliefs</b>	<b>Influential Factors on Their Families' Beliefs</b>
Personal experiences	Personal experiences
Experiences of family members	Experiences of family members
Experiences of friends	Experiences of friends
Experiences of acquaintances	Experiences of people they do not know
Experiences of people they do not know	Experiences of acquaintances



## **2.5 Perceptions of Public Opinion on Refugees and Immigrants**

The respondents indicated that they believed public opinion or attitudes towards refugees and immigrants are better in Canada than in the world as a whole or in the United States of America. What was truly remarkable about their responses was the discrepancy between public opinion and attitudes in Canada compared to those in the United States of America (Table 15).

***Table 15: Perception of Public Opinion on Refugees and Immigrants--  
Canada in Global Context***

<b>Place</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Very Bad</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>World</b>	17.3%	53.8%	17.3%	11.6%	52
<b>The U.S.A.</b>	4.0%	38.8%	38.8%	18.4%	49
<b>Canada</b>	52.0%	46.0%	2.0%	0.0%	50

The respondents indicated that they believed public attitudes towards refugees and immigrants are generally good or very good in their respective, provinces, cities, neighbourhoods, schools, colleges and universities. Indeed, a very high percentage felt that way. For all of those places and spaces the general assessment of approximately 90% of respondents was that public attitudes were good or very good (Table 16).

***Table 16: Perceptions of Public Opinion on Refugees and Immigrants Within Canada***

<b>Place</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Very Bad</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Province</b>	34.6%	61.5%	3.9%	0.0%	52
<b>City</b>	31.4%	60.8%	7.8%	0.0%	51
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	48.1%	44.2%	7.7%	0.0%	52
<b>School</b>	42.8%	46.9%	4.2%	6.1%	49
<b>College/University</b>	22.6%	71.0%	6.4%	0.0%	31
<b>Workplace</b>	24.0%	66.9%	6.1%	3.0%	33

**Note:**

- 17 of the 48 respondents indicated that the College/University question did not apply to them because they were not attending post-secondary education. Their answers were excluded from the tabulation.
- 15 of the 48 respondents indicated that the Workplace question did not apply to them because they were not employed for various reasons, including some likelihood were attending school or college/university. Their answers were excluded from the tabulation.

## 2.6 Perceptions of Effects of Public Opinion on Refugees and Immigrants

The vast majority of respondents felt that public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants is generally positive and that it has a positive effect on their happiness. They also indicated that positive public opinion contributed to their willingness to engage with the community, building a sense of belonging in Canada, and forming identities as members of the Canadian, provincial, and local communities.

### 2.6.1 Effects on Sense of Happiness of Refugee Youth and Families

The vast majority of respondents indicated that public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants had a positive effect on their own sense of happiness and that of their families. Indeed, the percentages regarding the effects on them and on their families were essentially the same (Table 17).

*Table 17: Effects of Public Opinion on Happiness*

Group	Very Happy	Happy	Sad	Very Sad	Angry	Very Angry	N
Respondents	21.2%	69.2%	9.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	52
Families	19.2%	71.2%	7.7%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	52

Although there was some difference between males and females in their responses for very happy and sad, they were relatively small though by no means insignificant. A lower percentage of females were very happy and a higher percentage were more likely to be sad (Table 18).

*Table 18: Effects of Public Opinion on Happiness by Gender*

Gender	Very Happy	Happy	Sad	Very Sad	Angry	Very Angry	N
Male	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18
Female	14.7%	70.6%	14.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	34

Similarly, although there were some differences based on the age of respondents (i.e., the 45.1% who were 16 to 18 years old and the 54.9% who were 19-24 years old), the differences were relatively small (Table 19).

*Table 19: Effects of Public Opinion on Happiness by Age Group*

Age Group	Very Happy	Happy	Sad	Very Sad	Angry	Very Angry	N
16-18	26.1%	65.2%	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	23
19-24	14.3%	75.0%	10.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	28

### 2.6.2 Effects on Sense of Being Welcomed and Belonging

The vast majority of respondents also indicated that public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants had a positive effect on them and their families in feeling welcomed and belonging in Canada. The percentage of responses on whether it had a positive effect on their feelings and those of their families were almost the same (Table 20).

*Table 20: Effects of Public Opinion on Sense of Being Welcomed and Belonging*

Group	Positive Effect	Negative Effect	N
Respondents	88.5%	11.5%	51
Families	90.4%	9.6%	51

The responses of male and female respondents on the question of whether public opinion had either a positive or negative effect on their sense of being welcomed and belonging were quite similar. Indeed, the difference was only 5.5% (Table 21).

**Table 21: Effects of Public Opinion on Sense of Being Welcomed and Belonging by Gender of Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Male</b>	94.4%	6.6%	18
<b>Female</b>	87.9%	12.1%	33

Similarly, the responses of younger refugee respondents (16 to 18) were similar to those of the older respondents (19 to 24) regarding whether public opinion had either a positive or negative effect on their own sense of being welcomed and belonging were not substantially different. However, they were somewhat greater than it was for males and females. Whereas the difference between males and females was 5.5%, the difference between the older and the younger respondents was 10.5% (Table 22).

**Table 22: Effects of Public Opinion on Sense of Being Welcomed and Belonging by Age Group of Respondents**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>16-18</b>	95.7%	4.3%	23
<b>19-24</b>	85.2%	14.8%	27

### **2.6.3 Effects on Desire to Become Involved in Activities of Canadian Community**

The vast majority of respondents also indicated that public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants had a positive effect on their own desire to become involved in activities of the mainstream Canadian community, as well as that of their family members and friends (Table 23).

**Table 23: Desire of Respondents, Families, and Friends to Become Involved**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	96.2%	3.8%	52
<b>Families</b>	94.2%	5.8%	52
<b>Friends</b>	94.2%	5.8%	52

### **2.6.4 Effects on Identity as Members of the Canadian and Provincial Community**

The vast majority of respondents also indicated that public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants had a positive effect on their own identity as members of the Canadian and Provincial community, as well as their family members and friends (Table 24).

**Table 24: Identity as Member of Canadian and Provincial Community**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	82.7%	17.3%	51
<b>Families</b>	82.0%	18.0%	50
<b>Friends</b>	80.8%	19.2%	49

### 2.6.5 Effects on Identity as Member of Local Community

The vast majority of respondents also indicated that public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants contributed to their own identity as a member of the local community, and also to the identity of their family members and friends (Table 25).

**Table 25: Identities as Members of Local Community**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N=50</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	80.4%	19.6%	50
<b>Families</b>	82.4%	17.6%	50
<b>Friends</b>	84.0%	16.0%	50

Some differences in responses to this question were evident in relation to the gender and age variables. In the case of gender, there was a substantial difference between males and females who responded. A substantially higher percentage of male respondents than female respondents felt that public opinion had contributed to their identity as members of the local community (Table 26).

**Table 26: Identities as Members of Local Community by Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N=51</b>
<b>Male</b>	100.0%	0.0%	17
<b>Female</b>	70.6%	29.4%	34

In the case of the age variable, the differences were also evident, albeit not to the same degree that they were for the gender variable. A slightly higher percentage of the younger cohort respondents than their older cohort counterparts felt that public opinion had contributed to their identity as members of the local community (Table 27).

**Table 27: Identities as Members of Local Community by Age Group**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N=50</b>
<b>16-18</b>	86.4%	13.6%	22
<b>19-24</b>	75.0%	25.0%	28

### 2.6.6 Effects on Identity as Member of the Refugee/Immigrant Community

The vast majority of respondents also indicated that public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants contributed to their own sense, as well as the sense of their family members and friends, of being welcomed by and belonging to their refugee/immigrant community (Table 28).

**Table 28: Identities of Families & Friends as Members of the Refugee/Immigrant Community**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Positive Effect</b>	<b>Negative Effect</b>	<b>N=51</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	84.6%	15.4%	51
<b>Families</b>	82.0%	18.0%	51
<b>Friends</b>	84.6%	15.4%	51

The responses revealed some differences among respondents along gender lines. A higher percentage of males than females said that public opinion gave them a sense of being welcomed and belonging in their ethnocultural newcomer community (Table 29).

**Table 29: Identities as Members of the Refugee/Immigrant Community by Gender of Respondents**

Gender	Positive Effect	Negative Effect	N=51
Male	100.0%	0.0%	17
Female	79.4%	20.6%	34

The responses did not reveal a major difference among respondents on the effect that public opinion had on their sense of being welcomed and belonging within the refugee/immigrant community by age group. The difference was only 8.1% between them (Table 30).

**Table 30: Identities as Members of Refugee/Immigrant Community by Age Group of Respondents**

Age Group	Positive Effect	Negative Effect	N=50
16-18	90.9%	9.1%	22
19-24	82.0%	18.0%	28

## **2.7 Perceptions of Treatment by Canadians**

The vast majority of respondents (i.e. approximately 84% to 86%) reported that generally they, their family members and friends who were members of their ethnocultural community have been treated well or very well by Canadians. Only a few indicated that sometimes they had been treated well and sometimes they had been treated badly (Table 31).

**Table 31: General Treatment by Canadians**

Group	Very Well	Well	Badly	Very Badly	Sometimes Well and Sometimes Badly	N
Respondents	19.2%	65.4%	1.9%	0.0%	13.5%	52
Families	15.5%	69.1%	1.9%	0.0%	13.5%	52
Friends	7.8%	76.5%	5.9%	0.0%	9.8%	51

Crosstabulations of two variables (i.e., gender and age) for the question regarding how the respondents had been treated by Canadians in most cases revealed that the vast majority indicated that they had been treated either well or very well.

Based on gender, a slightly higher number of females than males indicated that generally they had been treated badly or very badly by Canadians (Table 32).

**Table 32: General Treatment by Canadians Based on Gender**

Gender	Very Well	Well	Badly	Very Badly	Sometimes Well and Sometimes Badly	N
Male	11.1%	77.8%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	18
Female	23.5%	58.8%	3.0%	0.0%	14.7%	34

Based on age, the majority of respondents indicated that generally they had been treated well or very well. This was particularly true of the respondents in the older age group (Table 33).

**Table 33: General Treatment by Canadians Based on Age**

Age Group	Very Well	Well	Badly	Very Badly	Sometimes Well and Sometimes Badly	N
16-18	13.0%	60.9%	0.0%	0.0%	26.1%	23
19-24	21.4%	71.4%	3.6%	0.0%	3.6%	28

On a related question of whether they, their families or their friends had either ever or occasionally been treated badly or very badly, a substantial majority ranging from 68% to 78% indicated that neither they nor their family members nor their friends had ever been treated badly by Canadians, and a minority ranging from 21.6% to 28.8% indicated that they, their families and their friends had been occasionally treated badly or very badly by Canadians. (Table 34).

**Table 34: Bad Treatment by Canadians**

Group	Occasionally Been Treated Badly or Very Badly	Never Been Treated Badly or Very Badly	N
Respondents	28.8%	71.2%	52
Families	21.6%	78.4%	51
Friends	31.4%	68.6%	51

The survey results also revealed some differences, albeit relatively minor ones, in the perception of treatment by Canadians based on gender and age group of refugee youth. In the case of gender, the difference between males and females was 10.2% both in the case of their perception that they had never being treated badly or very badly, and their perception that occasionally they had been treated badly or very badly. Whereas 77.8% of males versus 67.6% of females indicated they had never been treated badly or very badly by Canadians, 22.2% of males versus 32.4% of females indicated that occasionally they had been treated badly or very badly by Canadians (Table 35).

**Table 35: Bad Treatment Based on Gender of Respondents**

Gender	Occasionally Been Treated Badly or Very Badly	Never Been Treated Badly or Very Badly	N
Male	22.2%	77.8%	18
Female	32.4%	67.6%	34

In the case of age group, the difference between the younger age group was only 2.2%. Whereas (69.6%) of the younger age group versus 71.4% of the older age group indicated that they had never been treated badly or very badly, 30.4% versus 28.6% of the older age group indicated that they had been treated badly or very badly occasionally by Canadians (Table 36).

**Table 36: Bad Treatment Based on Age-Group of Respondents**

Age	Occasionally Been Treated Badly or Very Badly	Never Been Treated Badly or Very Badly	N
16 – 18	30.4%	69.6%	23
19 – 24	28.6%	71.4%	28

## **2.8 Perceptions of Being Welcomed by Canadians**

The vast majority of respondents indicated that they, their family members, and members of their cultural or religious communities perceived Canada as a welcoming place for refugees and immigrants. The respondents indicated that their own perceptions and their assessments of the perceptions of members of their families, friends and cultural or religious communities were essentially the same and ranged from approximately 82.7% to 88.5%. Within that range, they placed themselves and their families at the higher end and their friends and members of their ethnic and cultural communities at the lower end. Moreover, of the remaining 11.5% to 17.3% respondents, all except 3 indicated there was a fluctuation between Canada being a welcoming place sometimes but not at other times for them, their family members, and their friends, as well as members of their ethnocultural groups (Table 37).

*Table 37: Perceptions on Canada as a Welcoming Place*

<b>Group</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Sometimes Yes and Sometimes No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	88.5%	11.5%	0.0%	52
<b>Families</b>	88.5%	11.5%	0.0%	52
<b>Friends</b>	82.7%	15.3%	2.0%	52
<b>Members of their Ethnic or Cultural Community</b>	84.6%	11.4%	4.0%	52

## **2.9 Perceptions of Being Accepted by Canadians**

A large majority of the respondents felt that Canadians accept them, members of their families, and their friends from various ethnocultural communities. The indication of high level of acceptance by Canadians of each of those three clusters of people was evident in the fact that more than 90% felt that Canadians generally accepted each of them (Table 38).

*Table 38: Sense of Being Accepted by Canadians*

<b>Group</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	96.1%	3.9%	51
<b>Families</b>	93.5%	6.5%	46
<b>Friends</b>	90.4%	9.6%	52

The sense of being accepted by Canadians was also very high by gender and age. In the case of gender, 100% of males and 94% of females indicated that they had a sense that they were accepted by Canadians (Table 39).

*Table 39: Sense of Being Accepted by Gender of Respondents*

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Male</b>	100.0%	0.0%	18
<b>Female</b>	94.0%	6.0%	33

Similarly, in the case of age 100% of the younger age group (i.e., 16 to 18 years old) indicated that they sensed that they were accepted by Canadians compared to 92.6% of the older age group (i.e., 19 to 24 years old) (Table 40).

**Table 40: Sense of Being Accepted by Age Group of Respondents**

Age Group	Yes	No	N
16-18	100.0%	0.0%	23
19-24	92.6%	7.4%	27

## 2.10 Perceptions of Being Included by Canadians

The majority of respondents felt that they, as well as their friends and their families, were included in activities and events by Canadians. However, their sense of inclusion was not as strong as their sense that they were accepted by Canadians (Table 41).

**Table 41: Sense of Inclusion by Canadians**

Group	Yes	No	N
Respondents	96.1%	3.9%	51
Families	93.5%	6.5%	46
Friends	90.4%	9.6%	52

Although a high percentage of respondents indicated they felt included, males were more inclined than females to feel that way (Table 42).

**Table 42: Sense of Inclusion by Gender**

Gender	Yes	No	N
Male	94.4%	5.6%	18
Female	76.5%	23.5%	34

The responses of the younger respondents (16 to 18 years old) and the older respondents (19 to 24 years old) regarding their sense of inclusion were essentially the same (Table 43).

**Table 43: Sense of Inclusion by Age**

Age Group	Yes	No	N
16-18	82.6%	17.4%	23
19-24	82.1%	17.9%	28



## 2.11 Perceptions of Canadian Citizenship

The vast majority of respondents indicated that although a very large majority of them and their families, along with a smaller majority of their friends from their ethnic community, were not Canadian citizens, they all valued such citizenship and all of them aspired to acquire it. Likewise, the vast majority indicated that they, their families and friends all regarded ‘becoming Canadian’ as a positive ideal to which they should aspire. Moreover, the vast majority also indicated that they, their families and their friends were already “becoming” Canadians. It must be noted that ‘becoming Canadian’ or ‘being Canadian’ are multifaceted and complex concepts which mean different things to different people (Wenshya Lee and Hébert 2006). Nevertheless, at its core is the notion that involves varying degrees of developing an identity as a Canadian or a sense of belonging in Canada, and accepting or espousing the prevailing norms, values, and traditions that collectively constitute the prevailing public philosophy or philosophies that are viewed as quintessential values of social and political culture.

### 2.11.1 Citizenship Status

The vast majority of respondents indicated that neither they nor their parents or friends were Canadian citizens (Table 44).

*Table 44: Actual Citizenship Status*

<b>Group</b>	<b>Canadian</b>	<b>Non-Canadian</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	7.7%	92.3%	52
<b>Families</b>	7.8%	92.2%	51
<b>Friends</b>	36.5%	63.5%	52

A vast majority of respondents (97.9%) indicated that their parents wanted them to become citizens.

### 2.11.2 Happiness Regarding Citizenship Status

Respondents indicated that there was a high degree of happiness among those who had Canadian citizenship. This included the following: 4 respondents who were Canadian citizens; 4 respondents whose parents were Canadian citizens; and 18 of 19 respondents who indicated that most of their friends were Canadian citizens (Table 45).

*Table 45: Actual Happiness with Citizenship Status*

<b>Group</b>	<b>Happy</b>	<b>Unhappy</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	100.0%	0.0%	4
<b>Families</b>	100.0%	0.0%	4
<b>Friends</b>	94.7%	5.3%	19

### 2.11.3 Desire to Become Canadian Citizens

Respondents indicated that there was a strong desire among all who were not Canadian citizens to become Canadian citizens. This included the respondents, as well as their parents and friends who were not Canadian citizens (Table 46).

**Table 46: Desire to Become Canadian Citizens**

	<b>Want to Become Citizen</b>	<b>Do Not Want to Become Citizens</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	100.0%	0.0%	48
<b>Families</b>	100.0%	0.0%	47
<b>Friends</b>	100.0%	0.0%	33

#### **2.11.4 Sense of Becoming Canadian**

The vast majority of respondents felt that they, as well as their families and friends were “becoming” Canadians (Table 47).

**Table 47: Sense of Becoming Canadian**

	<b>Becoming Canadian</b>	<b>Not Becoming Canadian</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	96.1%	3.9%	52
<b>Families</b>	89.1%	10.9%	52
<b>Friends</b>	90.4%	9.6%	52

## **2.12 Perceptions of National Identities and Affinities**

One of the most interesting findings in the survey was that respondents were almost equally divided between those who felt they were members of either a particular nation or a particular ethnocultural community. In the case of being members of a particular nation, 40.4% indicated that they were members of a particular nation, and 59.6% indicated that they were not. In the case of being members of a particular ethnocultural community, 55.8% indicated they were members of such a community, and 44.2% indicated that they were not. (Table 48). This particular response raises some interesting questions regarding what accounts for the responses of those who indicated that they did not feel they were members of either an ethnocultural group or nation. One is left wondering whether it had something to do with any one or more of the following: the wording of the question insofar as they may have had multiple identities rather than just one and therefore the question should have stated “any one or more” ethnocultural communities or nations; they were still in an identity formation phase; they were in an identity elimination or phase; they were in a global-citizen identity formation phase.

**Table 48: Members of Ethnocultural and National Identities and Affinities**

<b>Membership Group</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Any ethnocultural community</b>	55.8%	44.2%	52
<b>Any particular nation</b>	40.4%	59.6%	52

Furthermore, of the 21 respondents who answered an open-ended question regarding of which, if any, nations they were members, only 5 (23.8%) listed the Canadian nation, and 16 (76.2%) listed an array of other nations. The low overall response rate for this particular question and the small number who listed the Canadian nation might be attributable to any number of factors, including the possibility that they were uncertain regarding either or both precisely what the question meant and what nation or nations they should list. These are cited as possible explanations because, when asked a very explicit ‘forced-choice’ question regarding whether their strongest attachment was to

the Canadian nation or to some other nation, of the 51 respondents 38 (74.5%) indicated the Canadian nation, and only 13 (25.5%) indicated some other nation (Table 49).

**Table 49: Attachment to Canadian Nation or Other Nation**

<b>Canadian Nation</b>	<b>Other Nation</b>	<b>N</b>
74.5% (38)	25.5% (13)	51

This was an interesting response insofar as it corroborates their response to a subsequent question, summarized below, regarding the strength of their identity with and affinity to the Canadian nation, for which a total of 82.4% indicated that it was either strong (45.1%) or very strong (37.3%). In short, whereas a substantial number of respondents identified with and had an affinity to the Canadian nation, an even higher percentage indicated that they had a strong or very strong identity and affinity (i.e., attachment) to Canada or, if you will, the Canadian polity.

### **2.12.1 Perceptions of Strengths Identities and Affinities to Countries**

The survey results suggest that the respondents felt they and their families had what might best be termed dual identities or affinities to Canada and to the countries in which their parents were born.

#### **2.12.1.1 Strength of Identification with and Affinity to Parents' Country of Birth**

The vast majority of respondents indicated that their identification with and affinity to the country in which their parents were born was very strong (50.9%) or strong (21.6%) for a total of 72.5%. Likewise, they indicated that their respective family's identification with, and affinity to the country in which their parents were born was very strong (55.8%) or strong (32.7%) for a total of 88.5% (Table 50).

**Table 50: Strength of Identification with and Affinity to Parents Country of Birth**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Very Strong</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Not Very Strong</b>	<b>Very Weak</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	50.9%	21.6%	21.6%	5.9%	52
<b>Families</b>	55.8%	32.7%	9.6%	1.9%	52

#### **2.12.1.2 Strength of Identification with and Affinity to Canada**

The vast majority of respondents also indicated that their identification with and affinity to Canada was very strong (37.3%) or strong (45.1%) for a total of 82.4%. Likewise, they indicated that their respective family's identification with and affinity to Canada was very strong (34.6%) or strong (52%) for a total of 84.6% (Table 51).

**Table 51: Strength of Identification with and Affinity to Canada**

	<b>Very Strong</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Not Very Strong</b>	<b>Very Weak</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Respondents</b>	37.3%	45.1%	13.7%	3.9%	51
<b>Families</b>	34.6%	52.0%	11.5%	1.9%	52

### **3. CONCLUSIONS**

To reiterate, the central purpose of this research project has been to shed light on the perceptions of, identification with, and affinity to Canada among refugee youth based on an online survey involving a non-randomized sample of self-selected respondents from several cities in the four western Canadian provinces. Pursuant to that purpose, this study has addressed the following five research questions:

1. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding their social engagement and social relationships?
2. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding being in Canada, and what were the major institutional and non-institutional entities that influenced those perceptions?
3. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the nature of Canadian public opinion about refugees and immigrants at the national, provincial, local, and sub-local levels, and what were their perceptions regarding its effects on them, their families and their friends?
4. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the way they, their families and their friends were treated by Canadians?
5. What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the extent to which they, their families and their friends were bonding with Canada and Canadians?

In addressing those five research questions pursuant to the central purpose of explaining perceptions of, identification with, and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation, this study has relied on the responses to a self-administered online survey questionnaire of a non-randomized sample of 52 refugee youth between the ages of 16 and 24, who were residing in seven of the larger cities within the four western Canadian provinces, and who had lived in Canada for five years or less between 2014 and 2018.

The objective in this concluding section is fourfold:

- To provide a summary of the findings in relation to the five major research questions noted above.
- To provide some observations in relation to the central purpose of this survey research that, to reiterate, was to provide ascertain the refugee youth's perceptions of, identifications with, and affinity to, Canada, and to explain what accounts for the same.
- To proffer some policy recommendations based on the findings and the suggestions made by refugee youth.
- To proffer some recommendations on strategic directions for further research on refugee youth that build on this particular research project and some of the extant literature.

Each of these objectives is addressed, in turn, in each of the following four subsections.

### ***3.1 Summary of Findings Related to Five Research Questions***

This subsection provides a brief summary of the findings related to each of the five central research questions. A more extensive summary has already been provided in the Executive Summary of this research project.

#### ***3.1.1 What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding their social engagement and social relationships?***

Most refugee youth indicated they were socially engaged, albeit to varying extents. Such engagement included sports, recreational activities and hobbies, private social parties, and public community events. The findings also revealed that the majority of them also had many friendships, but only a few were in special relationships such as dating and marriage. In addition to some differences among all respondents on social engagement and social relationships, there was significant variation between males and females. The former were more likely than the latter to participate in social parties and community events and to have more friends.

#### ***3.1.2 What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding being in Canada, and what were the major institutional and non-institutional entities that influenced those perceptions?***

Most refugee youth indicated they were glad to be in Canada, despite some challenges they faced in being in this country. They also indicated that there were many things they liked about being in Canada, especially its political system, its society, and its progressive welfare state. Many refugee youth also noted a few things they did not like about being in Canada, including the challenges they faced by being resettled in this country. The most notable things they did not like included being separated from many family and friends, the country's social climate (e.g. racism and discrimination), and some problematic components of the immigration policies, settlement services and supports, economic integration services and supports, and social integration services and supports. In recommending initiatives that would improve their lives in Canada they pointed to the adoption and implementation of improvements to various policies, programs, services and supports designed to alleviate the aforementioned categories of challenges they faced.

#### ***3.1.3 What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the nature of Canadian public opinion about refugees and immigrants at the national, provincial, local, and sub-local levels, and what were their perceptions regarding its effects on them, their families and their friends?***

The vast majority of respondents perceived public opinion toward refugees and immigrants as being very positive. Similarly, the vast majority of respondents also indicated that public opinion in Canada had positive, rather than negative, effects on them, their families and their friends with respect to the following matters:

- Their happiness;
- Their sense of being welcomed and belonging in Canada;
- Their desire to become involved in community activities;
- Their identities as members of the national, provincial, and local mainstream communities in Canada; and
- Their identities as members of refugee/immigrant communities in Canada.

The vast majority also indicated that the most significant influences on their perceptions of public opinion in Canada were their families, friends, community, and school and the least significant influences are the internet, TV/radio, and workplace.

### ***3.1.4 What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the way they, their families and their friends were treated by Canadians?***

The vast majority of respondents (i.e. approximately 84% to 86%) reported that generally they, their family members and their friends were treated well or very well by Canadians. The bulk of the rest indicated that sometimes they were treated well and sometimes they were treated badly. Only a very small percentage indicated that generally they had been treated badly or very badly. Whereas a slightly higher percentage of females than males indicated that generally they had been treated badly or very badly by Canadians, a substantially higher percentage of younger respondents than older respondents indicated that generally they had been treated badly or very badly.

On a related question of whether they or their families had ever been treated badly or very badly by Canadians, a minority ranging from 21.6% to 28.8% indicated that they, their families or their friends had been treated badly or very badly occasionally by Canadians. The survey results also revealed some differences, albeit relatively minor ones, in their perception of treatment by Canadians based on gender and age group. In the case of gender, a slightly higher percentage of females than males indicated that occasionally Canadians had treated them badly or very badly. In the case of age group, a slightly higher percentage of younger respondents than older respondents indicated that occasionally Canadians had been treated badly or very badly.

- ***Perceptions of Being Welcomed by Canadians***

The vast majority of respondents indicated that they, their family members, and friends who were members of their ethnic or cultural communities perceived Canada as a welcoming place for refugees and immigrants. The respondents indicated that their own perceptions and their ascription of the perceptions of members of their families, their friends, and their cultural communities were essentially the same and ranged from approximately 82.7% to 88.5%.

- ***Perceptions of Being Accepted by Canadians***

A large majority of the respondents indicated that Canadians accepted them, their families, and their friends. The indication of high level of acceptance by Canadians of each of those three clusters of people was evident in the fact that more than 90% felt that Canadians generally accepted each of those three clusters of people. This was essentially equally true of males and females and younger respondents and older respondents.

- ***Perceptions of Being Included by Canadians***

The majority of respondents felt that they, as well as their families and friends, were included in activities and events by Canadians. However, their respective sense of being included by Canadians was not as high as their sense that they were accepted by Canadians. Although a high percentage of respondents indicated they felt included, there was a gender difference as a notably higher percentage of males than females felt included, but the difference between the younger and older respondents was remarkably small.

### ***3.1.5 What were the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the extent to which they, their families and their friends were bonding with Canada and Canadians?***

The responses of the vast majority of respondents revealed four important interrelated facts regarding the extent to which they, their families and their friends were bonding with Canada and Canadians. First, all respondents indicated they valued Canadian citizenship and aspired to acquire it. Second, the vast majority of them indicated that they, their families and their friends regarded ‘becoming Canadian’ a positive ideal to which they should aspire. Moreover, the vast majority also indicated that they, their families and friends were already ‘becoming Canadian’. Third, the vast majority of respondents, their families, and their friends had what might be termed dual identities and affinities—namely to the country in which their parents were born and to Canada. Fourth, a substantial majority of them indicated that their strongest attachment, as well as that of their families and their friends, was to Canada.

- ***Perceptions of Canadian Citizenship***

The vast majority of respondents indicated that although a very large majority of them and their families, along with a smaller majority of their friends from their ethnic community, were not Canadian citizens, they all valued such citizenship and all of them aspired to acquire it. Moreover, as noted above, the vast majority indicated that they, their families and their friends all regarded ‘becoming Canadian’ as a positive ideal to which they should aspire, and the vast majority also indicated that they, their families and their friends were already ‘becoming Canadian’.

A caveat is in order here because as revealed by a study titled: “The Meaning of Being Canadian: A Comparison Between Youth of Immigrant and Non-Immigrant Origins” (Weensy Lee and Herbert 2006), ‘becoming Canadian’ or ‘being Canadian’ are multifaceted and complex concepts which mean different things to different people. Nevertheless, at its core is the notion that one is experiencing varying degrees of developing an identity as a Canadian or a sense of belonging in Canada, and accepting or espousing the prevailing norms, values and traditions that collectively constitute the prevailing public philosophy or philosophies that are viewed as quintessential values of social and political culture. Precisely what it meant to each respondent, therefore is open to question. What is not open to question, however, is their strong desire to acquire Canadian citizenship.



- ***Perceptions of Identities and Affinities to Various Nations***

The respondents were divided on whether they felt they were members of a particular country or nation. Whereas 59.6% indicated they were members of a particular nation, 40.4% indicated they were not. Furthermore, of the 21 respondents who answered an open-ended question regarding which nations they were members, only 5 (23.8%) listed the Canadian nation, and 16 (76.2%) listed an array of other nations. However, when asked an explicit ‘forced-choice’ question regarding whether their strongest attachment was to the Canadian nation or to some other nation, 74.5% (38) indicated the Canadian nation, and only 25.5% (13) indicated some other nation.

- ***Perceptions of Strength of Identification with, and Affinity to, Canada***

Furthermore, the strength of the refugee youth’s identification with, and affinity to, Canada was essentially the same as the strength of the identification with, and affinity to, Canada that they ascribed to their families. Whereas a substantial majority (82.4%) of respondents indicated that their identification with, and affinity to, Canada was very strong (37.3%) or strong (45.1%), an even greater majority (84.6%) indicated that their respective families had strong (52%) or very strong (34.6%) sense of identification with, and affinity to, Canada.

### ***3.2 Concluding Observations Related to Central Purpose of Survey***

The foregoing overview of the findings of the survey has provided a particular portrait of the refugee youth who participated in the survey not only regarding their social engagement and social relationships, but also regarding their perceptions or feelings about the following matters: being in Canada, public opinion regarding refugees and immigrants among Canadians, their treatment by Canadians, and their identity with and affinity to Canada, the Canadian nation, and Canadians.

The objective in this subsection is to provide some concluding observations in relation to the central purpose of this survey, which to reiterate, was to ascertain the refugee youth’s perceptions of, identification with, and affinity to, Canada, the Canadian nation, and Canadians, and also to explain what accounts for the same. These two matters are dealt with in turn below.

- ***Perceptions of Canada and Canadians***

The first major observation that can be drawn from the survey findings is that the vast majority of refugee youth generally had a positive perception of Canada and of Canadians. More specifically, they perceived Canada as a peaceful and prosperous country that was governed by various liberal democratic principles including the rule of law and the recognition and protection of minority rights. Moreover, they generally perceived Canadians as welcoming, accepting and, albeit to a lesser extent, also inclusive vis-à-vis refugees and other newcomers.

Their perceptions regarding Canada and Canadians were influenced in part by what they generally perceived as a relatively, though by no means an absolutely, positive public opinion regarding refugees and other newcomers. The vast majority indicated that public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants had a much more positive than negative effect on various matters, including their sense of happiness, and their desire to become involved in community activities.



These observations regarding the positive perceptions of this particular sample of refugee youth, and particularly their perceptions of being in Canada, and their identification with and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation, align with the positive perceptions of refugee and immigrant youth and adults that have emerged in other surveys, studies, and reports (e.g., Ryan 2018; Keung 2018; Kafili 2013, 100; Immigrant Services Society of BC. 2018; Canada 2016; Shahsiah 2009, 45; and Wenshya Lee and Hebert 2006, 51).

- ***Identification with and Affinity to Canada and the Canadian Nation***

The second major observation that can be drawn from the survey findings is that the vast majority of refugee youth felt a strong sense identification with, and affinity to, Canada and the Canadian nation (Keung 2018). This is quite evident in their responses related to their identification with and affinity to Canada and also in their responses related to Canadian citizenship. In the case of their perceptions of their identity with and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation, a substantial majority (including some who also identified themselves as members other nations) indicated that their strongest attachment was to the ‘Canadian nation’. This suggests that even if they had dual or multiple national identities, affinities and loyalties, their principal attachment was to the ‘Canadian nation’. The strength of their identification with, and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation was also evident in their responses regarding their perceptions of Canadian citizenship. All respondents indicated that they valued Canadian citizenship and that they aspired to acquire it. Moreover, the vast majority also indicated that they believed they were ‘becoming Canadian’ and that that they aspired to ‘becoming Canadian’. Whether such bonding with Canada and the Canadian nation was largely based only on instrumental self-interest or some combination of that and any other types of interests, is worth probing in future studies.

- ***Commonality in Responses of Refugee Youth***

The third major observation that can be drawn from the survey findings is that there was a very high degree of commonality among respondents on most issues addressed in the survey, including their perceptions of Canada and Canadians, and their identification with, and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation. In light of that high degree of commonality, it is possible to make the following generalizations regarding their perceptions or experiences:

- They felt happy about being in Canada;
- They felt that public opinion toward refugees and immigrants was relatively positive and that generally it had a positive effect on them;
- They felt that Canadians generally treated them well or very well, welcomed them, accepted them, and, albeit to a lesser extent, included them;
- They valued Canadian citizenship and felt that becoming Canadian citizens was a very important goal for them;
- They felt they were integrating and ‘becoming Canadian’; and
- They identified with and felt an affinity both to Canada and to the countries in which their parents were born, but their identification with and affinity to Canada was stronger than to the countries in which their parents were born.

The very high degree of commonality among respondents on the aforementioned matters existed not only in relation to their own perceptions and experiences on the items listed above, but their responses also suggested that generally the very high degree of commonality also existed between them, members of their families, and their friends. Indeed, the only significant reported difference between them, their family members, and their friends existed in relation to an attachment to Canada compared to attachment to the country in which their parents were born. There was a 30% difference between them and their parents in terms of their respective attachment to the country in which the parents were born. The respondents were less attached than their parents to the country in which the parents were born.

The high degree of convergence in their positive perceptions of respondents is especially interesting and important in light of the fact that generally, they are from different cities, and likely even different parts of each city, they differ in their demographic profiles (e.g., place of origin, skin colour, religion, language, gender, age, and length of stay in Canada); and possibly, though not for certain because such as question was not asked in the survey, they even differ in their socio-economic status and that of their respective families.

In light of the observations above, two important caveats are in order. First, none of the foregoing observations regarding their positive perceptions of Canada, their strong identifications with and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation, or the high degree of commonality among them in their perceptions and experiences related either to those particular matters or any other matters is intended to suggest that their responses were completely uniform or unanimous. Indeed, that was only true of very few key issues (e.g., how much they valued and aspired to acquire Canadian citizenship). As noted in previous sections of this report, on most other issues there were some, albeit to mostly minor, differences among them.

The second caveat is that the foregoing positive portrayal of their perceptions of Canada, or their affinity with, and attachment to Canada and the Canadian nation is not intended to gloss over or negate two important matters. First, it is not intended to gloss over or negate the fact that this particular sample of refugee youth indicated that they, as well as their families and friends, had some problematic and challenging settlement and integration experiences, or at least some negative perceptions or observations about such experiences. Instead, it is intended to note that collectively their perceptions and observations regarding such matters were generally more positive than negative. Second, it is not intended to gloss over or negate the fact that this particular sample of refugee youth indicated that they, as well as their families and friends noted the challenges they faced due to some problematical aspects of Canada's refugee system (i.e., the admission, reception, settlement and integration policies, programs, services or supports). Instead, it is intended to note that their perceptions of these problematical aspects of Canada's refugee system were not necessarily as extensive and negative as is sometimes assumed or asserted by analysts and advocates who tend to focus largely on problematical rather than effective aspects of the system.

### ***3.3 Alternative Explanations Commonality in Positive Perceptions of Respondents***

What accounts for the very high degree of commonality among respondents on most issues addressed in the survey, including their perceptions of Canada and Canadians, and their identification with, and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation? Although the data does not provide the basis on which to say anything definitive regarding the influences or determinants of this high degree of commonality, there are at least six possible factors that account for it.

First, the relatively high degree of commonality in the positive responses might be attributable to the “relative gratification” phenomenon, which is the opposite of the “relative deprivation” phenomenon (Weensy Lee and Hébert 2006, 517). Whereas in the case of the former, people count their blessings, in the case of the latter people count their woes. More specifically, whereas ‘relative gratification’ refers to the tendency of people to focus on how much better their situation is not only compared to other persons (Gatto et al. 2018), but possibly also to their own situation in other contexts such as relatively dangerous, chaotic or impoverished communities (Gatto et al. 2018), “relative deprivation” refers to the tendency of people to focus on how much worse their situation is not only compared to other persons but also to their own situation in other contexts such as relatively safe, peaceful or prosperous communities (Wenshya Lee and Hébert 2006, 517).

Second, the relatively high degree of commonality in positive responses might be attributable to the fact that respondents lived in larger cities that were becoming increasingly multi-ethnic. Consequently, they were less likely to feel they were treated or singled out as exotic or as ‘the other’, completely marginalized, or completely alone.

Third, the relatively high degree of commonality in positive responses might be attributable to the fact that respondents lived in communities that were becoming more multi-ethnic cities (More progressive and supportive ethnocultural communities)?

Fourth, and related to the third, the high degree of commonality in positive responses might be attributable to the fact that their respective cities and various institutions therein had adopted progressive policies and programs to facilitate the settlement and integration of refugees and other newcomers.

Fifth, the high degree of commonality in positive responses might be attributed to the fact that those who opted to participate in the survey may have been more likely to have a greater sense of satisfaction regarding the following types of matters: being in Canada; public opinion regarding refugees and other newcomers; their treatment by Canadians; their sense of ‘becoming’ Canadian; and their sense of identification with, and affinity to Canada.

Sixth, the high degree of commonality in positive responses might be attributable to the fact that respondents were made aware of the survey by staff members and volunteers at settlement service agencies. Consequently, there is a high likelihood that they had not only a substantial amount of services and supports, but also a certain degree of social engagement and friendships by virtue of being served by or affiliated with such agencies.

A related question is why the survey did not reveal a higher degree of negative perceptions among respondents on most issues addressed in the survey. This includes, for example, their perceptions of Canada and Canadians, and their identification with, and affinity to, Canada and the Canadian nation. It also includes their perceptions of the challenging or problematic aspects of the refugee resettlement and integration system and sub-systems that are commonly identified in many studies that have explored these types of issues in the past (Shahsiah 2009; Kondic 2011; Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2012; Kafili 2013; Kobayashi and Preston 2014; Shik 2015)?

One possible explanation is that the challenges and problems they experienced or observed were limited. A second possible explanation is that they believed such challenges and problems were relatively minor in the proverbial grand scheme of things. A third possible explanation is that they saw the challenges and problems as temporary and surmountable. A fourth possible explanation is that this study did not contain many questions that focused on the challenges and problems *per se*. The reason for this is that the principal purpose of this study was to explore the general perceptions and experiences of newcomers, and not necessarily just, or even primarily, either (a) their perceptions and experiences regarding either all the challenges or problems they faced since arriving in Canada, or the challenging or problematic aspects of the refugee system (i.e., policies, programs, services and supports).

### ***3.4 Recommendations on Strategic Directions for Further Research***

Before proffering some recommendations on strategic directions for further research related to this research project, it is useful to start by proffering some observations regarding the value and limitation of this particular research project.

#### ***3.4.1 Value and Limitations of this Study***

This research report has provided some valuable insights on the views and experiences of refugee youth in larger cities in the four western Canadian provinces regarding, among other things, their perceptions of, identification with, and affinity to Canada and the Canadian nation, and the various issues addressed within the scope of the five central research questions. Furthermore, it has also focused on some issues regarding the perceptions and experiences of refugee youth that, as shall be explained in greater detail below, have not received much attention in the extant Canadian literature. This is particularly true of the perceptions of refugee youth regarding their settlement and integration experiences, the characteristics of the polity and society in which they have resettled, and their political identity formation therein.

Whereas previous studies have devoted significant attention to refugee and immigrant youth in the eastern Canadian provinces, particularly in Ontario (Shahsiah 2009; Berns-McGowan 2013; Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2012; Sundar 2008; Shakya et al. 2010), there are comparatively fewer studies that have focused on youth in the western provinces (Hébert et al. 2008; Wenshya Lee and Hébert 2006). Furthermore, the one study that has been found to bear the closest resemblance to the research objectives of this report (Kafili 2013) was conducted on youth in the eastern maritime city of Halifax, Nova Scotia.

However, despite its value in providing such insights on refugee youth in Western Canadian cities, some caution should be exercised in generalizing the findings to the refugee youth population either in the four Western provinces or in the rest of Canada. The reason for this is that this study

has some methodological limitations. More specifically, the findings are based on the responses of a very small and non-randomized sample, rather a large and randomized sample, of refugee youth drawn from a limited number of cities. Furthermore, it was a skewed sample. The skewing occurred primarily as a result of two interrelated methodological issues regarding the recruitment of respondents and the selection of the respondents. First, the respondents were recruited primarily among refugee youth who had direct and likely extensive contact with settlement service agencies in each city, most of which dealt extensively with government sponsored refugees, which kindly agreed to assist in facilitating their recruitment. Second, the respondents were self-selected insofar as they decided whether to participate in the survey. No special screening or vetting process for including or excluding prospective respondents was used, other than explaining the eligibility for participating in the survey. Third, the survey was self-administered by respondents, and consequently it was not possible either to clarify some questions or to clarify and probe some responses.

These particular features of the recruitment and selection of respondents were used due to the exigencies that emerged during the ethics approval process. More specifically, they were used to address the concerns of the ethics review board both to preclude or at least minimize the risk of any pressure being applied to potential respondents to participate, and also to safeguard their anonymity and confidentiality. Unfortunately, using this approach not only precluded the ability to generate a randomly selected stratified sample, but it also made it difficult to manage and monitor the composition of the sample, and to clarify any question or to clarify or probe any responses.

### ***3.4.2 Recommendations for Building on this Report***

Given the limitations of this study regarding aforementioned methodological matters, further research is warranted to get a fuller and more statistically grounded account of various issues that have been explored or emerged within the limited scope of this study. Toward that end, further research should be undertaken which is designed to rectify the aforementioned methodological limitations of this study. This includes:

- Increasing the number and types of cities across Canada;
- Focusing on smaller types of urban and non-urban municipalities;
- Increasing the number of respondents;
- Selecting a much larger representative random-stratified sample based on a particular set of interesting and important variables; and
- Using either an in-person or a telephone survey, rather than an on-line survey; using members of the research team to administer the survey questionnaire, rather than relying on respondents to self-administer it.

Furthermore, special consideration should be given to the value of asking additional questions regarding the demographic profile of respondents. This includes questions regarding the following matters:

- Refugee programs through which the youth arrive in Canada (i.e., the government sponsorship program, the private sponsorship program, the Blended Visa Officer Referred (BVOR) program, or the unaccompanied minors program);
- Whether the youth or members of their family have received or are receiving any settlement and integration services or supports, and which organizations are providing them;
- The socio-economic status of respondents and their families prior to becoming refugees and since arriving in Canada;
- Education and special occupational training prior to arrival in Canada;
- Education and special occupational training since arriving in Canada;
- Employment since arriving in Canada

Other valuable strategic directions for further survey-based research on refugee youth between the ages of 16 and 24 that would build on this report and the extant literature, include:

- Comparative surveys of refugee youth who were resettled in Canada through various programs (e.g., refugee, asylum seeker, and immigration);
- Comparable and ideally comparative surveys that focus on a cohort of refugee youth and a cohort of non-refugee youth who arrived in Canada at the same time, which provide insights (a) on their respective settlement and integration experiences, and (b) on what they deem to be the challenging or problematic aspects of the refugee resettlement and integration system.
- Comparable and ideally comparative surveys on the perceptions of refugee youth of the social and political values and various types of policies in Canada, and the extent to which they find them deem them to be either laudable or problematic.

In undertaking any further research, it is useful to consider not only all the foregoing points, but also to be mindful of the extant literature on refugee and other newcomer youth related to their integration, their identity formation and management, and their happiness and well being profiled in the next section.

### ***3.5 Overview of the Extant Canadian Literature on Refugee Youth***

The existing Canadian literature regarding refugee and other newcomer youth generally tends to focus on one of the following three topic areas:

1. Integration of Refugee Youth;
2. Identity Formation of and Management by Refugee Youth;
3. Wellbeing and Happiness of Refugee Youth.

These three sets of literature related to each of these three topic areas are profiled below.

### ***3.5.1 Integration of Refugee Youth***

The literature that focuses on the integration of refugee youth has tended to focus on the challenges and determinant of their economic, social, cultural or political integration. Notable works in the area of challenges in various spheres of integration include a study titled “Immigrant Children, Youth and Families: A Qualitative Analysis of the Challenges of Integration.” (Social Planning Council of Ottawa 2012), which focuses on economic, social, cultural and political integration of refugee youth and their families. Another notable work titled “Social exclusion and inclusion of young immigrants: Presentation of an analytical framework” (Fangen 2010), provides a useful analytical framework for examining young immigrants, but could also be used in examining refugee youth. The principal value of the analytical framework is in identifying the various sectors or spheres of inclusion and exclusion (e.g. educational, labour-market, spatial).

A notable and useful study that focuses explicitly and entirely on the determinants of integration is titled "Trust among recent immigrants in Canada: levels, roots and implications for immigrant integration" (Bilodeau and White 2016). As its title suggests, this study examine the importance of ‘trust’ as one of key factors that influences the integration outcomes of the immigrants.

### ***3.5.2 Identity Formation and Identity Management by Refugee Youth***

The literature that focuses on identify formation and management of refugee youth tends to focus primarily on the formation and management of their ethnocultural and political identities. Two notable studies focus primarily on identity formation. The first study, titled “Integration Experiences, Identity Formation, and Sense of Home and Belonging: Iranian Female and Male Newcomer Youth in Halifax” (Kafili, 2013), examines various facets of identity formation among newcomer youth. The second study, titled “The Meaning of Being Canadian: A Comparison Between Youth of Immigrant and Non-Immigrant Origins” (Wenshya Lee and Hérbert 2006), compares the similarities and differences on what it means to be Canadian between clusters of immigrant and non-immigrant youth.

Two other studies on this topic area focus primarily on identity management by newcomer youth. One of these studies, titled “To “Brown It Up” or to “Bring Down the Brown”: Identity and Strategy in Second-Generation, South Asian-Canadian Youth” (Saundar 2008), examines strategic identity management among South Asian immigrant youth in Canada. The other study, titled “Being CBC: The Ambivalent Identities and Belonging of Canadian-Born Children of Immigrants” (Kobayashi and Preston 2014), examines the ambivalence as they manage what the author’s term the “in-between identities” of second-generation youth in relation to their various ethnocultural and nationalist identities and sense of belonging within the Canadian polity.

In addition to these studies, which focus exclusively on youth, other studies regarding identity formation focus on adult immigrants. Nevertheless, they also have some relevance for examining and understanding the identity formation processes of youth. One such study titled “earning their support: feelings towards Canada among recent immigrants” (White et al. 2015), examined the feelings of affinity, attachment and ‘support’ of adult immigrants towards Canada. Another such study titled "Why immigrants’ multiple identities matter: Implications for research, policy, and practice" (Wiley et al. 2019), explains why multiple identities matter and provides a valuable analytical framework and postulations regarding the multiple identities of immigrants.

Several studies have analyzed the influences on or determinants of identity formation. One of these, titled "Identity Development in Immigrant Youth" ((Schwartz et al. 2018), examined the multiple influences on identity development or, if you will, formation among immigrant youth in North America. It is particularly noteworthy that this study also devoted attention to the factors that impede or arrest some aspects of identify formation among immigrant youth. Three other studies focused on specific factors that influence identity formation. One such study titled "Youth experiences of cultural identity and migration: A systems perspective" (Khan et al. 2018) focuses on two general categories of factors, namely environmental factors and experiential factors. A second study focuses on three specific factors that influence identity formation among immigrant youth, titled "Identity Trans-Formation in Contact Zones: Socialization of Israeli Immigrant Youth in Canada" (Atari 2013), identifies three specific sets of factors, namely language, school setting, and cultural contact. A third study titled "Identity, identification, and racialization: Immigrant youth in the Canadian context" (Shahsiah 2009) focuses on one particular factor (i.e., racialization) that influences identity formation (i.e. immigrant identities and Canadian identities).

### ***3.5.3 Wellbeing and Happiness of Refugee Youth***

The literature that has focused primarily or exclusively on the well being and happiness of newcomer (i.e., immigrant and refugee) youth devoted attention to the dimensions, degrees and determinants of their well being and happiness. One such study titled "Immigrant Youth in Canada: A Research Report from the Canadian Council on Social Development (Kunz and Hanvey 2000), provided an analysis of the settlement and integration challenges faced by immigrant youth in Canada at the turn of the century. Another such study, produced almost two decades later, titled "Immigrant Youth in Canada: A Literature Review of Migrant Youth Settlement and Service Issues" (Shields and Lujan 2018), provided an overview and assessment of the needs of immigrant youth at that juncture in history in various dimensions or spheres of their lives (e.g., education, health, employment, social participation, belonging, settlement, and language).

Two studies focused on the mental health dimension of well being and happiness of immigrant and refugee youth. One titled is "Immigrant and Refugee Youth Mental Health in Canada: A Scoping Review of Empirical Literature" (Khan et al. 2018), provides a valuable overview of some important literature on this phenomenon. The other, titled "Place-making, settlement and well-being: The therapeutic landscapes of recently arrived youth with refugee backgrounds" (Sampson and Gifford 2010), examines the importance of 'place-making', which is a socio-psychological process of creating suitable or desirable places or spaces, in facilitating healing and in fostering a sense of belonging of refugees (Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking 2010).

Two studies focused on factors that influenced the wellbeing and happiness of newcomer youth. Both of those studies emphasized the importance of the home environment and the family support as key factors (Sabatier and Barry 2008). This included the study titled "Immigrant Youth in Canada: A Research Report from the Canadian Council on Social Development" (Kunz and Hanvey 2000), and the study titled "Needs of Newcomer Youth" (Burgos et al. 2019).



### ***3.6 Recommendation on Strategic Directions for Policies, Programs, Services and Supports***

The objective in this sub-section is to proffer some recommendations on strategic directions for policies, programs, services and supports for refugee youth based on the responses provided by those who participated in this study. It is important to note at the outset that their recommendation dealt most directly and specifically with their basic needs related both to their resettlement and settlement and also to their economic and social integration. There are no recommendations that dealt directly and specifically with their perceptions of, identification with, or affinity to Canada (i.e., Canadian polity, nation, or society). Nevertheless, they indicated that meeting these needs would increase their sense of happiness and wellbeing about being in Canada, and this in turn, this would enhance their perceptions of, identification with, and affinity to Canada.

As noted in the body of this report, the three major components of the system in which they noted some deficiencies and recommended some improvements included several facets of the following three spheres of the refugee system:

- Resettlement and Settlement
- Economic Integration
- Social Integration

Their recommendations on improvements in each of these three spheres are listed below.

- **Recommended Improvements for Resettlement and Settlement**

In the case of resettlement and settlement, they suggested the following improvements in services and supports:

- Facilitating resettlement or immigration of family members,
- Financial support to pay for the cost of airfare,
- Language training,
- Access to post-secondary education programs,
- Finding employment,
- Establishing friendships in mainstream and ethnocultural communities, and
- Financial subsidies or supports to cover living costs (e.g., high housing costs).

- **Recommended Improvements for Economic Integration**

In the case of economic integration, they suggested the following improvements in services and supports:

- Greater access to language training programs for them and their family members,
- Starting educational and training programs,
- Completing educational and training programs,
- More scholarships and student loans, and
- Securing employment, especially well-paid employment.

- **Recommended Improvements for Social Integration**

In the case of social integration they suggested the following improvements in services and supports:

- Increasing awareness among Canadians of the challenges refugees face prior to and after their arrival in Canada,
- Increasing number and types of refugee and immigrant support groups,
- Increasing opportunities to meet and befriend other newcomers,
- Increasing opportunities to meet and befriend persons within their ethnocultural groups,
- Increasing opportunities to meet and befriend persons beyond their ethnocultural groups,
- Increasing opportunities to be engaged in ethnocultural community groups and activities,
- Increasing opportunities to engage in mainstream community groups and activities,
- Increasing the welcoming spirit of communities (e.g., less racism & discrimination),
- Increasing community safety,
- Improving community plans to create more public spaces where newcomers can meet and socialize with others,
- Creating more culturally robust and dynamic communities,
- Increasing equity between women and men, and
- Increasing opportunities to improve and retain their mother tongue.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

#### PROJECT TITLE:

*“Social, Cultural and Political Affinities and Identities of Refugee Youth in Canada: A Factor Analysis”*

#### THANK YOU:

- Thank you for considering participating in this study.
- Participation involves answering the questions in the questionnaire posted on this website. Your participation is very valuable and appreciated.
- However, please remember that you do not have to participate in this study if you choose not to do so.
- Please note that if you participate by completing the study you **cannot** request that we withdraw or eliminate your responses because given the anonymous nature of the survey we will not be able to find and eliminate your responses.
- Answering the questions will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

#### GIFT CARD:

As a reminder, be sure that you provide your contact information after the survey to receive your \$20 gift card. Your contact information will **not** be linked to your survey responses.

#### RESEARCHER:

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#### TITLE & FOCUS OF STUDY:

- The title of the study is *“The Social, Cultural and Political Affinities and Identities of Refugee Youth in Canada: A Factor Analysis”*
- The focus of the study is on some important views of refugee youth regarding living in Canada.
  - You will be asked to answer questions regarding three key matters:
    1. Your **views** on public attitudes toward refugees and diversity.
    2. Your **views** on the effects that the public attitudes toward refugees, and diversity have not only on (a) their happiness, sense of belonging, and community involvement in Canada, but also on (b) their social, cultural and political affinities and identities in Canada.
    3. Your **views** on what would help to improve not only (a) their happiness, sense of belonging and community involvement in Canada, but also (b) their social, cultural and political affinities and identities in Canada.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY:**

- Your responses to the various questions are anonymous.
- No one will know which questionnaire you completed or your responses.
- Your name will NOT be listed in any presentations or publications.
- If I refer to or quote any parts of your responses in an academic report it will be attributed either using general descriptions (e.g., male or female; refugee youth; from your continent of origin), or simply by using a special confidential code assigned to your questionnaire (e.g., respondent #25).

### **FUNDERS & HOSTS OF SURVEY:**

- This survey is funded by the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC) from a national research project financed by SSHRC, which is one of Canada's major academic funding agencies.
- This survey is hosted by Voxco, a Canadian-owned and managed company whose data is securely stored in Canada.

### **REQUESTING COPY OF RESEARCH REPORT:**

If you are interested in receiving either an electronic or a printed version of the research report(s) please contact Prof. Joseph Garcea at the University of Saskatchewan at:

- E-mail: [joe.garcea@usask.ca](mailto:joe.garcea@usask.ca)
- Phone: (306) 966-5222

### **STORAGE & DISPOSAL OF INFORMATION:**

- The information from the questionnaires will be stored on the secure SSRL server at the University of Saskatchewan and on the PI's password protected computer for a period of at least 5 years, after which time be deleted using a specialized electronic file deletion software (e.g., File Shredder).

### **ETHICS APPROVAL FOR SURVEY & RIGHTS AS PARTICIPANT:**

- This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics Board, and has indicated that there are no foreseeable risks.
- Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Research Ethics Office [ethics.office@usask.ca](mailto:ethics.office@usask.ca); (306) 966-2975. Out of town participants may call toll free (888) 966-2975.
- Participation is strictly voluntary.  
You can skip any question you don't want to answer.  
If you want to withdraw from the study at any time you can close your browser window and your data will be discarded.  
If you decide to take a rest or a break after completing part of the survey, *it will be saved automatically* so you can go back to the survey *provided you use the same computing device*.
- By selecting the command **NEXT** below and completing this questionnaire, your free and informed consent is implied and indicates that you understand the above conditions to participate in this study.
- Please consider printing the information you have just read above for your records.

### **STARTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE:**

To start the questionnaire please press the command **NEXT** below.



**Which of the following cities is closest to where you live, work, or study?**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Text</b>
1	Winnipeg
2	Brandon
3	Saskatoon
4	Regina
5	Calgary
6	Edmonton
7	Vancouver
8	Victoria

**How old are you?**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Text</b>
1	16
2	17
3	18
4	19
5	20
6	21
7	22
8	23
9	24

**What is your gender identity?**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Text</b>
1	Male
2	Female
3	Other

**How many years have you lived in Canada?**

Code	Text
1	1 Year
2	2 Years
3	3 Years
4	4 Years
5	5 Years

**In what country were your parents (or persons you consider to be your parents) born?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**In what country were you born?**

[textbox]

**To which ethnic or cultural group(s) does your family (or persons you consider to be members of your family) feel it belongs?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**What is your family's (or persons you consider to be members of your family) religion(s)?**

[textbox]

Code	Text
99	No Religion

**What language(s) do your family members (or persons you consider to be members of your family) speak?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**What language(s) do you speak?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**In what country or countries are you a citizen? [choose as many as apply to you]**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Text</b>
1	Canada
2	Country where you were born (Which one?)
3	Some other country (Which one?)
4	Nowhere

**How would you describe your skin color? [choose one]**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Text</b>
1	White
2	Light Brown
3	Dark Brown
4	Light Black
5	Dark Black
6	Other (please specify)

**What are you currently doing in Canada? [choose as many as apply to you]**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Text</b>
1	Studying
2	Apprenticing for a Trade or Profession
3	Working
4	Studying and Working
5	Studying and Apprenticing for a Trade or Profession
6	Apprenticing and Working
7	Not Studying, Not Apprenticing and Not Working
8	Seeking Work
9	Seeking Admission to College/Trade School/University
10	Seeking Apprenticeship Placement for a Trade or Profession

**How would you rate your level of knowledge about Canada and Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Very High
2	High
3	Medium
4	Low
5	Very Low

**Where did you learn most of what you know about Canada and Canadians? Please rank these from most important to least important with 1 being most important and 7 being least important.**

Code	Text
1	Your Friends
2	Your Family (or persons you consider to be members of your family)
3	School/College/University
4	People I work with
5	A special program offered for refugee youth
6	Television, Radio and Newspapers
7	Web-sites on the internet

**Have you played any sports since coming to Canada?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Which sport(s) have you played?**

[textbox]

[textbox]

[textbox]

**Have you had any hobbies (special activities you enjoy) since coming to Canada?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**What hobbies have you had?**

[textbox]

[textbox]

[textbox]

**Have you participated in other recreational activities that you enjoy since coming to Canada?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**What other recreational activities have you had?**

[textbox]

[textbox]

[textbox]

**Have you participated in any social parties with people of your age since coming to Canada?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**What was the Heritage of most people at those parties?**

Code	Text
1	Mostly Canadian Heritage
2	Mostly non-Canadian Heritage
3	A Relatively Equal Number with Canadian Heritage & Non-Canadian Heritage

**Have you attended any other special events such as any sporting event, festivals, concerts, or movies, with other people since coming to Canada?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**What was the Heritage of most people with whom you attended the special event(s)?**

Code	Text
1	Mostly Canadian Heritage
2	Mostly non-Canadian Heritage
3	A Relatively Equal Number with Canadian Heritage & Non-Canadian Heritage

**How many friends do you have?**

Code	Text
1	Not Very Many
2	Many
3	A Lot

**What is the Heritage of most of your friends' families?**

Code	Text
1	Mostly Canadian Heritage
2	Mostly non-Canadian Heritage
3	A Relatively Equal Number with Canadian Heritage & Non-Canadian Heritage

**Are you, or have you been, in a special relationship with another person on a regular basis?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**What is or was the nature of the special relationship?**

Code	Text
1	Very Special Friendship(s)
2	Special Friendship(s)
3	Dating Someone
4	Married to Someone

**What do you like about being in Canada?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**What don't you like about being in Canada?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**What thing(s) would make you feel better about being in Canada?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]

**What thing(s) would make any other member(s) of your family (or persons you consider to be members of your family) feel better about being in Canada?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**What thing(s) would make your refugee or immigrant friends feel better about being in Canada?**

[textbox]

[textbox]

[textbox]

**Do you feel accepted by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does your family feel accepted by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not Applicable (because family not in Canada)

**Do most of your refugee/immigrant friends feel accepted by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Do you feel included in activities/events by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Do most other members of your family (or persons you consider to be members of your family) feel included in activities/events by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not Applicable (because family not in Canada)

**Do most of your refugee/immigrant friends feel included in activities/events by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Are you a Canadian citizen?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Are you glad you are a Canadian citizen?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Would you like to become a Canadian citizen?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Do your parents (or persons you consider to be your parents) want you to become a Canadian citizen?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Do you feel that you are becoming a Canadian?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Are your parents (or persons you consider to be your parents) Canadian citizens?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not Applicable

**Are they glad they are Canadian citizens?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No



**Would they like to become Canadian citizens?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Do your parents (or persons you consider to be your parents) feel they are becoming Canadian?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not Applicable

**Are most of your refugee and immigrant friends Canadian citizens?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Are most of those who are Canadian citizens happy that they are Canadian citizens?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Would they like to become Canadian citizens?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Do most of your refugee and immigrant friends feel they are becoming Canadian?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Do you feel that you are a member of any ethnic or cultural community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Which ones?**

[textbox]

[textbox]

[textbox]

**Do you feel that you are a member of any particular nation(s)?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

Which ones?

[textbox]

[textbox]

[textbox]

To which nation(s) do you feel the strongest attachment?

Code	Text
1	Canadian Nation
2	Other Nation(s)

To which nation(s) do you feel the stronger attachment?

[textbox]

[textbox]

In your opinion, how are public attitudes towards refugees/immigrants in each of the following places:

	Very good	Good	Bad	Very Bad
The world?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The United States?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Canada?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your province?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your city?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your neighbourhood?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, how are public attitudes towards refugees/immigrants in each of the following places:

	Very good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Not Applicable
Your school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your college or university?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your workplace?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How do you feel you have been treated by Canadians in most cases?

Code	Text
1	Very Good
2	Good
3	Bad
4	Very Bad
5	Sometimes Good/Very Good and Sometimes Bad/Very Bad

Have you ever been treated badly or very badly by Canadians?

Code	Text
1	Yes

Code	Text
2	No

**How do members of your family feel they have been treated by Canadians in most cases?**

Code	Text
1	Very Good
2	Good
3	Bad
4	Very Bad
5	Sometimes Good/Very Good and Sometimes Bad/Very Bad

**Have any of your family members ever been treated badly or very badly by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**How do most of your refugee and/or immigrant friends feel they are treated by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Very Good
2	Good
3	Bad
4	Very Bad
5	Sometimes Good/Very Good and Sometimes Bad/Very Bad

**Have any of your refugee and/or immigrant friends ever been treated badly or very badly by Canadians?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

How strong is your identification with, attachment to, or affinity with each of the following:

	Very Strong	Strong	Not Very Strong	Very Weak	Not Applicable
With the original country from where your parents were born?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With the country in which your family lived after leaving the country where your parents were born?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With Canada?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How strong is your family's identification with, attachment to, or affinity with each of the following?

	Very Strong	Strong	Not Very Strong	Very Weak	Not Applicable
With the original country from where your parents were born?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With the country in which your family lived after leaving the country where your parents were born?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With Canada?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you believe that Canada is a nice and welcoming place for refugees and immigrants?

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Sometimes Yes & Sometimes No

Do your family members believe Canada is a nice and welcoming place for refugees and immigrants?

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Sometimes Yes & Sometimes No
4	Not Applicable

Do most of your friends believe Canada is a nice and welcoming place for refugees and immigrants?

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Sometimes Yes & Sometimes No

Do most members of your ethnic, cultural, or religious community believe Canada is a nice and welcoming place for refugees and immigrants?

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Sometimes Yes & Sometimes No

**Which of the following are the most important influences on your beliefs regarding whether Canada is or is not a nice and welcoming place for immigrants and refugees? Please rank them from most important to least important with 1 being most important and 7 being least important.**

Code	Text
1	Family Discussions
2	Friendship Group Discussions
3	School/College/University Discussions
4	Workplace Discussions
5	Community Discussions
6	Television/Radio Discussions
7	Internet/Facebook/Twitter Discussions
8	Any Other Discussions? (If yes, indicate which discussion(s) below)

**If you selected "any other discussions", please explain:**  
[textbox]

**Which of the following are the most important influences on your family's beliefs regarding whether Canada is or is not a nice and welcoming place for immigrants and refugees? Please rank them from most important to least important with 1 being most important and 7 being least important.**

**Choices**

#	Code	Text	Attributes
1	1	Family Discussions	Visible
2	2	Friendship Group Discussions	Visible
3	3	School/College/University Discussions	Visible
4	4	Workplace Discussions	Visible
5	5	Community Discussions	Visible
6	6	Television/Radio Discussions	Visible
7	7	Internet/Facebook/Twitter Discussions	Visible
8	8	Any Other Discussions? (If yes, indicate which discussion(s) below)	Visible, Fixed

**If you selected "any other discussions", please explain:**  
[textbox]

**Which of the following are the most important influences on your family's beliefs regarding whether Canada is or is not a nice and welcoming place for immigrants and refugees? Please rank them from most important to least important with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.**

Code	Text
1	Personal Experiences
2	Experiences of Your Family Members
3	Experiences of Your Friends
4	Experiences of Your Acquaintances
5	Experiences of People You Don't Know Personally
6	Not Applicable (because no family members in Canada)

**Which of the following are the most important influences on your beliefs regarding whether Canada is or is not a nice and welcoming place for immigrants and refugees? Please rank them from most important to least important with 1 being most important and 5 being least important.**

Code	Text
1	Personal Experiences
2	Experiences of Your Family Members
3	Experiences of Your Friends
4	Experiences of Your Acquaintances
5	Experiences of People You Don't Know Personally

**What effect does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants have on your happiness? How does it make you feel?**

Code	Text
1	Very Happy
2	Happy
3	Sad
4	Very Sad
5	Angry
6	Very Angry

**What effect does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants have on your family's happiness? How does it make your family feel?**

Code	Text
1	Very Happy
2	Happy

Code	Text
3	Sad
4	Very Sad
5	Angry
6	Very Angry
7	Not Applicable (because family not in Canada)

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants give you a sense of being welcomed and belonging in Canada?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants give your family a sense of being welcomed and belonging in Canada?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not applicable (because family is not in Canada)

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants increase your desire to become involved in activities of the Canadian community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants increase your family's desire to become involved in activities of the Canadian community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not applicable (because family is not in Canada)

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants increase your friends and acquaintances desire to become involved in activities of the Canadian community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your identity as a member of the local community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your identity as a member of the refugee and immigrant community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your identity as a member of the Canadian and Provincial Community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your family's identity as a member of the local community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not Applicable (because family does not live in Canada)

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your family's identity as members of its refugee and immigrant community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not Applicable (because family does not live in Canada)



**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your family's identity as a member of the Canadian and Provincial community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No
3	Not Applicable (because family does not live in Canada)

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your friends' identity as members of the local community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your friends' identity as members of their refugee and immigrant community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Does public opinion in Canada regarding refugees and immigrants contribute to your friends' identity as members of the Canadian and Provincial community?**

Code	Text
1	Yes
2	No

**Can you think of any other thing(s) that have affected or will affect your happiness, sense of attachment to, affinity with, and identity with Canada?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]

**In addition to what you have already said, is there anything else you want to say regarding what should be done to help refugee youth and their families to improve their lives, happiness, and sense of belonging in Canada?**

[textbox]  
[textbox]  
[textbox]