

**REFUGEE FATHERS IN A NEW COUNTRY: THE CHALLENGES OF CULTURAL
ADJUSTMENT AND RAISING CHILDREN IN WINNIPEG, CANADA**

By

Shahrokh Rezania

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Manitoba in Partial
fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts

Department of Sociology,

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Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

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MASTER OF ARTS

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Abstract

This study explores how refugee fathers perceive their new situation, how they redefine themselves, and how they adjust to living in Canada. In addition, the study identifies and makes recommendations regarding services that can be put to place to assist refugee fathers facing the challenges of resettling in Winnipeg and Canada with their families. Ongoing protracted conflict in various regions of the world has led to annual increases in the number of people living in refugee situations. Winnipeg, Canada, is becoming home for many of these refugees. Refugees, and refugee fathers in particular, face challenges integrating into their new environment. For example, refugee fathers may experience specific challenges related to their cultural adjustment of fathering children in a new country which could have negative consequences on their resettlement and personal development. If positive support mechanisms are insufficient and if their basic human needs cannot be satisfied, then refugee fathers may become at risk of becoming dysfunctional and socially isolated, which can have a negative impact on family cohesion. In order to assist refugee fathers in their successful transitions into a foreign culture and society, it is essential to try to understand their perceptions and experiences of resettling.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose of Study

My reason for choosing the topic of refugees in general and refugee fathers' roles within their families in particular, is the result of my practicum with the Needs Center. The Needs Centre is a Winnipeg organization established to meet the needs of immigrants and refugees, and which has a special interest in meeting the needs of immigrant and refugee youth to prepare and equip them to integrate into Canadian society. After finishing my practicum in April 2013, I spoke to the Director of the organization and asked if there were any issues that she thought required research in order to serve the needs of refugees more constructively and efficiently. Mrs. Van Lou suggested I work on refugee fathers, because of their problems of culture shock and challenges with resettlement into Canadian society. I myself was a refugee in Germany (1986-1988) and went through all administrative procedures and ordinances designed for refugee claimants. My personal history as a refugee inspired me to accept the suggestion and to undertake this scholarly research.

Continuous conflicts in numerous regions of the world have led to yearly escalations in the number of people living in refugee circumstances. Winnipeg, Canada is becoming home to many of these refugees. Refugees, and in particular refugee fathers, are vulnerable to challenges of integration and adjustment into their new environment. If social supports provided by the refugee serving agencies are inadequate to meet their basic human needs, then it is possible that refugee fathers will not be able to fulfill their role as fathers in the family and will face difficulties integrating and adjusting into new host country. This study reflects the perceptions, and life experiences of war-affected refugee fathers living in Winnipeg with regards to their challenges,

struggles and coping strategies. The purposes of this study are two-fold: first, to understand from refugee fathers themselves how they experience adjustment to Canada, and secondly, to produce research that can help refugee-serving agencies better help their clients.

1.2 The Need for Research on Fathers in Refugee Families

Refugee families who arrive and settle in a western country must face and cope with a variety of predicaments. Learning the language of the receiving country is vital, as is finding a job, caring for children, and building a social network (friends, acquaintances and colleagues). Settlement also means connecting with their community, the new culture, and life style of the host country, at the same time as facing their own personal needs. In many parts of the world, a traditional cultural expectation is that fathers are the breadwinners of families, despite economic exigencies (or the high likelihood of economic exigencies) that force women to enter the job market. This might be contravened by cultural attitudes of women as housewives, who do not work outside of the home, as their role is caring for children. These post-migration circumstances may pose great challenges for refugee fathers. This raises numerous questions which I address in my thesis research. Perhaps the most important question is how do refugee fathers face and attempt to overcome cultural differences and contradictions with regard to their traditional roles as breadwinners, agents for socializing their children, and preservers of home country customs and traditions? A further question: are serving agencies adequately prepared with supporting programs to help refugee fathers to successfully adjust to a new culture and society? When refugee fathers do not have necessary support mechanisms, the risk is that the magnitude of challenges that they face might undermine their ability to cope and could lead to family disintegration.

I conducted my study on the challenges of refugee fathers to try to fill the gap in this relatively underexplored area of academic and policy-related research. This research attempts to add to existing research on refugee fathers and their adjustment challenges with respect to factors like employment, housing, language acquisition, domestic relationships, and network building.

Furthermore, the study both gives prominence to the perceptions, experiences, and challenges of refugee fathers, and it also identifies coping strategies that they may use to deal with adjustment challenges. This knowledge can inform government and refugee serving agencies to develop and finance appropriate programming for refugee fathers and their families.

Finally, and very importantly, the interviews conducted with twenty-four refugee fathers for my study provided these men with an opportunity to describe the concerns, experiences and challenges they faced while resettling in Winnipeg. In doing so, the study provided the condition where refugee fathers had the opportunity to reveal their untold stories, experiences, worries, wishes, and goals in a confidential and supportive setting with the interviewer.

1.3 Chapter Organization

This thesis is divided into 14 chapters including the Introduction. It is important to first provide an overview of refugees as a global problem as background context for understanding the experiences of refugees who come to Canada and settle in Winnipeg. In this regard, the literature review in Chapter 2 discusses a range of themes. First, I provide an overview of refugees as global problem. Second, statistics on refugee families in Canada and Winnipeg are

introduced. Third, Chapter 2 reviews the existing published Canadian and international research on refugee fathers concerning their challenges during their resettlement in Western countries.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology of this study. A qualitative face to face interview approach is used, involving 24 refugee fathers with a various timespan of settlement in Winnipeg. The aim of these interviews was to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and perceptions of refugee fathers living in Winnipeg with regards to their challenges and coping strategies.

Throughout history since ancient times, people have been forced, for varying reasons, to leave their home and settle in a new neighbourhood or even in another country (permanently or temporary). In this regard, Chapter 4 presents a concise history, including a review of historical records on refugees in pre-modern and modern times, and factors that lead people to become refugees in the first place. This discussion provides a deeper understanding of the current problems of refugees, in general, regarding the troubles faced in any developed or developing countries.

Chapter 5 briefly explains the process that has led to the recognition of international refugee rights. Recognizing the rights of refugees in the international spectrum became a matter of concern to the international community and was addressed in the context of international cooperation and burden-sharing under the League of Nations to deal with the continual waves of refugees after the First World War. This process developed further after the Second World War through action undertaken by the United Nations. The United Nations pursued two goals: first, they oversaw the management of numerous refugee situations in all regions of the world and, second, they tried to develop appropriate laws for refugees by governments and states. Current

refugee policies in Western countries are also considered, including how these policies have undergone modifications. Finally, the history of refugees in Canada is reviewed.

Chapter 6 discusses refugee families. First, it examines the family as a social institution. In general, the family as a social institution is seen as the basis of a society, undertaking numerous tasks including socialization of children, arranging roles of family members, developing certain forms of behavior in a family and so on. Policies, decisions of other social institutions and economic processes at the international level also impact significantly the family regarding size, roles of members, status, economic levels, and family mobility and so on. Second, the chapter examines the impacts of globalization on the changes in family institutions that can also be seen to affect refugee families. Third, I examine new challenges facing families in Western countries and the numerous challenges of refugee families in Western host countries.

Refugee communities are remarkably diverse. As they resettle in a Western country, they continue their cultural habits which might be at odds with the mainstream culture of the host country. Obtaining cultural background information of and therefore better understanding refugee communities can be conducive for refugee-serving agencies in order to incorporate and adopt new cultural knowledge and promote respect for negotiation and collaboration within the refugee population, rather than simply explaining the laws of the host country to them. As many of the fathers interviewed in my study come from the Middle East and Africa, Chapter 7 provides a discussion of the traditional family structures and cultural values associated with Arabic, Muslim and African cultures. This discussion of the cultural characteristics of the refugee populations from the Middle East and northern and central Africa is aimed at placing in context and adding further to the knowledge of cultural practices gained directly from refugee fathers who were interviewed of this study.

Chapter 8 briefly explains the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and notes the impacts of PTSD and other mental health issues among refugees. Refugees are at risk of a variety of mental health issues including PTSD. Estimates of prevalence rates for PTSD among refugees range from 39 to 100 per cent, compared to just one per cent in the general population (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Resettlement Handbook 2002, p. 236). Consequently, a discussion of the topic is important for understanding challenges facing refugee families and helping to alert refugee-service providers to the possibility of PTSD and other mental health issues in refugee populations.

As refugee fathers in particular resettle into their new country, they experience changes along with many new prospects in their resettlement. Also they face fresh challenges of adjustment in a new society with very different norms and values. The challenges might begin with renegotiating their own roles; for example, as supervisor and disciplinarian their children; gender roles; and in marital relationships. Chapters 9 and 10 present the first part of the results and discussion of the interview-based research findings of my study, drawing on a sample of 24 refugee fathers in Winnipeg. In particular, these chapters focus on the key themes that emerged from interviews that refugee fathers identified as changes and challenges they have experienced during their resettlement. The key themes in Chapter 9 are organized into eight categories of: Perceptions of Major Changes since Their Settlement in Winnipeg, Perceptions of Challenges of Being a Father in Winnipeg, Positive Points of Being a Father in Winnipeg, Negative Points of Being a Father in Winnipeg, Issues Around Discipline and Parenting, Issues Related to Schooling Children and Supervising Children's Access to Computers and the Internet, How Fathers Have Changed Their Discipline Strategies and, finally, Fathers' Aspirations for Children. In turn, Chapter 10 presents findings related to key themes including: Difficulties Adjusting to

New Parental Role Expectations, How Fathers Deal with Challenges of Adjusting to New Family/Marital Role Expectations, and Coping with Marital Disagreements.

Refugee fathers face not only challenges related to renegotiating their status and roles within the family but also a range of challenges which prevent refugee fathers from successfully adjusting to and integrating into a Western country, thus exacerbating their difficult living conditions and the subsequent impacts on their family. Chapter 11 presents the second part of the findings of my study related to these issues. The key themes in Chapter 11 are organized into four categories: Challenges of Housing, Issues Related to Welfare Income, and Issues Related to Illiteracy and Credential Recognition.

Chapter 12 presents the third and final part of my interview-based research findings related to fathers' perceptions of personal needs and experiences with social-service agencies. Social-service agencies pursue various goals: first, they promote opportunities for their client with varying needs (i.e. at-risk people, children, families) in order to participate and develop in society; second, empowering people in need to assume responsibilities and achieve goals; third, assessing people's circumstances in order to allocate the resources and plan responses to their needs; and fourth, intervening and providing services to achieve change through provision of professional and viable support. Refugee-serving agencies play significant roles in facilitating adjustment challenges of refugees including refugee fathers by learning about their circumstances and personal needs and allocating adequate services and resources in order to empower them. Accessibility and transparency to and of services can be very beneficial for refugee fathers, helping them to know where to go and which services are available for coping with their problems. The lack or inadequacy of services by social-services agencies contributes to maintaining the status quo of people in need. The key themes of Chapter 12 focus on factors

relating to Fathers' Perceptions of Personal Needs and Needed Refugee Services. The key themes in the Chapter are: Perceptions of Personal Needs; Coping with Problems; Seeking Help, Where?; and Fathers' Recommendations on Needed Services for Refugees.

Chapter 12 also provides an overall summary analysis of my interview-based data by cohort. This final sub-section highlights similarities and differences across three cohorts of fathers included in my study, divided according to the time span of their resettlement in Winnipeg (less than 3 years; 1 to 3 years, 3 to 5 years, and more than 5 years). Data were collected by using the same questions and data collection methods for all subjects in order to obtain accurate information about their perceptions and experiences. This analysis points to many similarities, yet also some notable differences, in the views and perceptions of fathers that are linked to the length of their resettlement in Winnipeg.

Chapter 13 presents the recommendations for social policy makers and refugee service organizations that stem from my study. These recommendations are based on both the views expressed by refugee fathers interviewed for my study and the findings of previous research that has addressed the issue of improving the programs and social services provided to refugees.

Chapter 14 is the conclusion which summarizes my qualitative research and highlights the key findings regarding the challenges and experiences of refugee fathers living in Winnipeg.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 An Overview of Refugees as Global Problem

Refugees are one of today's most acute humanitarian global problems. (UNHCR/WFP, 2006; Whittaker, 2006; Bariagaber, 2006). Global statistics about refugees over the last three decades show that the international movement of refugees is high. Based on a 2014 report,

the number of people forcibly displaced worldwide has reached 59.5 [million] people at the end of 2014. An estimated 13.9 million individuals were newly displaced due to conflict or persecution in 2014. (UNHCR Global Trends, 2014, p.2)

UNHCR Global Trends (2014) has issued a report with data on the territorial distribution of refugees in the hosting countries and in source countries worldwide, which is summarized in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Population of Refugees by Hosting and Source Countries, 2014

Major refugee-hosting countries in 2014

Major source countries of refugees in 2014

Hosting Countries	Population of Refugees	Source Countries	Population of Refugees
Turkey	1,600,000	Syrian Arab Rep	3,900,000
Pakistan	1,500,000	Afghanistan	2,600,000
Lebanon	1,150,000	Somalia	1,120,000
Islamic Rep of Iran	982,000	Sudan	666,000
Ethiopia	659,500	South Sudan	616,200
Jordan	654,100	Dem. Rep. of the Cong	516,800
Kenya	551,400	Myanmar	479,000
Chad	452,900	Central Africa Rep	412,000
Uganda	385,500	Iraq	369,000
China	301,000	Eritrea	363,100

It is estimated that globally some 6.4 million refugees (45 percent) were in a protracted situation by the end of 2014, which occurs when: “refugees of the same nationality have been in exile for five years or longer in any given asylum country” (UNHCR Global Trends, 2014, p.11).

In addition,

“more than 5.9 million refugees under UNHCR’s mandate (42%) resided in countries where the GDP per capita was below USD 5,000. Developing regions hosted 86 per cent of the world’s refugees – at 12.4 million persons, the highest value in more than two decades”. The Least Developed Countries provided asylum to 3.6 million refugees or 25 per cent of the global total (UNHCR Global Trends, 2014, p.2). A record high of nearly 1.7 million individuals submitted applications for asylum or refugee status in 2014” (UNHCR Global Trend, 2014, p.2).

These figures show that refugees are a major international problem. Refugee families are part of the whole.

2.2 Refugee Families in Canada

The Government of Canada reports that “24,049 refugees and their families arrived in Canada in 2013 (2013). Of these 5,790 were government-assisted refugees (GARs), 6,396 were privately sponsored refugees, (PSRs), 8,149 refugees landed in Canada (RLCs), and 3,714 refugees were dependents. The number of refugees who were dependents was 4,858 in 2012.”¹

2.3 Refugees in Winnipeg

In the recent years many visible minorities - including refugees - from many countries have settled in Winnipeg’s inner city. Winnipeg’s inner city has become more diverse in the recent years. In 2001, foreign-born residents numbered 110,000 people or 16.5 percent of the total population, and the city was home to 82,600 visible minorities or 12.5 percent of the total population. Statistics Canada (cited in Carter, 2009) predicts the visible minority population in Winnipeg will increase to 115,000, a 37 percent increase, by 2017. Over the last decade, refugees

¹ “Government-Assisted Refugees: (GARs). Convention Refugees are selected from abroad by the government of Canada for resettlement. GARs hold permanent resident, (PR), status upon arrival and receive financial and other support from the Government of Canada for up to one year. Privately- Sponsored Refugees, (PSRs): Convention Refugees are selected from abroad by a private sponsor, who agrees to provide financial and other support for one year. PSRs hold PR status upon arrival. Refugee Claimants/Asylum Claimants: Foreign nationals, who apply for refugee protection from within Canada, or at a port of entry. Once their asylum claims are heard and approved by the Immigration and Refugee Board, (IRB), they can apply for PR status. Refugees Landed in Canada, (RLCs): Refugee Claimants, who have their asylum claim approved by the IRB. Convention Refugees: People who meet the refugee definition according to the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. GARs, PSRs and RLCs are all Convention Refugees. Refugee Dependents: Are the spouses and children of refugee claimants, who are included in application for refugee status.” (AMSSA Strengthening Diversity in BC. Info Sheet (May 13, 2013))

made up to 20 percent of the new comers in Winnipeg's inner city (Carter, Polevychok, and Friesen, 2006). Most refugees settle in the inner city, an area of substantive urban decline (Carter, 2009) and they often have few skills necessary to gain employment, as well as little money (Carter et al., 2006). Carter (2009) conducted a study on the living conditions of privately sponsored refugees. He found that the average income was about half that of Winnipeg households, and 68 percent were in poverty – three times the level of the average Winnipeg household (p.105). The socioeconomic marginalization experienced by many refugee families living in Winnipeg's inner city can lead to new problems for refugee households, for example, changing the refugee intact family to dysfunctional family where the family cohesion fades, or the risks for refugee youth who might be drawn into illegal activities (Rossiter and Rossiter, 2009).

Based on the Manitoba Immigration Fact report, 384 of Canadian's government-assisted refugees who come to Manitoba in 2013 were from Uganda, Kenya, Somalia and South Africa, while 979 privately-sponsored refugees came from Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia (Manitoba Immigration Facts: Statistical Report, 2013). Along this line, based on the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2013): "There were 1,425 refugees that landed in Winnipeg in 2013 including 765 males and 660 females. Of the 765 males, 572 were single, 189 were married or common-law. Of the 765 males, 202 were between 0 and 14 years of age, 503 between 15 and 44 years of age and 60 were 45 years of age or more." (Prepared by: Labour and Immigration Manitoba, 2013). These data show the relevance of research that particularly can be conducted on refugee fathers and their problems in Winnipeg, Canada since very little is known about the resettlement experiences of refugee fathers either as Government-Assisted Refugees: (GARs) ,or

as Privately- Sponsored Refugees, (PSRs), or as Refugees Landed in Canada, (RLCs), or as Refugee Claimants.

Refugee families have unique histories. Dramatic events such as war, violence, rape, torture, incarceration, length of time living in refugee camps in a foreign country, and resettling in a western country (for example, Canada), cause problems adjusting to the new country. For example, in 2005 the Needs Center in Winnipeg conducted interviews with 130 war-affected, children and youth aged between 5 and 18 years, as well as face-to-face interviews with 184 parents (129 mothers and 55 fathers). They found that approximately two-thirds of the parents and families of refugee children had lived in refugee camps. The average time was 12 years, ranging from 8 months to 30 years (Bhuiyan, 2008).

2.4 Challenges Faced by Fathers in Refugee Families

Refugee families who arrive and settle in a western country face and cope with a variety of predicaments. Learning the language of the receiving country is vital, as is finding a job, caring for children, and building a social network (friends, acquaintances and colleagues). Settlement also means connecting with their community and the new culture and life style of the host country, at the same time as trying to meet their own internal needs. In many parts of the world, a traditional cultural expectation is that fathers will be the breadwinners of families, despite the economic exigencies, or the high likelihood of economic exigencies that force women to enter the job market. This might be contravened by cultural attitudes of mothers as housewives, who do not work outside of the home, but care for children instead. These post-migration circumstances may pose great challenges for refugee fathers. How do refugee fathers

overcome cultural differences over their traditional roles as breadwinners, agents for socializing their children to be good citizens, and preservers of the customs and traditions of their home country? In this context, the resettlement of refugee families turns out to be a major challenge for refugee fathers and can be seen as a proof test for refugee fathers. They must learn to cope with issues of resettlement at two levels: the internal or psychological level (i.e., which involves learning how to maintain their back home status along with the culturally ascribed privileges, while rearranging the relationships with other family members [spouse, children], and rethinking expectations; and at the external or practical level (i.e. which involves dealing with issues that are related to the job market, such as language fluency, obtaining job experience in Canada, foreign credential recognition, and lack of Canadian references) (Carter, 2009).

The challenges that refugee fathers face in resettlement in a new country are complex and various. If the refugee serving agencies of the host society fail to help them to overcome these challenges, then the chance of a successful transition for refugee fathers shrinks. As a result, it is important to understand the complex and various challenges of refugee fathers and how these challenges might negatively affect them.

2.5 Who Is A Refugee? Who Is An Immigrant?

The literature reviewed in the remaining part of this chapter is predominantly about refugee fathers and their adjustment difficulties to a new society. However, some of the literature reviewed also deals more generally with immigrant fathers and their adaptation problems to a new society. Before turning to research, it is important to discuss specific differences between immigrants and refugees, and also to explain in more detail why literature on immigrant fathers

is useful for understanding the resettlement problems of refugee fathers. Immigrants and refugees differ on a number of points. The United Nations defines an international migrant

as a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective ... of the country of arrival the person will be a long-term immigrant (United Nations, 1998 cited in Sher, 2010, p. 2)

Migrants, unlike refugees, are not forced to move to and settle in a new country. Instead, they travel to pursue personal, familial, social, financial, economic, and political goals. Among these, economic opportunities seem to predominate over other goals (Ward, Bochner, and Furnham, 2001, p. 192). In contrast, a refugee is someone who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling, to avail himself of the protection of that country (United Nations 1951 cited in Ward et al., 2001, p.219).

Refugees can be distinguished from immigrants because their relocation and resettlement are involuntary (Kim, 1988; Mayada, 1983). Secondly, refugees’ pre-migration experiences often include calamities in the form of loss, torture, incarceration, destruction, witnessing of massacre etc. Third, their resettlement in a new country is usually permanent (Beiser, Dion, Gotowiec, Hyman, and Vu, 1995; Majodina, 1989). Fourth, they are rarely prepared to resettle in a new society with respect to language proficiency, financial resources, or adequate skills that might contribute to mitigating the difficulties of relocation in a new society (Ward et al., 2001, p. 220). Finally, refugees mainly come from countries whose culture is often different from culture of the receiving countries. However, both immigrants and refugees go through most of the same

process of intercultural contacts with the culture of the host country when the culture of the receiving country is substantially different from their country of origin.

Common predicaments of intercultural contacts include conflicting values, intergenerational family issues, mental health issues in the form of depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder, issues related to entering the job market, child rearing, and network building. As a result, reviewing research on immigrants and the experiences of immigrant fathers can be informative and useful. In particular, it can help identify research questions that can be asked in studying the resettlement experiences of refugee fathers and to discover the types of counselling and services that may be of benefit to them.

Refugee families who have settled in western countries such as Canada have been subjects of scholarly research from a number of perspectives. Research has been conducted, for example, on: post-migration stress (Hyman, Vu, and Beiser, 2000; Khanlou, 2008; O' Mahony, Donnelly, Raffin Bouchal, and Este, 2013) issues related to refugee women with a history of sexualised violence (Yohani and Hagen, 2010), and refugee determination systems (Collacott, 2010; Jones, 2008; Brouwer, 2005). There is also a small but important body of research that has been completed on the experiences of refugee fathers, which is the main focus of the following literature review.

2.6 Literature on Refugee Fathers

Roer-Strier published an important article in 1996 aimed at developing a concept for understanding how immigrant parents adapt to a new host country. Roer-Strier's (1996) goals were to introduce and explain: (1) the meaning of the concept of adaptive adult image; (2) coping

strategies and how they are used by immigrant parents while resettling in a new country; and finally how socializing agents (including family therapists) in the host country can use the proposed “*adaptive adult image*” conceptual framework to become acquainted with the norms, beliefs, and ideologies of child-rearing practiced by immigrant parents.

Roer-Strier (1996) points out that immigrant parents face major changes in their physical, cultural, social settings and, particular challenges with respect to child-rearing practices and ideologies. According to Roer-Strier, parents in every culture carry an *adaptive adult image* that underlies their child-rearing ideologies and practices. In turn, immigrant parents practice their own adaptive adult images while resettling in the host society with a different culture. Roer-Strier argues that the *adaptive adult image* refers to a socializing metaphoric characterization of child-rearing ideologies and practices. According to him, this characterization reflects different aspects of cultural contexts, such as physical aspect (for example, geographic location, and climate), social aspects (for example, political regime, social codes, and family systems), and ethnic aspects (for example, religion, heritage, customs, language). Roer-Strier claims that the concept of adaptive adult image embraces the parent’s socioeconomic status, level of education, and professional orientation as well. Questions and expectations such as “what is an ideal child?”, “what kind of person would you like your child to become when he (or she) grows older?”, and “what are the most desirable traits in a child?” have roots in the values, beliefs, customs and rules of child rearing- practised in a given society. In other words, a parent’s *adaptive adult image* is formed by values, beliefs, customs, rules, and ceremonies related to child rearing and vary significantly across society, culture and subcultures.

According to Roer-Strier, clashes of conflicting adaptive images occur when the immigrant parents’ adaptive adult image differs from adaptive adult images of the host culture’s

socializing agents (teachers, peers, counselling therapists and so forth). For example, in Israeli society, the adaptive adult image is built on values, norms and expectations intended for creating a self-governing along with a self-confident child, whereas the “adaptive adult image” of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Israel focuses on maintaining a tradition of distinct roles for girls and boys. Roer-Strier explores the extent to which the effectiveness of coping strategies applied by immigrants rests on variables such as family characteristics, cultural context, attitudes of socializing agents, and the extent of tolerance of pluralism in the host culture. In this regard, he argues that overcoming cultural differences should be regarded “as situation that can be handled by choosing the most effective strategy for a particular family in a given culture” (Roer-Strier, 1996, p. 2).

To classify types of coping strategies, Roer-Strier studied data collected over a 7 year period. These data were derived from clinical work with immigrant families, training programs for professional or socializing agents in Israel (educators, social workers, educational psychologists, and family physicians), and interviews with immigrant parents. The data were analyzed using a Grounded Theory in order to identifying the coping strategies used normally by parents. According to the author, the traditional “uni-cultural” style (the Kangaroo), the “culturally disoriented” style (the Cuckoo), and “bi-cultural” style (the Chameleon) are the most common coping strategies used by parents.

The traditional “uni-cultural” style is used by parents to raise children in accordance with the culture of origin in order to preserve the original *adaptive adult image*. Parents who use this coping strategy resist any intervention from outside of the family and evaluate such intervention as a threat. According to Roer-Strier, deploying this coping strategy may have some merits, including: (1) the low level of acculturation stress due to the experiencing minimal changes; (2)

fulfilling of parental roles with confidence and consistency; (3) maintaining of cohesion and fighting foreign influences; (4) less ostracizing of a child by family and community members while child attempts to adopt the values of the host culture. The second model, the “culturally disoriented” style, refers to a rapid assimilation of children in the host culture because the family tends to disqualify itself as an effective socializing agent; accordingly, the formal and informal socializing agents in the host country assume responsibility for the child’s well-being and for fulfilling the role of the main socializing agent. The third strategy is the “bi-cultural” style that refers to teaching children to personally adapt to being part of both cultures while at the same time teaching them to acknowledge and respect differences between the values and socialization practices of each culture.

According to Roer-Strier, a variety of factors contribute to the choice of coping strategy. The first factor is related to the parental appraisal criteria, that is to say, whether parents perceive the host culture as superior as or more advanced than their culture of origin. If the response is positive, then they tend to adapt the “culturally disoriented” (Cuckoo) strategy. If parents perceive their culture of origin as being more advanced than the culture of the host, they incline to adapt the “uni-cultural” (Kangaroo) strategy. The second factor is the motivational conditions of immigrants, which determine the process of the choice of coping strategy in the receiving country. In addition to motivational conditions, the extent and degree of cultural differences between both cultures are important for the choice of strategy. The final factor is the socio-economic changes that affect the cohesion of family and thus can influence the process of the choice of coping strategy.

The concepts developed by Roer-Strier can be used to help study and understand the coping strategies employed by immigrant and refugee parents, and as such are relevant to my

proposed research on refugee fathers. In particular, the concepts help to better understand the logic behind different child rearing practices. The knowledge of these concepts can also help in devising interview-research questions for my thesis research aimed at learning more about the specific types of coping strategies used by refugee fathers to help their children adjust to a new host country, and the challenges and difficulties fathers face in this regard. Designing interview questions that ask refugee fathers themselves about their styles of child rearing, may also help to identify issues that need to be addressed in improving government policy and programs for refugee fathers and the services provided to them by immigrant and refugee aid organizations.

In their study of immigrant and refugee fathers, Shimoni et al (2003) sought to identify the strengths of immigrant and refugee fathers as well as potential barriers with respect to their adjustment to a new country. Shimoni et al (2003) mentioned that there were few studies on fathers' engagement with children and barriers to their involvement in childrearing. They also noted that there were few known effective strategies to reduce these barriers in a new country. The authors argued that immigrant and refugee fathers in a new host country face a variety of stressors including underemployment, unemployment, and gender- role reversal if their spouse is working outside of the home. The stress related to role reversal is also likely to be felt more strongly if the spouse works outside the home while the father is underemployed or unemployed, since this means the father is more likely to be socially isolated. This status can make immigrant and refugee fathers feel depressed, uprooted, and lost. Although there are numerous intervention and prevention programs to meet the needs of children, many of these programs are directed at mothers, and programs rarely address the roles of fathers. According to Shimoni et al (2003), refugee and immigrant fathers face additional barriers such as language inefficiency, lack of

information about services, reluctance of service providers to help them, and fear of stigmatization and deportation, which may hamper them to fulfill their father roles.

In their study, Shimoni et al (2003) reported on research they undertook in order to understand: (1) the difficulties and stressors of immigrant fathers; (2) the meaning of fatherhood by them; (3) their values, beliefs, joys, and the challenges they face; and (4) what immigrant fathers bring to Canada, and what Canada provides for to them. Another purpose of their research was to understand fathers' strengths, and use these strengths to design a model that would build on the personal skills, interests, ability, and culture of the individual. The team (2003) tried to avoid the pitfall of what has been referred to as "a deficit model", namely, converting environmental risks into personal deficits. They chose in-depth interviews as the method of providing qualitative data exploring fathering from the perspectives of the participants. The interview questions they developed were based on a review of the literature and from their previous research, discussions with program staff over the five years, and direct contact with participants of the project. The questions were aimed at gaining information about men's feelings, values, and beliefs towards fathering as well as similarities and differences in fathering in Canada and their home country. The interviews were conducted in the participant's first language through the assistance of translators.

Shimoni et al (2003) chose purposeful sampling and a snowball sample of 24 immigrants (obtained with the assistance of Calgary Immigrant Aid Society and ESL teachers). Participants were recruited from the former Yugoslavia, South America, South East Asia, and China, each of

whom was the parents of a preschool child². The average length of time they had been in Canada was 2.75 years, and their average age was 38 years. The researchers found that participants struggled with respect to their employment and being unemployed. They concluded that immigrant fathers “were positively engaged with their children, as they faced the struggles of acculturation, language acquisition, and employment ... and had a desire to learn more while assuming more child-rearing responsibilities in Canada” (Shimoni et al., 2003, p. 565). They recommend that the most important service for immigrant fathers is intense support to learn English. The authors also suggest that immigrant -serving agencies should make efforts to “include fathers in mainstream programs or to create new opportunities that are specifically geared to fathers who are facing the challenges of immigration while taking on childrearing responsibilities” (Shimoni et al., 2003, p. 566) .The authors further recommended that immigrant-serving agencies develop programs that support fathers who try to preserve their own cultural heritage, and at the same time want to be successful in Canada. According to the researchers, understanding the bi-cultural model (of adjusting to the mainstream culture outside the home, while inside the home following the culture of their home country) can help professionals to “explore what cultural elements are significant for fathers to maintain in their home setting and how these choices can be respected” (Shimoni et al., 2003, p. 566)

In another Canadian study, Este and Tachble (2009a) conducted research on refugee fathers facing a variety of challenges including unemployment, social isolation and the alteration of their roles within their families. Their study was designed to explore the perceptions and experiences of Sudanese refugee men as fathers in the Canadian society and to learn more about

² Participants were recruited from the former Yugoslavia (2 from Yugoslavian and as 2 from Bosnian) South America (1 from El Salvador, 4 from Colombia, 1 from Chile) South East Asia, (3 from India, 1 from Nepal, and 3 from Pakistan) China (4 from the Mainland China, 1 from Hong Kong, and 1 from Taiwan).

their acculturation experiences. Twenty Christian Sudanese refugee fathers were interviewed. Interviews were conducted in English, along with the language of the respondents and were translated into English, with interviews ranging in length from 45 to 90 minutes. All of the fathers interviewed had been in Canada for less than 10 years, and their ages were between 25 and 57. Eleven were landed immigrants, eight were Canadian citizens, and one did not disclose his status.

The following questions were asked in the interviews: (a) what does being a father mean to you? (b) What values guide your behaviour as a father? (c) How did you learn to be a father? (d) How...have you and your family benefited by coming to Canada? (e) Please describe how you spend time with your children; (f) How are decisions made in your family? (g) What are your aspirations for your children? (h) What are the major concerns that you have in relation to your children? (i) what challenges do you face in Canadian society that affects your role as a father? , and (j) what changes, if any, have you experienced in your role as a father in Canada? Este and Tachble (2009a, p. 460).

All of the interviewees expressed the opinion that fatherhood was a serious responsibility involving commitment to, and the care of, all family members. They also stated that fathers should teach their children to become good citizens with a strong sense of right and wrong, to give back to the community, to respect others and their parents, and to behave well with elders. Acting upon African traditions and customs seemed to be of major importance for the guidance of behaviour of fathers. Fathers thought that providing a good education to their children was a valuable goal in ensuring a better life. Their response to the question of, “How did you learn to be a father?” was that they had learned from their fathers and other male members of the family.

However, the study found that the long working hours was a significant factor in preventing fathers from spending time with their children.

Este and Tachble (2009a, p. 464) found that many issues to pose challenges to fathers' roles: unemployment; under-employment along with poor-paying jobs; (due to racism and discrimination or the lack of recognition of their credentials); challenges in adapting to Canadian society with respect to the discipline of their children (the perception that children have more rights in Canada); lack of social support due to a the lack of close-knit communities and extended families, friends, neighbours; and role changes such as sharing domestic tasks at home (i.e. sharing the kitchen – in Sudan, “a man does not go into the kitchen”).

The efforts and stressors experienced by Sudanese refugee fathers along with Russian immigrant fathers in Canada are discussed in another study by the same authors. In this study, Este and Tachble (2009b) reported the research they undertook aimed at developing cross-cultural understandings of fatherhood among fathers from both Russian (immigrants) and Sudanese communities in Calgary, Alberta. Their criteria for selecting fathers to participate in the study included: (1) that the length of their residency in Canada should range between a minimum of six months and a maximum of 10 years; and, (2) the study should include fathers who had children up to twelve years of age. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions and experiences of Sudanese refugee fathers and Russian immigrant fathers relating to their fathering roles.

To conduct this research, the authors interviewed fourteen fathers from the former Soviet Union who had settled in Canada between 2000 and 2005. All of them had at least a diploma or certificate from a college. Five had a bachelor's degree, five had a master's degree, three had a

diploma or certificate, and one had doctoral degree. They interviewed the participants for between 45 minutes to 90 minutes, asking about: their understanding of the meaning of fatherhood; the values that guided their behavior as fathers; how they learned to be a father; the nature of their interactions with their children; aspirations for their children; decision-making in the family; benefits gained from their move to Canada; and the challenges they encountered as fathers in a new society” (Este and Tachble, 2009b, p. 144). The researchers drew on interview data from a sample of twenty Christian Sudanese refugee fathers, who were likely the same refugee fathers interviewed in their other study. However, in this study they reported additional educational data for their sample of Sudanese fathers, noting that fourteen of them had some postsecondary education and that nine of these were university graduates. Fourteen of the participants were employed, two of them were seeking employment, and four were students. The ages of the participants were between 25 and 57 years old.

Both the Sudanese and Russian fathers stated the father is a provider; their primary responsibility is as a protector for their children, and the head of family and responsible for the whole family. Both groups saw the role of the father as a teacher of the child to become a good citizen, (with a strong sense of right and wrong), and with respect for other people in their interactions. Both groups valued education and educational opportunities as the main avenue for making a good life for their children. Both groups mentioned if they had spare time, they would engage in a variety of activities with their children, from playing with them or swimming to reading. However, the increasing cost of living in Calgary in the last three years has forced them to work multiple jobs to provide for their families. Regarding decision-making related to their children, some Russians mentioned that both parents are the major decision-makers. Others stated when it came to their children’s schooling, their wives were the primary decision makers.

Sudanese fathers affirmed that decisions related to children were made jointly. Both groups expressed that underemployment, the lack of recognition of their credentials, and a lack of experience in the Canadian workforce were considered as obstacles.

For both groups of fathers, underemployment and unemployment were the major concern. These obstacles were seen as frustrating because the fathers were not able to provide things needed by their families and children. Both groups expressed that there were no family members on whom to rely, unlike in their countries of origin. They also expressed concern about not playing a significant role in their children's school education and of losing control over them as they become teenagers. According to the authors, the Sudanese families reflect the Sudanese society with clear roles and expectations for adults and children, in which children are expected to respect and obey their parents, other family members, adults and neighbors. Sudanese society, in the words of Hynie (2008 cited in Este and Tachble, 2009b, p.151), is "collectivist" and emphasizes group harmony, obedience, and a strict hierarchical relationship.

Correspondingly, in such relational structures, "Men are responsible for their family's economic upkeep" (Hynie, 2008 cited in Este and Tachble, 2009b, p.151). Because Sudanese fathers cannot fulfill the ascribed cultural roles, they feel frustrated and view themselves as unsuccessful fathers and husbands, and not as valuable social members. Accordingly, they may feel alienated and marginalized. The same feelings of frustration and worry were experienced by the Russian fathers, due to the lack of meaningful employment to provide financial stability for their families. Racism and discrimination were crucial issues that the Sudanese fathers expressed during the interview. Racism, however, was not mentioned by the Russian fathers.

In the current study, research by Este and Tachble (2009a and 2009b) is used to design research questions aimed at: (1) obtaining knowledge about meaning of fatherhood among refugee fathers; (2) understanding the post- immigration predicaments they face in Canada; (3) and learning how refugee fathers identify themselves with their primary role in family as breadwinners (with respect to their cultural background). The interview questionnaire is described in Chapter 3 and can be found in Appendix A. One of the aims of this study is to obtain knowledge from asking such questions that can help immigrant and refugee service agencies identify issues that need to be addressed to improve their policies and programs for refugee fathers.

A final important study that has implications for my research was conducted by Verhoeven (2012) on posttraumatic stress disorder and its effects on parent-child relations in refugee families. This study reported on 80 parent-child dyads, consisting of 29 refugee fathers and 51 mothers, with young children aged 18 to 40 months. Participants were recruited from Dutch asylum seeker centers and from client groups at Centrum 45, a national treatment and expertise center for psychological trauma in the Netherlands. Refugee and asylum seekers often experience high levels of posttraumatic stress which is manifested in flashbacks, nightmares, hyper vigilance, sleeping problems, concentration difficulties, anxiety, depression, psychosomatic disorders, grief-related disorder, crises of existential meaning and drug or alcohol abuse. It is also known that as the severity of a mother's traumatic experiences goes up, her availability to meet the needs of children goes down, and she becomes more emotionally withdrawn from her child (Verhoeven, 2012). The specific questions raised in this study were: Are these finding applicable to fathers? How do traumatized refugee fathers interact with their children? Are there differences between the traumatized mothers and fathers regarding their

interaction with their children? Overall, the purpose of this study was to explore the quality of the father-child interactions among refugees and asylum seekers who had settled in the Netherlands and who had been exposed to traumatic events. Another purpose of this study was to examine whether parents with posttraumatic stress symptoms were less sensitive and more hostile during the interactions they had with their children.

Two approaches were used to measure the quality of interaction. One approach was operationalized as Emotional Availability. Data were collected during a free play session, through videotaping parent-child interaction for 15 minutes, and using the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire to measure a parent's post-traumatic stress. Their findings were that refugee fathers as well as mothers with post-traumatic stress, (anxiety, depression, psychosomatic disorder, grief-related disorders, crises of existential meaning and drug or alcohol abuse), have below par involvement with their children, are less sensitive, and are more hostile and intrusive (intrusive in the sense of attempts to control the child, and interrogating the child about what he or she did, and when). Overall, the findings of the research showed that: (1) there is no difference in posttraumatic stress between fathers and mothers pertaining the quality of the parent –child interaction; and (2) both mothers and fathers who suffer from posttraumatic stress are less involved with their child, and are less sensitive to their child's needs, and more often hostile.

This study is relevant to my research for a number of reasons. First, it points to the importance of trying to determine if study participants are suffering from posttraumatic stress, and if they are, then trying to determine how posttraumatic stress affects their life and their interactions with their children. Secondly, identifying refugee fathers with posttraumatic stress can help service agencies try to develop and make available services that can help them cope

better with their posttraumatic stress and improve the quality of interaction they have with their children. It is also significant to mention that the findings of Verhoven's (2012) study are consistent with the research that has found that psychological distress is much more common among refugees (Fazel, Wheeler and Danesh, 2005; Sundquist, 1993; Smither and Rodriguez-Giegling, 1979). In this regard, research shows that refugees exhibit more adjustment problems (Montgomery and Foldspang, 2008; Jensen et al., 1989; Hicks, Lalonde, and Pepler, 1993). For example, research has found a higher incidence of clinical depression among Indochinese refugees in New Zealand (Pernice and Brook, 1994), and Vietnamese boat people in Canada were reported to have high levels of anxiety, depression and psychosomatic symptoms (Berry, Kim, Monde, and Mok, 1987). In addition, research on Indochinese refugees who lived in refugee camps showed that they displayed more psychological distress (due to a variety of issues such as overcrowding, health problems depression, anxiety, domestic violence, and sexual abuse) than those who did not (Chung and Kagawa-Singer, 1993). Considering the above mentioned evidence of the high levels of psychological distress reported among refugees, my thesis includes a chapter (Chapter 8) that addresses in detail the latest findings of research on psychological state of refugees both prior to (for example, in refugee camps) and after they arrive in a host country.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the current study I use qualitative research methodology to explore the perceptions, challenges and experiences of refugee fathers living in Winnipeg. I conducted in depth structured and semi-structured interviews with 24 refugee fathers who had experienced various timespans of resettlement in Winnipeg, ranging from less than one year, to more than five years.

3.2 Process of Recruitment

To conduct these interviews I relied on the NEED Center (Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services Inc.) to recruit refugee fathers who wanted to participate. I sent the recruitment form to the NEED Center to organize a gathering of refugee fathers (See Appendix B). The NEED Center organized the gathering at which seven refugee fathers expressed their readiness to participate. I shared the intention and the goals of this study and handed out the consent form. They shared their phone numbers, as well as their home address. The NEED Center was where I conducted some interviews, although most interviews occurred in the home of the participants. Through snowballing sampling, some refugee fathers introduced me to their friends, who volunteered to interpret the interviews. In addition, I personally contacted existing immigrant and refugee serving agencies to recruit volunteer refugee fathers for the interviews.

IRCOM (Immigrant Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba), and Family Dynamics helped recruit refugee fathers. I applied the same procedure that I did at the NEED Center, i.e. I distributed the consent and the recruitment forms to the person in charge in that

organization and waited for their approval. Family Dynamics was very helpful in introducing refugee fathers and also offered an interpreter with the condition that I pay for the interpreter. Three interviews took place at the Family Dynamic service. Only one interview was conducted with an interpreter at this agency, and two other interviews were conducted in English without an interpreter. IRCOM cooperated and gave me permission to recruit refugee fathers. A staff member and I went together to each apartment, knocked on the door, and if they opened the door, my associate (who has been working for years in this organization) explained the goal of the study. If they were convinced and agreed to be interviewed, I collected their names and phone number to contact them at a time that was convenient to them. Another way that I recruited participants at IRCOM was to stand outside of the building. If I saw someone who I thought might be a prospective candidate, I talked to them and explained the goal and purpose of this research and handed out the recruitment form and the consent form. In this way, I was able to conduct one interview.

3.3 Qualitative Research Strategy

There were good reasons for choosing a qualitative research method. Because I was interested in learning directly from refugees about their personal perspectives on their adjustment to Canada, I needed to employ qualitative methods. Many factors were involved in the adjustment to a new country with different culture from the country of origin. For example, the factors that seemed to be the major triggers for refugee fathers having adjustment problems

according to the research literature included a background of problems in their country of origin, conflicting values, and the socioeconomic status of family.

Quantitative research methods could not have responded to my need to understand adjustment from the perspective of refugee fathers. Qualitative interviews, in contrast, enable researchers to learn from participants what is centrally important in their experiences and to uncover details, and obtain a deeper understanding of participants, their views, perceptions, feelings, perspectives, and experiences (Van den Hoonaard, 2012, Legard et al., 2003). In open-ended interviews, the researcher generally has a list of questions or topics to be covered during the course of the interview. The flexibility of the interview process allows the interviewee to freely share their stories as they feel comfortable, while also providing space for the interviewer to ask new probing questions as deeper insights are provided over the course of the interview. This process of expression allows marginalized people, in particular, to dictate how they will be represented in society (Van den Hoonaard, 2012).

3.4 Structured and Semi-Structured Interviewing

To conduct my interviews, I mainly used structured interviewing. In three interviews, I used the semi-structured interviewing. The use of semi-structured interviewing depended on the readiness of the interviewee and the level of trust the participant had in me. Structured interviews refer to an approach in which all questions are written beforehand and are asked in the same order (Singleton, and Straits, 2010, p. 266). The semi-structured interviewing method was primarily used since it provides the additional advantage of asking a fixed set of questions of all participants, while also allowing flexibility and spontaneity in asking unplanned questions based on participants' answers. Berg (2001, p. 70) states that "questions used in a semi standardized

interview can reflect an awareness that individuals understand the world in varying ways. Researchers thus approach the world from the subject's perspective...by using unscheduled probes...that arise from the interview process itself." This leads to richer data as it lets questions to be asked that the researcher would not have known to ask before. It also leads to getting answers that differ from one interviewee to another and that may be surprising and more in depth. As DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006, p. 316-317) point out "that that the goal of the interviewer "is to encourage the interviewee to share as much information as possible, unselfconsciously and in his or her own words". Generating trust was the main key in my semi-structured interviews so that the fathers felt they could reveal their challenges and experiences during their time of resettlement in Winnipeg.

3.5 Data Gathering Techniques

The questions I asked in the open-ended interviews fell into three main subgroups: background information, fathering, and personal needs and services (See Appendix A). I intentionally avoided asking about marital relationships, child rearing issues, and the use of corporal punishment on children, since the sensitivity of such questions that might have made it uncomfortable for the interviewees and might have jeopardized rapport for the whole interview.

All of the interviews were recorded on a digital audio recorder, transferred to a password protected laptop, and then transcribed and analyzed by me. Each interview took approximately 60 to 80 minutes, and in some cases took over 120 minutes, depending on the depth to which each father shared his challenges and experiences. In order to ensure that anonymity of the

interviewee was maintained, the following precautions were taken: the names of participants were not recorded at any time; their names were kept confidential and pseudonyms were used; and identifying information was removed from transcriptions. In addition, participants' answers and data were stored in a password-protected laptop. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before they took part in the research. Informed consent refers to, "...the knowing consent of individuals to participate as an exercise of their choice, free from any element of fraud, deceit, duress, or similar unfair inducement or manipulation" (Berg, 2001, p.56).

3.6 Data Analysis

In the analysis and interpretation of interview data, I used Grounded Theory. Bowen (2006, p. 2) states that "Grounded theory is a research approach or method, that calls for a continual interplay between data collection and analysis, through the systematic collection and analysis of data pertaining to a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Data collection, analysis, and theory stand in a reciprocal relationship with one other". Kaufman and Denk (2011, p. 65) state that grounded theory research questions "...emerge from data, and are not generated a priori from the hypotheses."

Grounded theory according to Bowen (2006, p. 2) "is generated by themes, and themes emerge from the data during analysis... capturing the essence of meaning or experience drawn from (various) situations and contexts." Morse and Field (1995, p.139-140) mention that it helps in the "identification of common threads that extends throughout an entire interview or set of interviews. Themes are usually quite abstract and therefore difficult to identify. Often the theme does not immediately "jump out" of the interview but may (become) apparent if the researcher

steps back and considers, “What are these folks trying to tell me?” The theme may be beneath the surface but, once identified, appears obvious.

Data analysis refers to “the process of making sense of the information you have collected and searching for what lies below the surface content ...and is the fascinating process of making sense of what people have said, identifying patterns and understanding meanings” (Whittaker, 2009, pp. 88-9). A coding system was used to identify subject matters and patterns developed throughout the data analysis. Once the coding of data was completed, relevant themes and patterns were selected. In addition, I used a broad range of literature to give comprehensive insight into findings.

3.7 The Study Participants

I interviewed 24 refugee fathers who had experienced various time spans of resettlement in Winnipeg. I interviewed three cohorts of refugee fathers: the first cohort consisted of ten refugee fathers who have been living in Winnipeg for up to three years; the second consisted of nine refugee fathers who have been living in Winnipeg between three to five years; and the third was made up of five refugee fathers who have been living in Winnipeg more than five years. The purpose of cohorts was to be able to identify similarities and differences with regards to challenges that refugee fathers face during the different stages of settlement in Winnipeg.

The 24 fathers were from eleven nationalities: six were Iraqi refugee fathers, five were Congolese, two Sierra Leone, two from Ethiopia, one from Afghanistan, one from Central Africa, three from South Sudan, one from Ecuador Guinea, one from Bhutan, one from Rwanda, and one from Eritrea. Four fathers were between 25 to 35 years old, five were between 35-45 years old, eleven were between 45 to 55 years old, and four were between 55 to 60 years old.

3.8 Study Limitations

It is important to acknowledge the potential limitations of the research design and methodology employed in the current study. First, participants in the study were recruited through the NEED Center, IRCOM, and Family Dynamics, and snowballing from there. It is possible that those who were recruited through the agencies, due to their close relationship with their agency, took a more cautious approach in their answers due to fear of authority and other reasons. Second, the study was based on a relatively small sample of 24 participants. Therefore, in order to further examine challenges, it would be beneficial to increase the sample size and include more refugee fathers from a more diverse range of ethnic groups in a variety of areas and from different social backgrounds as well as varying individual experiences. Third, the study used interpreters during data collection. Consequently, it is possible that my findings partially may have been influenced by the interpreters' own personal preferences and characteristics in interpreting my posed questions and their answers to the questions.

Finally, it is also important to recognize the limits in undertaking cross-cultural study, specifically if the researcher and participants are from different cultural backgrounds. Due to these differences, there may be barriers to communication leading to withholding of opinion or information. Cross-cultural research requires time to build a trusting relationship; especially if the interviewer hopes to engage in an open conversation about a variety of very sensitive issues such as parenting, marital situations and the quality of services for refugees.

In order to put in context and therefore better appreciate the significance of the interview-based research findings of this study, I first review literature on the history of refugees and their and rights in international law; the challenges facing refugee families and fathers; and the

problem of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among refugees, with a particular focus on refugee fathers.

Chapter Four: A Brief History of Refugees

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of perceptions of the displaced in the Abrahamic faiths and how these ancient texts ask adherents to comfort the displaced, homelessness and migrants. Abrahamic faiths from a historical point of view have been the major source and host countries of refugees. In addition, the Western countries with their Abrahamic faiths (mainly Catholic and Protestant) have often been viewed to be the safest haven for the resettled refugees with respect to allocated services and provisions compared to other countries. The above mentioned points are the reasons for returning to the Holy scripts in these faiths to see what they suggest about refugees and the help they should receive. A number of other topics are discussed in this chapter including refugees in pre-modern times, refugees in modern times, and refugees after the Second World War. Further, I briefly examine root causes of refugee movements. In the following chapter (Chapter 5), I add further to the discussion of the contemporary global and national situation of refugees by examining the rights of refugees in international law, and current refugee policies in Western countries including Canada.

4.2 The Displaced and Homeless in Abrahamic Faiths

Studying the ancient Abrahamic texts provides a primary reference to the ancient call to comfort the displaced. These religious texts reveal that the problems of the displaced and the homeless are not contemporary issues, but are longstanding in the course human history. For example, there are passages in the Bible that deal with refugees and their treatment: “Betray not

the fugitive...Be a refuge to them from the destroyer..." (Isaiah 16:3-5 RSV). "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall do him no wrong. (He) shall be as a native among you, and you shall love him as yourself..." (Leviticus 19:33; RSV). "One law and one ordinance shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you." (Numbers 15: 16 RSV). "At the end of three years, you shall bring a tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns... (and)...the sojourners, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled." (Deuteronomy 14: 28-29 RSV). As Ryan (1987, p. 211) has pointed out, "according to the biblical account, after the Hebrews were freed from four hundred years of slavery in Egypt, and as they were conquering Canaan's land (modern Israel and portions of Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria), they received instructions to set up three cities of refuge" (Deut. 19:1-7, King James Version).

In the Qur'an, the holy book of the Muslim peoples, there is a clear duty to take care of refugees. For example, in the Qur'an, Allah expresses compassion for the refugee: "I will certainly wipe out the bad deeds of those who emigrated and were driven out of their homes..." (3:195; see also 24:22). One also reads in the Qur'an a verse that refers to the inclusiveness of this religion as well as an explicit view on the issue of asylum-seekers and refugees: "And if anyone of the disbelievers seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that (he) may hear the word of Allah, and then escort (him) to where (he) will be secure" (Surah 9:6). Also, Islam states that "migration may be necessary if one's life or beliefs are threatened and the Qur'an requires that the faithful also follow any agreements and treaties that they have signed on the rights of refugees [5:1]" (Cited from High Commissioner's Dialogue: General on Protection Challenges, 2012).

4.3 Concept of Refugee in Ancient Greece

The care and fair treatment to refugees is also traceable in ancient cultures. The Greek civilization used the term “asylia”, referring to a place of immunity from attack or plunder (Casule, 2013, p.2). The Romans modified the word into the noun “asylum”, referring to a place of protection. According to Casule (2013, p.2) the term “asylia” had a religious tone for the ancient Greeks, granting immunity from plundering raids. Further, Casule (2013, p.2) states that “those who violated the sanctuary of a particular god or goddess risked incurring divine wrath.” As Arboleda and Hoy (1993, p. 68) also point out, “for the ancient Greeks, asylum was a way for certain individual fugitives to seek safety in places of worship. This ‘internal’ right of asylum existed simultaneously with an ‘external’, or territorial, right to asylum, afforded to foreign political refugees in different kingdoms or city-states.” According to Ryan (1987, p. 213), the Greeks preserved this right, which they regarded as divinely inspired, primarily to save the lives of those who were defeated in the war.

4.4 Support of Refugees in the Roman Empire

Under Roman law, the right to protect the innocent, the maliciously pursued, the injured, the oppressed, and the unfortunate was preserved and followed the concept of sanctuary into canon law (Ryan, 1987, p. 214). The canon law was enmeshed and integrated in the Christian Church after Christianity became legalized in the Roman Empire by Constantine in 303 A.D (Arboleda and Hoy, 1993, p. 69). Arboleda and Hoy (1993, p. 69) note that “it was not until the 7th century, however, that the right of asylum was first legally recorded in Anglo-Saxon secular law, the nature of the right varying according to the specific time and region in question.”

4.5 Refugees in Pre-modern Times

Unfortunately, there are no recorded figures of the number of refugees who were forced to flee Europe in pre-modern times. However, the earliest recorded figures of displaced people who sought refuge in Europe dated to the latter part of the thirteenth century. In 1493, 150,000 Jews fled from Spain to France refusing to convert, from where they had originally been expelled in the beginning of the thirteenth century. In Portugal, they had been embraced warmly for economic reasons, but were expelled from the country within a few years. As a result, they went to North Africa and the Middle East. Zolberg, Suhrke and Aguayo (1989, p.7) point out that the reason that the Jews were expelled lay in the belief of the European Christians that the Jews were not “innocent victims” of religious persecution, but [were] a people guilty of wrongfully resisting legitimate acts of their sovereign...(and) therefore deserved their unhappy fate.” Similarly, 275,000 Muslim Spaniards were expelled after the fall of Granada in 1492 (and) across the Mediterranean beginning in 1609. Religious intolerance that generated massive expelling is found in the history of European Calvinists in 1573. Calvinists were expelled to the adjacent Low Countries by tyrannical Spanish rulers. Hundreds of persecuted Calvinists left France for England before and after the revocation of the Edit of Nantes by Louis XIV. France had been famous for its tolerance toward the Protestant minority, “which was based on the Edict of Nantes, enacted in 1598, after four decades of civil war” (Zolberg et al.,1989, p. 5). The Calvinists, (after the official ordinances), had birth, work, marriage and death rights removed and they were sent into exile. As a result, their population declined to about four percent of the French population by the early 1680s. They went to Britain, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Brandenburg-Prussia, Russia, the British colonies in North America, and the Dutch colony in South Africa (Zolberg et al., 1989, p. 6).

Many Protestant dissenters left England and Scotland for the New World. In the late 16th century and in the mid-17th, and after the end of the Thirty Years' War, Irish Catholics fled to Spain and France, when Oliver Cromwell attempted to deport them to western Ireland (Connacht). Because of their resistance, they were indentured to plantation labor in Barbados. The New World also generated refugees "when French Acadians were expelled from their Nova Scotia home by British authorities after 1755...with many ending up in Louisiana" (Zolberg et al., 1989, p.8).

4.6 Refugees in Modern Times

The French revolution created 129,000 refugees. This group consisted of: 25,000 members of the clergy (banished for their refusal to take an oath of allegiance to the revolutionary constitutions); the nobility who did not participate in the political opposition; and political opponents of successive ruling groups during the different phases of the revolution. Similarly, during the American Revolution, "the number of loyalists who left for Canada, Nova Scotia, or England ran as high as 100,000" (Zolberg et al., 1989, p. 9). In a population of around 2.5 million (including slaves, some of whom became refugees), the ratio was around 24 refugees per 1,000, or five times higher than the ratio in France (Palmer, 1959, p.188, cited in Zolberg et al., 1989, p. 9).

In the 19th century, two major factors were responsible for creating political refugees in the West: incessant hostilities between revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries, and national independence movements. Examples were the emerging waves of refugees, such as the 5,000 Polish rebels, who fled to France after a defeated insurgency in 1830, and defeated French Canadians, many who fled to the United States, along with some English Chartists and Irish

nationalists. Added to these events were ongoing crises in France, Germany, Italy, and Austro-Hungary that created thousands of refugees. For example, 130,000 residents of Alsace and Lorraine were forced to leave their homes following the annexation of their region to Germany in 1871 (Zolberg et al., 1989, pp. 10-11). Pogroms, international wars, (i.e. the first and second world war), revolution, ethnic conflict, fascist repression, nationalist movements, and suppressed religious minorities were the triggers that contributed to a wave of refugees in Europe from 1900 until the end of the Second World War.

About 9.5 million refugees left Europe between 1926 and 1945. Zolberg et al (1989, p. 18) state that “although these numbers are roughly comparable to current counts for the developing world, when the population size of the relevant countries is taken to account, the European crisis is relatively much greater.”

Europe was the major continent generating refugees before the Second World War. Afterwards, up to about 1990, refugees in Europe were mainly a product of Cold-war conflict between the Soviet Union and America. During this period, Asia and Africa became the new loci of generating refugees. The next section will briefly review the issue of refugees in post-1945 Europe and outline the new waves of refugees after the Second World War from Africa and Asia.

4.7 Refugees after the Second World War

Major waves of refugees escaped Eastern European socio-political conditions, political suppression and harsh economic conditions in the late 1940s. About 3.5 million moved from East Germany to West Germany between 1951-1961. About 200,000 Hungarians left their country for

the West, after the crushing of the Hungarian uprising in 1956 (Marrus, 1985, p. 360, cited in Zolberg et al., 1989, p. 26). Whittaker (2006, p. 13) states that from 1945 to 1956, over 200,000 Poles, Czechs, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Hungarians went to Britain as “volunteer workers” as they fled Soviet oppression. In the 1990s, the civil wars in ex-Yugoslavia, spawned more refugees in the continent of Europe, as people broke free from the Former Soviet Union. Since the late 1940s, however, the majority of refugees departed from the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. The first waves of refugees were the homeless and stateless Palestinians in 1948. According to Azza (Vol. VII, 2010-2012, p. XVII),

At the end of 2011, there were at least 7.4 million displaced Palestinians representing 66 percent of the entire Palestinian population (11.2 million) worldwide. Among them were: 5.8 million Palestinian 1948 refugees of whom 4.8 million are registered with and assisted by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) and one million unregistered refugees; More than one million 1967 refugees and; 519,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) on both sides of the Green Line (1949 armistice line).

Whittaker (2006, p. 1) states that between 1945 and 2006 about 50 to 60 million people were “either uprooted or forced to leave their countries voluntarily or involuntarily.” For more updated global figures of the numbers of people forcibly displaced, see Table 2.1 (in Chapter 2).

4.8 Root Causes of Refugee Movements

The causes of the movement of refugees vary from country to country. The motive may be mono-causal or multi-dimensional. Historical research shows that the following series of causes trigger the movement of refugees:

The first cause is the partiality of the state in religious affairs and its favoritism policy towards the state religion, which results in deploying suppressive measures against religious minorities. An example would be in 1685, when Calvinists tried to escape state ordinances which attempted to force them to become Catholic (Zolberg et al., 1998, p. 5). A present day example would be the “Iranian Diaspora”. Iranian Christians International, a human rights organization based in Colorado Springs (U.S.) reported in 1999 that “the ‘Iranian Diaspora’ included an estimated 4 million people. Of these, 408,000 (including Bahais, Armenians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Muslim converts to Christianity and others) emigrated or were displaced because of religious persecution” (Moreno, 2000, p.12).

Second, wars and civil wars are major reasons for the movement of refugees. For example, Galbraith (2003, p.1) states that “...the 1991 Gulf War produced nearly three million refugees. Almost all of them left Iraq and Kuwait before the war started or after Desert Storm. The largest groups were the Kurds and Shi’ites fleeing Saddam Hussein, after a failed post-war uprising.” Civil wars, such as the one in Rwanda in 1993, when the Hutu president of Burundi was assassinated, cause a movement of refugees, as a country enters a period of civil strife. In Rwanda, the Hutu community killed thousands of Tutsi civilians. This resulted in the intervening of the Burundian army extending a cycle of revenge with mass-killings of Hutu civilians. Around 800,000 Burundians were forced to flee their homes (Baez, 2011, p. 392). Today, the civil war in Syria is created a mass exodus of refugees who are dispersing into neighbouring countries. Estimates are that more than 3.5 million refugees have fled Syria (Guardian, March 11, 2015). This includes 1.1 million in Lebanon, 620,000 in Jordan, 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey, 232,800 in Iraq, close to 136,000 in Egypt, and about 6.5 million within Syria. These five countries host 97 percent of Syria’s refugees.

Third, economic under-development, with resulting problems of poverty and inequity in developing countries is also responsible for creating refugees. Various factors, such as problems of balance-of-payments, deteriorating terms of trade, indebtedness, inflation, desertification, and deforestation are contributing to the threat of basic conditions of survival (Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues, 1986). This results in the mass flow of people (Zolberg et al., 1989, p. 259). Added to these factors are: disputes over land tenure and property ownership (for example, in Rwanda); and competition for control and the exploitation of resources, like diamonds in Angola and Sierra Leone or timber in Liberia, and inequitable distribution of oil wealth, such as in Nigeria (Seasy, 2002, p. 4). These various factors fuel conflict in developing countries, especially Africa. According to Seasy, control over diamond-rich Sierra Leone by “rebels ” plummeted this country in a ten year war and the revenue of diamond trade and other mineral exports financed it, leaving the country with a massive foreign debt, a poor infrastructure, a huge weapon arsenal, and a country with an estimated 120,000 refugees fleeing to Liberia (2004, p. 4). An estimated 370,000 refugees crossed into Guinea during the Sierra Leone civil war (IRIN).

Fourth, human rights violations and political violence are triggers that create refugees. The history of refugee migration shows that whenever and wherever a regime and its officials in power take an oppressive approach to protect their own privileges, wealth, and power, it takes the form of accusation, incarceration, interrogation, terror, threat, and torture, including psychological pressure and economic deprivation to its opponents and dissidents. The intention of this is to convert, segregate, or attract their cooperation with the regime. A survey was conducted in 1976 on Chilean refugees who lived in Belgium and the Netherlands. It illustrated that a total of 112 adults or 60 percent had undergone torture. Of these, 61 percent were men,

and 49 percent were women (Barudy, 1989). Bariagaber (2006, p.17) provides other examples, noting that:

some refugees flee from repressive regimes, such as those in the former Zaire, Ethiopia, and Uganda, when Mobutu Sese Seko, Mengistu Haile Mariam, and Idi Amin Dada, respectively, were in power. Others see exile as an 'exit' strategy from a multiethnic state dominated by a single cultural group, because they do not see much prospect for an inclusive state in the future, as in Sudan. Still others flee because of inter-state wars, such as those between Ethiopia and Somalia, and more recently, between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Fifth, in the case of African countries, a lack of a workable and functional state through the germination of a homogenized policy with regard to common language, history, and psychological orientation is a factor in generating refugees. Absent a competent state, many African countries are incapable of setting disputes through civil institutional mechanisms, and instead deploy a military force against rebellious groups (Bariagaber, 2006, p.17). In this context, Bariagaber (2006, p. 18) notes that:

the conflict between Hutu majority and Tutsi minority in Rwanda, (wherein 500,000 and 1,000,000 individuals perished); the civil war in Sierra Leone, (where hundreds of thousands were either killed, maimed, or forcibly dislocated); the civil war in Sudan, (which claimed millions of casualties and displaced persons); the recent humanitarian disaster in stateless Somalia; and the Nigerian Civil War in the latter half of the 1960s, are all cases in point.

Another source of refugees is the foreign intervention of superpowers in the internal and domestic affairs of countries. Hakovirta (1986, p. 23, cited in Bariagaber, 2006, p. 18), gives the example of the US intervention "in Somalia, to avert massive hunger and population displacement in the first half of the 1990s," and also that of "several African countries in the DRC in the latter half of the 1990s" which "caused population movements of mammoth proportions."

Nationalist movements in countries are a seventh trigger. When the nationality question remains mainly unresolved within a political structure of a multiethnic society, the unresolved nationality question smoulders, until conflicts over national self-determination occur. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, for example, fifteen sovereign republics came into existence. Ethnic demands for nationalism became significant in each of the new republics. For example, it has been reported that in the 1990s “The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh forced almost half a million Armenian and Azeri refugees out of their homes. More than 80,000 refugees from Moldova sought asylum in Ukraine, because of alleged discrimination by the predominantly Romanian population of Moldova. The Russian Federation was home to almost 460,000 refugees, mostly non-Russians, and to some 700,000 ethnic Russians from the non-Russian republics of the former Soviet Union” (USCR 1998). Similarly, the conflict in former Yugoslavia generated more than a million and a half refugees in the early 1990s and another 750,000 Kosovo refugees in the late 1990s (Bariagaber, 2006, p.15).

Finally, cataloguing people as state enemies is an eighth reason for seeking refuge and soliciting asylum. Two current cases are associated with Snowden and Assange, who are seeking political asylum in foreign countries, due to revealing state confidentialities.

What is the responsibility of individual states or governments for refugees? What organizations exist for the protection of refugees? In the next chapter, I review the rights of refugees in international law along with responsibility that states and other organizations have with respect to refugees.

Chapter Five: International Refugee Law and Refugee Policies of Western Countries

5.1 The Rights of Refugees in International Law

This chapter briefly describes the evolving definition of refugee and their international rights from 1920 up to the present. It succinctly explains the process that led to broadening the definition of refugee in in the African Context, and then, discusses current refugee policies in the developed western countries. Finally, the chapter reviews the refugee policies of Canada.

To begin, who exactly is a refugee according to international law? Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo (1989, p. 3) state that

refugee status is a privilege or entitlement, giving those who qualify access to certain scarce resources or services outside their own country, such as admission into another country ahead of a long line of claimants, legal protection abroad, and often some material assistance from private or public agencies.

According to Hathaway (2005), there were definitions before 1951. From 1920 until 1935, the definition of refugee was largely *juridical*: those persons treated as refugees, were deprived of the protection of the government of their state of origin. The goals of the juridical definition of refugees included: (1) facilitation of their international movements abroad; (2) enabling them in resettlement; and (3) preparing the nation to assume responsibility for them. The second definition of refugees defined a *social* approach to the refugee. Based on this definition, refugees were perceived to be helpless victims, whose socio-political occurrences caused them to be separated from their home society. The goals of the social perspective were to assist a person without formal national legal protection, and to assist those who were trapped and affected by adverse social or political phenomena. The third variation was *individualist*, and predominated between 1938 and 1950. Based on the individualist approach to a refugee, a

refugee is defined as a person who has escaped the country of origin, due to the following causes: (1) perceived injustice, distrust of authorities, and desire for personal freedom.

In 1933, governments that adhered to the Convention of the International Status of Refugees were obliged to address questions respecting such issues as refoulement (the forced return of refugees to their country of origin), legal questions, labour conditions, industrial accidents, welfare and relief, education, and the creation of committees for refugees. These administrative measures served as a model for the 1951 Refugee Convention (Jaeger, 2001, p. 730). In 1945, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), a specialized agency of the recently formed United Nations, tightened the definition of the term (Whittaker, 2006, p. 2). In 1951, the first official definition was ratified. The 1951 Refugee Convention introduced a definition of refugee that provided a defined practical framework for: clarifying who a refugee is; specifying the rights of refugees; and outlining accountability of the host country to meet the legal needs of refugees. The 1951 Convention defined a refugee as

a person who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/ her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution (cited in Whittaker, 2006, p. 2).

According to the Refugee Convention of 1951, to be a bona fide refugee, the refugee should cross a frontier while seeking sanctuary, and had to be a victim of a specific form of harassment with a rational and well-founded fear such that return to the country of origin was impossible. In such cases, the host or receiving country must give a refugee the same rights as its

own citizens, including legal rights, along with rights to property, education, housing, welfare, and entry to a profession, and the right and freedom to travel with a passport. Also, the host country was obligated to take care of the family unit of the refugee, in particular, the care of children without parents. In turn, the refugee was obligated to obey the law of the host country, and in the case of transgression of the law in the host country, the refugee was made subject to being deported to “a safe third country” (Whittaker, 2006, p. 3).

Persecution based on any other grounds will not be considered (Human Rights Education Associates [HREA] 2003). Articles 12-30 of the Refugee Convention of 1951 contained a set of the rights and entitlements for those individuals who have been recognized as Convention refugees as follows:

- All refugees must be granted identity papers and travel documents that allow them to travel outside the country
- Refugees must receive the same treatment as nationals of the receiving country with regard to the following rights:
 - Free exercise of religion and religious education
 - Free access to the courts, including legal assistance
 - Access to elementary education
 - Access to public relief and assistance
 - Protection provided by social security
 - Protection of intellectual property, such as inventions and trade names
 - Protection of literary, artistic and scientific work
 - Equal treatment by taxing authorities
- Refugees must receive the most favourable treatment provided to nationals of a foreign country with regard to the following rights:
 - The right to belong to trade unions
 - The right to belong to other non-political nonprofit organizations
 - The right to engage in wage-earning employment
- Refugees must receive the most favorable treatment possible, which must be at least as favorable to that accorded aliens generally in the same circumstances, with regard to the following rights:
 - The right to own property
 - The right to practice a profession
 - The right to self-employment
 - Access to housing
 - Access to higher education

- Refugees must receive the same treatment as that accorded to aliens generally with regard to the following rights:
- The right to choose their place of residence
- The right to move freely within the country
- Free exercise of religion and religious education
- Free access to the courts, including legal assistance
- Access to elementary education
- Access to public relief and assistance
- Protection provided by social security
- Protection of intellectual property, such as inventions and trade names
- Protection of literary, artistic and scientific work
- Equal treatment by taxing authorities (HREA 2003)

Added to the mentioned articles is the principle of non-refoulement as defined in the article 33 of the 1951 Convention requiring that states should follow the principle and avoid returning any refugee “in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion” (cited in Hathaway, 2005, p. 300). However, as Hathaway, 2005, p. 301) has pointed out:

The duty of non-refoulement is not, however, the same as a right to asylum from persecution...it does not affirmatively establish a duty on the part of states to receive refugees. As an obligation...it constrains, but does not fundamentally challenge, the usual prerogative of states to regulate the entry into their territory of non-citizens.

5.2 Broadening Definition of Refugee in the African Context

The Refugee Convention of 1951 has contributed to saving the lives of individuals who fled their country because of persecution. However, it has not been comprehensive enough to save the lives of individuals who flee their countries for other reasons, such as poor governance, widespread insecurity, poverty and lack of basic services. In particular, beginning in the 1960s, it

was recognized that the definition in the Refugee Convention of 1951 excluded a number of African refugees, estimated at 750,000 in 1967, and later stabilized at approximately 4,000,000 by the beginning of the 1980s (Hofmann, 1992, pp. 318-319). As Bariagaber (2006, p. 11) has pointed out in the African context, the criterion for identifying refugees was insufficient to include many individuals who fled because of external aggression, international war, or civil war, and to identify or recognize the legitimacy of their motive for fleeing. More specifically, African countries were not able to fulfil the provisions of the Convention because: (1) the massive exodus of tens of thousands refugees made it impossible to identify the flight motive of each individual; (2) in Africa, refugees could cross borders imperceptibly through many entry points and blend in the population; and (3) the lack of economic and manpower capabilities of African countries impeded putting into practice the provisions of the 1951 Convention (Bariagaber, 2006, p.11). The existence of a gap in the protection of the 1951 Convention, caused the OAU to form in 1969, with the goal of extending the 1951 definition. In doing so, the OAU significantly contributed to international refugee law in the following areas:

- (1) The extension of the traditional refugee definition to include also persons who, as the result of civil wars or other armed conflicts in their home country, are forced to leave without being politically persecuted in the traditional legal sense;
- (2) the unambiguous recognition of the principle of non-refoulement in its wide sense from which it follows that no state may subject any person to measures which would force such person to return to or to stay in a country where his/ her life, physical integrity or liberty would be threatened; and
- (3) the emphasis on the absolutely voluntary character of any repatriation programme for refugees (Hofmann, 1992, p. 329).

It is important to note however that although this definition is broader than the definition in the 1951 UN Convention, it still does not include victims of natural disasters who cross national borders in search of help, as well as internally displaced persons who stay within the

borders of their country of origin, even if their displacement is violence-related (Bariagaber, 2006, p.11).

In brief, Hathaway (1991 cited in Foster, 2007, pp 114-115) notes that since the 1960s, international law has recognized various types of refugees: those protected by the 1951 Convention definition, who are given a full range of rights, and are secure from the threat of being returned to the country of origin, where they fear prosecution; those protected by a regional agreement, but who may be at risk of return due to seriously disturbing public order (they are generally protected against return in Africa and Latin America); those who fear harm due to a serious disturbance of public order, but who have no protection from a special regional agreement, and no claim to protection from return, as a right in national legislation of the asylum state; and those who are compelled to leave their country of origin as a result of natural or man-made causes. All refugees who fall into these categories may claim material assistance from the UNCHR, get help in resettlement, repatriation, or legal protection, but enjoy no special claim to protection under international law.

More than sixty years after the ratification of the Refugee Convention, it seems that it is no longer effective. Many countries seem to lack interest in adhering to the Convention in the contemporary world for a variety of reasons, which include among them the increasing flow of refugees (from a few million in the mid-1970s to some ten million in 2012), and the growing cost of processing their claims. Particularly in Western nations this has invoked worry, and a perception of refugees as a threat to the political, economic, and social stability of host countries. Feller (2001, p. 134) suggests that even in traditionally hospitable asylum countries, refugees have become the subject of threat, hostility, violence, physical attack and rape. In the developed

world, recent years have witnessed changes in asylum policies in Western countries that are incompatible with the Convention. According to Feller (2001, p. 136), “increased detention, reduced welfare benefits, and the severe curtailment of self-sufficiency possibilities, coupled with restricted family reunion rights, all have been manifestations of this trend.”

5.3 Current Refugee Policies in the Developed Western Countries

Current refugee policies in many western countries are at variance with the Refugee Convention of 1951. In fact they are contrary to the purposes and the intentions of the Convention. Scrutiny of the current refugee policies in the West indicates a noticeable shift in these policies in recent decades. The governments of the West, through administrative and legal measures, have spawned structural barriers and strictures toward refugees and the undesirable by measures that include: delaying the court process towards the recognition of refugee status, increasing border control and visa requirements, discouraging refugees from pursuing their claims, and reducing welfare services (including money for living expenses and health care).

Examples abound in western countries. The UK and Ireland have introduced a voucher system to deter asylum seekers (Thielemann, 2004, p. 22). Asylum seekers are not allowed to work in the UK and are dependent on the state. Each asylum seeker receives 36.62 pounds (£43.43) per week for living (Volkery in Spiegel Online International, 2013). In France, the asylum seeker faces restrictions on welfare benefits, reduction in housing subsidies, limited authorization to work, financial aid reduced to one year, and a monthly allotment of \$250 (which is one third of the poverty level) (Fassin, 2005, p. 376). Refusing refugee claims for a safe third country is another legal measure against the asylum seekers in Europe. For example, Germany

signed the Convention with Poland, the Czech Republic, Bulgarian, and Romania as safe countries (Whitney, 1996, p.389) to decrease refugees' entry. Pollet et al (2014) state that:

In 2013, 435,385 persons sought asylum in the EU 28 and a total of 469,085 in the EU, however, according to Eurostat data, the overall protection rate at first instance in the EU 28 was at 34%. For final decisions on appeal the recognition rate was 18%. Belgium, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Austria, Poland and Slovenia all had an overall recognition rate that was lower than the EU average in 2013.

In Italy, those persons determined to be illegal immigrants have had to pay a fine of up to €5,000 (or about \$6,800) (Schlamp in Spiegel on Line International, 2013). Added to this are increases in fines on airlines and shipping companies, obliging the carrier to pay the costs if the passenger is detained, as well as pay fines for bringing the passenger in question. Carrier sanctions impose the cost of the removal from the country of any passenger with improper documentation on the carrier, and compel the carrier to prevent them from disembarking. Airlines who erect detention centers at international airports are at variance with Article 31(1) of the 1951 Refugee Convention, and also with Article 18 of the Council Directive (2005/85/EC of 1st December 2005). (Jesuit Refugee Service Europe, 2007, p.1).

Both covenant Article 31(1) of the 1951 Refugee Convention, and also Article 18 of the Council Directive (2005/85/EC of 1st December 2005), emphasize that a person who is seeking asylum should not be held in detention. However, detention centres and incarceration of asylum seekers has become legally institutionalized across Europe, the US, and Australia. For example, in Europe, by 2007

Thirty detention premises/facilities [were] spread across the 10 new Member States [of the European Union]: two in Estonia, one in Latvia and one in Lithuania, (on the North-Eastern border); six in Poland, two in Slovakia, four in

Hungary and one in Slovenia, (on the Eastern border); five in Cyprus, (on the South-Eastern border); three in Malta, (on the Southern border); and five in the Czech Republic (Jreurope, 2007, p. 5).

A preliminary 2005 inventory revealed more than 200 “detention centres” in 24 European countries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom) (Jreurope, 2005, p. 3).

As of 2013, there were 8,521 asylum seekers in detention centres around Australia, including 1,731 children” (Human Rights in Australia, 2013). Detention of some asylum seekers is mandatory in the United States (Legomsky, 2009, p. 166). The detention of asylum seekers causes a variety of problems, which include deprivation of liberty, psychiatric harm, separation from family, and economic hardship for the detainees and their families (Legomsky, 2009, p. 166).

Added to the problem is organized propaganda by the mass media and politicians in OECD countries and Australia, aimed at tarnishing refugees and asylum seekers as “bogus scroungers,” who come to the West in order to abuse the welfare system. Media headlines like the following are common:

Take the following examples from newspaper headlines in the UK: Our land is being swamped by a flood of fiddlers stretching our resources—and our patience—to breaking point” (The Sun, March 9, 2000); “Hello Mr. Sponger... Need Any Benefits?” (Daily Star, April 4, 2002). “Scandal of how it costs nearly as much to keep an asylum seeker as a room at the Ritz” (The Daily Mail, February 2, 2000); “...we resent the scroungers, beggars and crooks who are

prepared to cross every country in Europe to reach our generous benefits system” (The Sun, July 3, 2001 cited in Thielemann, 2005, pp. 5-6).

The Voices of Young Refugees in Europe network in 2011 (VYRE) examined the portrayal of refugees in European social mass media. They found refugees were portrayed = negatively. For example, refugees were referred to as “poor dirty terrorists, presenting damage to social systems” and described as “those who steal jobs from local people, and who are often involved in criminal activities.” (2012, p. 15). Also, refugees as portrayed in the media “come mostly from big families; they are uneducated, and present a threat to national security” (VYRE, 2012, p. 15). In addition, the majority of the European newspaper articles on refugees refer to them “as a burden to the society where they live” (VYRE, 2012, p. 15).

The public attitude toward refugees in Australia is identical to the attitude of people in Europe and the USA. A poll conducted by News Poll in 2002 (Shanahan, 2002, p. 2 cited in Schwitzer et al., 2005, pp. 5-6), reported that

48% of participants supported turning away all asylum seekers arriving on the shores of Australia, and 38% agreed to allow some asylum seekers entry depending on the circumstances. Only 10% of respondents were in favour of accepting all asylum seekers arriving on Australian shores.

The question then arises as to how far the refugee policies in Canada are different from those of other Western countries. Does the government of Canada implement a different policy towards refugees or follow the same pattern which prevails in the other western countries?

5.4 Refugee Policies in Canada

In recent decades, Canada has adjusted its refugee policies in the direction of refugee policies implemented in other Western countries. The earliest record of admitting people in Canada as refugees were the Loyalists, escaped slaves, free blacks, and pacifists (including Mennonites and Quakers), who came to Canada during the American revolution and before Confederation. The first Immigrant Act adopted in 1869 had no refugee clause. However, the government of Canada arranged resettlement of 20,000 Mennonite refugees between 1923 and 1930. Canadian policies have not always been amiable. For example, in the 1920s Canada opposed admission of refugees following World War 1 in Europe for the reason that, “once admitted, stateless refugees could not be deported” (Canadian Council for Refugees, p. 1). In 1939, as 900 desperate Jewish refugees were fleeing the horror in Germany, a ship called the St. Louis headed towards Canada after being rejected by the United States. “Canada refused to take them in and the ship sailed back to Europe, where 254 would later die in concentration camps. Fewer than 5,000 Jewish refugees were admitted to enter Canada between 1933 and 1945” (Beswick and Bureau, 2013). Those Jews who entered Canada were mistreated by the government of Canada.

According to Iggers and Iggers (2006, p. 2), “Canadian officials knowingly ignored the Geneva conventions. They refused to provide adequate food, shelter, and medical care to the imprisoned Jews.” The government of Canada did not sign the 1951 Convention on Refugees until 1969 (Macklin, 2009, p. 79). When Europe saw 9 million displaced persons and refugees after the Second World War, Canada announced its readiness to accept European refugees and displaced persons. Between 1946 and 1952, Canada accepted some two hundred thousand DPs

(displaced persons). Most were from Eastern Europe, including 39,000 Poles (Avery 1982, p. 13), 32,000 Ukrainians (Gerus and Rea, 1991, p. 16), 12,000 Hungarians (Patrias, 1992, p. 20), and a similarly large numbers of people from other countries around Europe.

In 1956, political upheaval in Hungary due to the invasion by the Soviet forces that quickly crushed the revolt, created 200,000 Hungarian refugees (Zieck, 2013, p. 49). By the end of 1957, more than 37,000 Hungarians had been accepted into Canada (Thompson and Bangarth, 2008, p. 295). The later admission of refugees further included the arrival of 10,975 Czechs, when the Warsaw Pact troops invaded Czechoslovakia, between August 20, 1968, and March 1, 1969 (Canadian Council for Refugees, p. 6). The government of Canada admitted refugees on a case-by-case basis, without formally recognizing refugees as a class of immigrants until 1969. As Makarenko (2010, p. 5) points out that “even after signing the UN Convention, the federal government did not institute formal procedures for determining claims to Convention refugee status until 1978, when amendments to the Immigration Act were introduced.”

From 1970 until recently, Canadian refugee policies were gradually and continuously formed by a variety of amendments. In 1970, the government created a “Guideline for Determination of Eligibility for Refugee Status” to be used by immigration officers to select refugees overseas. In 1976, the government passed the first Canadian immigration legislation to recognize refugees as a special class of immigrants. It aimed to: fulfill its international legal obligations regarding refugees and displaced persons; and create a refugee determination system, by rendering a decision to the Refugee Status Advisory Committee. In 1978, Canada formally recognized refugees as a legitimate class of immigrants. In 1985, the Singh decision issued by the Supreme Court of Canada recognized fundamental justice under the Canadian Charter of

Rights and Freedom for refugee claimants and the Supreme Court accepted that the lack of oral hearings breached the Charter for both citizens and non-citizens in Canada (Pratt, 2005, p. 66).

In 2001-2, the government of Canada enacted the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, which on one hand, recognized refugees in its title, and on the other hand, tightened eligibility requirements for refugees (Makarenko, 2012, p. 6). After September 11, 2001, the government of Canada enacted legislation providing extended powers to arrest detain and deport landed immigrants suspected of being a security threat. The issue of security also brought about the Safe Third Country Agreement with the United States, which had important implications for refugee and asylum seekers who earlier could emigrate to Canada or vice versa from Canada to the USA on a travel visa and claim refugee protection. Due to the visa entry requirement, it became impossible for refugees to enter Canada as they had previously. Any refugee claimant who now arrives at the Canadian border from the US will be rejected and returned to the US as a Safe Third Country. The purpose of the legislation was to prevent individuals in the US from leaving, and possibly escaping US authorities, by making a refugee claim in Canada (Makarenko, 2010, p. 6). Added to Canadian-American cooperation in the area of security and immigration are the following measures: (1) steps to ensure the compatibility of immigration databases of both countries, and (2) the creation of joint immigration-processing facilities (Makarenko, 2010, p.6).

Based on the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations (IRPR), a refugee is entitled to ask for protection in Canada, if the refugee is

(1) A UN Convention refugee; (2) a person who faces a substantial risk of torture (based on Article 1 of the Convention Against Torture [CAT]); (3) A person who faces a risk to life, or of cruel and unusual treatment, or who risks punishment that is not faced generally by other individuals in that country, is not the result of lawful sanctions, and is not caused by the country's inability to supply adequate health care (Macklin, 2009, pp. 79-80).

This proviso obliges Canada internationally to protect refugees under the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol. Asylum seekers entering Canada have to make their claim by filling in a Personal Information Form (PIF), completed in English or French, and submit it to the IRB within twenty-eight days. After submitting the Personal Information Form, the asylum seeker may work or obtain social assistance with limited public health insurance (Macklin, 2009, p. 81). According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, refugees get a minimum amount needed to cover only the most basic food and shelter needs based on provincial social assistance rates. After the PIF is received by the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB), the claim is scheduled for either a hearing or an expedited process, which is financially and emotionally difficult. The average time of being heard takes 16.5 months, and costs \$ 4,100 (Chan, 2012, pp. 1-2).

At the present time, Canadian refugee policy attempts to decrease the number of asylum seekers entering Canada, and to reduce the acceptance rate of refugee claimants. According to Black (2012), the acceptance rate is around 28 per cent, with 2,449 claims accepted out of 8,646 cases. That is a substantial drop from 2006, when the acceptance rate was 47 per cent, and 5,024 cases were accepted out of a total of 10,620. In this regard, Macklin (2009, p. 94) points out that

it is not the 'law' determining who falls within the refugee definition, but rather those who apply it: [administrative decision makers of the IRB]; and, those who control access to the system [the government], who determine... whether and how an asylum seeker will be heard.

The mechanisms used by the government of Canada to reduce the number of refugees entering Canada are varied, but include: (1) imposing visa requirements from citizens of ‘refugee-producing’ countries; (2) imposing responsibility on air and marine carriers for transport of undocumented or unsuitably documented migrants; (3) representing private transportation companies as delegates of Citizenship and Immigration; (4) posting visa officers at foreign airports to check passenger documentation on planes destined for Canada; and (5) instituting detention centers for children held with parents seeking asylum (and also deportees) (Macklin, 2009, pp. 105-6, CBC, 2012).

Bill C-31, introduced in 2012, embraces important changes to Canada’s refugee determination system and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Chan (2012, p. 2) points out this bill contains the following restrictions: limiting health care for refugees, and removing access to supplementary services such as pharmaceutical, dental, and optometric care. Claimants who have had their claims rejected and are awaiting appeal or deportation, will no longer have access to even basic health care, and will only be treated if their condition poses a threat to public safety. Moreover, Senator Jaffer in the Huffington Post (2012) stated that Bill C-31 gave “the minister the power to impose penalties on designated foreign nationals who arrive as a group, such as mandatory unreviewable detention for six months, which would place 16 and 17 year-old children in jail-like detention centers. In addition, there would be a five year prohibition on applying for permanent resident status, even if a person has succeeded in becoming a convention refugee, leaving them with no possibility of reuniting with family for at least five years.” This legislation mostly came into force mid-way through 2012 and has radically altered the landscape for refugee claimants (Alboim and Cohl, 2012, p. 30). (See Table 5.1)

Table 5.1: Humanitarian Stream Changes**Refugee/Asylum Seeker/Humanitarian Stream Changes**

Date Announced by CIC	Content
March 29, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIC Minister J. Kenney announces commitment to gradually increase annual acceptance of government-assisted refugees to an additional 500 places and privately sponsored refugees to an additional 2000 spaces BUT only if and when Balanced Refugee Reform Act is approved by Parliament • Commitment to increasing funding of Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) for refugees; Funding expected to come from revenue that would be saved with BRRA reforms
March 30, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenney introduces Balanced Refugee Reform Act (BRRA) to Parliament
June 29, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRRA receives Royal Assent
August 13, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival of MV Sun Sea on coast of British Columbia carrying 492 Tamils • No CIC news releases addressing this event
October 21, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harper government introduces Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act (Bill C-49)
June 16, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing Human Smugglers from Abusing Canada's Immigration System Act reintroduced in Parliament (Bill C-49 died on order paper, now Bill C-4)
October 7, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source Country refugee program repealed
December 9, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister Kenney announces proposed changes to private refugee sponsorship program: • Sponsorship and permanent resident applications to be submitted together OR returned as incomplete • Applicants must be recognized as refugees by UNHCR or by a state
February 16, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harper administration introduces Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act (Bill C-31) • Bill includes more changes to BRRA, most elements proposed in Bill C-4, and mandatory biometric data for temporary visa applicants
April 25, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) reformed: Supplemental healthcare benefits (e.g. medicinal prescriptions, dental, vision care) eliminated for refugee claimants and other protected persons
May 9, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minister Kenney announces changes to Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act (Bill C-31): • Initial detention review for "designated arrivals" would occur

	14 days after detention as opposed to one year (and subsequent reviews every 180 days) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 month Pre-removal risk assessment (PRRA) bar, proposed in the original bill, would be raised to a 36 month bar for individuals from "designated safe countries"
June 20, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harper government introduces Faster Removal of Foreign Criminals Act (Bill C-43)
June 29, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act (Bill C-31) receives royal assent

Source: Samantha Bezic, 2012, pp. 48-49

Bill C -31 contains the following clauses: (1) it allows the judges to prosecute suspected smugglers and convict them with a mandatory minimum prison. This occurred by amending and expanding definition of human smuggling (Bill C-31 section 117). The ostensible goal of Bill C-31 is to reduce the human trafficking. However, as CSSSDLM/PRAIDA (2012, p. 8) pointed out, “we fear that because of these measures, the claimants we see will be in an even worse state since they risk paying more for their access to safety and spending more time at the hands of unscrupulous smugglers”; (2) the Bill makes a new legal category that gives the Minister of Public Safety the authority to label any group of individuals as “irregular arrival” persons. This can be done in any case in which the Minister believes that the process of determining eligibility may not be conducted in a timely manner, or if the Minister has any suspicion that a person or group of persons may be involved in criminal or “terrorist” activity (Bill C-31 2012, 10 cited in Bechard and Elgersma, 2012).

Also, Clause 23(2) of Bill C-31 amends section 55(3) of the IRPA, which governs the detention upon entry into Canada of permanent residents or foreign nationals. Section 55(3) of the IRPA currently provides that a permanent resident or a foreign national may be detained by an officer upon entry into Canada if: (1) the officer considers detention necessary in order to complete the examination of the permanent resident or foreign national; or (2) the officer has

reasonable grounds to suspect that the permanent resident or foreign national is inadmissible on grounds of security or for violating human or international rights (Bechard and Elgersma, 2012).

Darwish and Latham (2013, para 1) point out that these provisions are likely to drastically increase the number of migrants facing detention in the coming years. Further, they assert that “over the past decade, we have witnessed a steady increase in the number of migrants who have been detained. From 2004-2011, an estimated 82,000 migrants were detained by Immigration Canada, with an additional 13,000 since 2011 alone.” Also, in this regard, Gilbert and Loiero (CBC NEWS Canada, 2012) reported that “over the past year 289 migrant children have been held in detention centers in Canada, many of whom were under the age of 10.” It is further important to consider that in the future immigration detention may be given over increasingly to the private sector in the absence of accountability to the Canadian public (Darwish and Latham, 2013, para 7).

The current situation of refugees is not very promising and the conditions of their lives in the western countries are becoming increasingly restricted through legal measures and law enforcement aimed at intercepting them at their borders, or interdicting them from exercising legal rights. Western countries, including Canada, which formerly embraced asylum claimants have changed their asylum policies to create legal restrictions that prevent asylum seekers from entering. Since the 1980s, in Canada, the climate of hospitality toward refugees has gradually changed as they have increasingly come to be stereotyped as “bogus refugees”, “queue jumpers” and system abusers of the generous welfare system who pose a threat to security in Canada. Since September 2001 and the 2012 enactment of Bill C-31, the number of refugee claimants has drastically declined. More importantly, in Canada, the acceptance rates for asylum claimants

have gradually decreased from 40-45 percent, and in 2010 and 2011 reached 38 percent, the lowest rate in the history of the IRB (Focus Migration, 2013, p.9).

Chapter Six: Refugee Families

6.1 Introduction

As refugee families resettle in a western country, they face unprecedented challenges related to the dominant values of their new country which differ from, and potentially clash with, their own family values. A range of related matters will be discussed briefly in this chapter. First, I examine the family as a social institution. I then explore globalization and its impacts on the changes of family institutions, and describe some of the challenges that families in modern western countries now face. Finally, I will provide an overview of the challenges refugee families often experience in adapting to western countries.

6.2 The Institution of the Family

According to Rawls (1971, p.55), an institution refers to a public system of rules, positions, rights, duties, powers, and immunities that specifies certain forms of actions as permissible and forbidden, and which also provides certain penalties and defense, when violation occurs. Social institutions set normative rules governing and controlling everyday behavior of people (Erkan, 2012), and thus contribute to predictability of life (Ambert and Krull, 2006). Furthermore, social institutions govern relationships between social members including the facilitation of social behavior (Poloma, 1993 cited in Erkan, 2012). Social institutions are the result of collective choices to achieve efficiency, solve collective-action dilemmas, and reduce transaction costs (North, 1990). Finally, social institutions are rooted in the culture and history of a given society and thus they are taken for granted and become persistent norms and beliefs (Hall and Taylor, 1996).

Social institutions negotiate and facilitate social practices, and allocate particular roles for members of the institution. It is essential to identify how the rights and duties of social members are defined, and how powers and immunities are practiced within an institution. It is also essential to know if the rules are progressive ones, that is to say, if they contribute to improving and distributing equal rights and duties; or if on the contrary, they are rigid obstacles to equal rights. From a historical point of view, the family as a social institution has contributed to gender inequalities in the majority of human societies by adhering to the following characteristics:

- First, the existence of paternal authority over women, which exists during marriage and after divorce, inheritance rights, the prevalence of marriage involving teenage and underage girls, and the acceptance or legality of polygamy.
- Second, the lack of women's rights to freely participate in society, the public and economic life.
- Third, attempts to physically control women's bodies via rape, sexual harassment, domestic violence and female genital mutilation.
- Fourth, the preference for sons rather than daughters, indicating the high importance of sons in families for economic, religious, or social reasons.
- Fifth, patriarchal and patrilineal ownership rights, including property rights and accessibility to land and credit (Branisa et al., 2014, p. 254).

However, more recently the impacts of globalization have led to changes in the pattern of gender inequalities in families in western countries. At the same time, globalization has

contributed to a certain degree of change in the cultural and social values of families in other countries.

6.3 Globalization and its Impact on Families

It appears inadequate to examine the changes in families in our present time without taking into account the overall impacts of globalization on families in general society. A broad range of explanations of the process of globalization have been produced from different viewpoints and perspectives. For example, the process of globalization has been described as ‘time–space compression’ (Harvey, 1989), ‘action at distance’ (Giddens, 1990), ‘accelerating interdependence’ (Ohmae, 1990), and ‘networking’ (Castells, 1998). Castells (1998) has associated the process of globalization with an increase in social interdependence. As Kanter (1997, p. 37 cited from Moore and Lewis 2009, p. xiii) points out, “the world is becoming a global shopping mall in which ideas and products are available everywhere at the same time.” Friedman (2002, p. 5 cited in More and Lewis, 2009, p. xiii) states that:

globalization means the spread of free-market capitalism to virtually every country in the world. Globalization also has its own set of economic rules—rules that revolve around opening, deregulating, and privatizing your economy. Unlike the Cold War system, globalization has its own dominant culture, which is why it tends to be homogenizing.

Giddens (1990, p. 64) draws attention to the social side of globalization and puts forward that: “globalization can be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.”

Globalization has transformed societies which had been either hunting and gathering societies, or pastoral and agrarian societies, or non-industrial civilizations” (Giddens, 1997). In general, it has been argued that in contrast to newly transformed societies in the age of globalization, these earlier forms of social organization were characterized by “no sustained growth in per capita income; limited growth of living standard of people” (Lucas 2004), and a cultural emphasis on “making parents proud as the main goal; rejecting divorce; abortion; euthanasia and suicide; seeking social conformity; supporting deference to authority, and having high levels of national pride and a nationalistic outlook” (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005, p. 52).

The outcomes of globalization are not identical in every society. They might have developed differently in the social, economic, cultural and political realms. Likewise, each society may have its own unique institutional dynamics which differ from each other as well as distinctive political and economic systems which lead to a varying range of outcomes and changes in the traditional patterns of families. In addition, the way in which individual societies are exposed to globalization and the subsequent response of societies to these changes, make for varying degrees of impacts on families. However, those societies which share the same values can be expected to show similar changes in families and values as a result of the impacts of globalization. There are several examples that illustrate how globalization and its impacts have changed traditional family patterns.

In Canada, Ambert and Kurll (2006, p. 97) states that as a reformist liberal government was installed in Quebec in 1960, the province changed profoundly in a variety of ways. First, Quebec shifted from an agrarian to an industrializing society with greater financial power. Second, it curtailed the powers of the Roman Catholic Church, particularly its domination of education and its influence on moral issues such as the prohibition of divorce. Third, Quebec

began to utilize French as a first language instead of English. Changes also took place in the family, such as the expansion of women's social and legal rights to access education beyond primary school and other areas, a break from Church and political elite expectations that Quebecoise women should bear many children. For example, changes in the family were also affected by legal and policy changes that eased access to divorce and contraception.

The second case is connected to the impacts of globalization on families in China where, before the advent of globalization, it was commonplace to see three to five generations of a single family living together under one roof. Filial piety was a strong social value and extended family structures were common (Ting, 2012). The rise of globalization, in the forms of urbanization, industrialization, capitalization, and political reform markedly impacted traditional Chinese society and family life. The impacts of globalization on families in China have included the following:

- Dramatic decrease in family size
- Decline in number of extended families
- The growth of the nuclear family as the most common type of family
- Changes in obligations and relationships between family members particularly, in particular, in Beijing and Hong Kong
- Changes in marriage patterns and family formation as well as increased number of people with two or more marriages in their life time (Ting, 2012).

In Africa, the impacts of globalization in the forms of colonialization, the adaptation to Christianity, information technology, migration, and commercialization (Banda, 2014) have

significantly changed the traditional patterns of families. Changes include shifts in decision making roles due to the establishment of cash-crop economy; changes in wedding patterns, and changing maternal roles such as marriage at an older age and a decline in fertility. Further, the impacts of globalization on families have led to an increase in households headed by women, an increase in the rate of marital instability and dissolution, and shifting patterns in mate selection and family relations. The impacts have also given rise to the compromising of traditionally African social obligations such as sharing, caring, and child fostering due in large part to the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic across the continent, and the growing problem of intimate partner violence linked to the ongoing HIV/AIDS epidemic (Takyi and Oheneba-Sakyi, 2006, p. 274).

Globalization forces existing social institutions including the prevailing social relationships to adjust and adapt to its conditions, policies, and rules. In general, it has been found that the following changes are related to globalization and its impacts on family structure:

- Growth and expansion of the nuclear family as well as gradual decline of the extended family
- Weakening of patriarchal authority in families
- Increase in women's economic participation, specifically, in cases of single parents headed mostly by mothers (Cheal, 2008, p. 33)
- Change in age at marriage and age at birth of first child
- Decline in arranged marriages
- Childbearing becomes more voluntarily as well as a matter of personal choice, due to the wide availability and increasingly legal use of contraception
- Change in size and structure of households due to various reasons such as declining fertility, decreasing rate of children's contribution in the family economy, improving

health care and child survival rates, and declining of orthodox religious attitudes and authorities (Cheal, 2008, p. 46)

- Increasing costs of raising a child, i.e., in Canada, to raise a child up to 18 years costs \$72,000 or between \$3,000 to \$4,000 per year (McMahon, 2013)
- Obligation towards kinships and performing formal duties are now becoming a matter of personal choice
- Increase in rates of marriage dissolution or divorce
- Increase in international migration impacts families in varying ways: migration-related adverse incidents including suicides and deaths of migrants or family members, clandestine love affairs (either migrant or spouse), instances of abandoning families, incidents of family break-ups, bigamy or polygamy as a result of separation of married couples
- Weakening security system of older persons due to the changes in the size and patterns of families
- Budgetary cuts in health and education sectors directly affect the health and the nutrition levels of the new born family members
- Emergence of a new middle-class family with its luxurious lifestyle in developing countries, with its own prerogatives such as living in modern houses and apartments, owning luxury vehicles, and other perceived status symbols, engaging in overseas travel, educating their children in international colleges, shopping at modern supermarkets with credit cards, and seeking private hospitals and services for maintaining health care (Jiloha, 2009).

- Obedience and conformity of the child to adult interests were desirable in the past; today unvarying obedience of child is no longer the prevailing desirable outcome
- Increasing plurality of family forms: unregistered cohabitation has become an alternative to marriage-based families; an increase in other family structures such as single-parent families, reconstituted families, living apart together (LAT), living together apart (LTA) (Adam et al., 2011).

6.4 Challenges of Today's Families

Societies exposed to the impacts of globalization inevitably bring about a new social structure that is predominantly based on a market economy which accelerates the free flow of labor across continents, decreases the bargaining power of labor, and creates opportunities for migration (Jiloha, 2009). In addition, globalization of the economy coupled with the advent of information technology and enhancement in communication and transportation, has created a competitive climate at the global level; as a result, contingent employment has replaced long-standing employment and is forcing workers to undertake more jobs and geographic dislocations in order to pursue their careers (Dau-Schmidt and Brun, 2006). Today's family is squeezed between the impacts of globalization and the lack of supporting policies that bring about new challenges such as follows:

- Families appear to be more structurally unstable, more socially isolated and receive less support by other social institutions. Subsequently, they are not as able to fulfil their responsibilities with respect to supervising, guiding, and educating their youth and caring for their elders (Ambert and Krull, 2006).

- There is a lack of economic and social resources available to the single-parent family, thus making it more difficult to run families efficiently compared with a two-parent family that has an adequate income (Kahne and Mabel, 2010).
- The massive proliferation of the visual media—specifically TV and the Internet—pose a challenge to families. Popular media has been found to have a greater effect on interpersonal relationships in families who watch television more and communicate less, and eat separately while watching different programs at different times (Roberts and Foehr, 2004).
- The content and quality of TV programs, specifically family-based sitcoms, leave negative feelings on children such as fear and anger. Further, watching such sitcoms, according to Weiss and Wilson (1996) lead children to believe that “‘real’ family life should be more dramatic because what they see on television is like that”.
- By the end of elementary school, the average child has watched over 8,000 murders on TV (Waters 1993). Subsequently, it has been found that there is a positive correlation between aggressiveness in young adults (both boys and girls) and the level of violent TV viewing during childhood (Huesman et al., 2003; Bushman and Huesman, 2001).
- Children have become a very lucrative commercial target for the advertising industry with more than \$12 billion spent annually (Dittman, 2002). The way in which the advertising industry affects parental relationships with their children was studied in a supermarket. The research reveals that “65 percent of all parents’ refusal to buy food items advertised on television instantly resulted in parent-child conflict or arguments” (Atkin, 1978).

- Sexual content and imagery in the media have increased for over years. One content analysis found that in the United States sexual content that ranged from flirting to sexual intercourse had increased from slightly more than half of television programs in 1997-1998 to more than two-thirds of the programs in the 1999-2000 seasons (Knukel et al., 1999 cited in Brown 2002, p.42). Also, adolescents look to the media for information about dating and sexual relationships as they are learning to negotiate their own emerging sexuality (Pardun et al., 2005).
- Lowry and Towles (1989) conducted research to compare the sexual content in soap operas in 1979 and again in 1987. They concluded that the 1987 soap operas had the following messages: “non-marital sex is the most exciting, spontaneous sex is very romantic, all unmarried people engage in sex, and indiscriminate sex is not related to unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease” (cited in Ambert and Krull, 2006, p. 77).
- On one hand, the Internet is a source of communicating, playing, searching and learning (Livingstone and Bovill, 2001); on the other hand, it is a source of hideous crime such as sexual abuse and exploitation of children, i.e. child pornography, pedophilia (Sheldon and Howitt, 2007) and cybercrime, as well as being used as a channel for conducting harmful activities such as drug trafficking, hate speech, bomb-talk, stalking, hack-tivism, and other nefarious deeds (Wall, 2001).
- Due to the complex aspects of the Internet, parents and other adults can be, in the words of Prensky (2001), digital immigrants who often cannot cope with the rapid evolution of technology. The inability to upgrade their own technical knowledge and awareness, on one hand, leads parents to develop moral panic (Paynee, 2008) in term of the perils and

detrimental outcomes of Internet exposure; and on the other hand, leaves children alone in their interaction with online media (Eurispes-Telefono Azzurro, 2008). Equally important, parents may administer either an evaluative supervision, i.e. try to steer their children through discussion or, they strive to use a restrictive approach, that is, try to control access to media and time spent on media activities by children (Tabone and Messina, 2010, p. 2078).

- Establishing an egalitarian division of labour within family members is a challenge, i.e. the change in activities once exclusively reserved for the female gender role (kitchen work, childrearing, cleaning up, etc.) (Schmid, 1982, p. 8). Even so, in dual-career families, women do more household work and childrearing than men (Cheal, 2008).
- Female-headed single-parent families particularly face a number of challenges as follows: (1) poverty resulting from a lack of adequate financial support to earning lower wages than men (Menaghan and Parcel, 1990); (2) challenges associated with raising a child including: first, children in single-mother families on average display lower school performance (Sigle-Rushton and McLanahan, 2004); second, these children have a higher level of anxiety due to financial difficulties in the family; third, they exhibit a higher degree of maladaptive behavior, particularly conduct disorders and socialized delinquency (Schroeder et al., 2010, Anderson and Linden 2014) and finally, they are more at risk of becoming young offenders (Corrado and Freedman, 2011).
- Care and care giving are frequently becoming more demanding as well as being a new challenge for today's families. Care is associated with the age of the care recipient and the level of fragility. As a result, it becomes a source of tension in families, as care recipients feel the loss of autonomy, and care providers feel they must give up paid

employment in order to care. As Cheal (2008) states, caregivers who give up their employment will have a lower pension income in the future.

- Today's parents are anxious because they need both the knowledge and affection to raise a child. Parents either excessively praise the child, or they anxiously criticize the child for his deficiencies. Both conducts reveal parental nervousness. This results in a growing need for many parents to seek advice, undergo counseling, but with serious doubts that any remedy can really heal the underlying anxiety (Stearns, 2003, p. 212).

6.5 The Challenges Faced by Refugee Families

Refugee families have a pre- and a post-migration stage. Pre-migration is related to the time when families confront war, flight, violent displacement, death, and separation from relatives with undeniably devastating impacts on their lives. As they leave their home countries, they might settle in refugee camps in neighboring non-western countries, where they may experience traumatic events and atrocities. Atrocities may occur in the form of beatings, torture, exploitation, and sexual abuse. In addition, in refugee camps, refugee families live in very difficult conditions. They do not have enough food, have limited access to clean water, and, if they get sick, often cannot get adequate medical care (Biran et al., 2012).

The post-migration stage begins with their resettlement in a western country. Yet they face challenges their new society. Refugee families must learn to speak, listen, read, and write in the local language in order to effectively communicate in their new country. They must also learn the culture of their new country.

According to Papadopoulos (2002) refugees generally experience four types of traumatic events overall: (1) ‘anticipation’ of the imminent catastrophe in their original home; (2) ‘devastating events’ which lead to the uprooting of people from their homes (this is often a violent phase); (3) ‘survival’, when they are safe from physical danger but are still in temporary accommodation, waiting to be settled in a different territory; and (4) ‘adjustment’, when refugees struggle to fit into their new environment and life. As refugee families resettle in a western country with a totally different culture, they face unparalleled challenges in various forms. In Appendix C, I provide a table that summarizes the challenges of refugee families which have been identified in previous research.

In summary, globally today’s family is exposed to the impacts of globalization which change the habitual structure of families with respect to size, gender roles, authority, kinship relationships, extended family, cultural values, practices, and behaviors relating to family dynamics. At the same time, they face various unprecedented challenges as the outcomes of globalization continue to influence change in socio-economic family conditions. Today’s family challenges may include the inability of parents to maintain their overall childrearing responsibilities or to cope with their children, as well as disparities in incomes of single-parents as compared to two-parent families.

For refugee families who have arrived in a Western country, resettlement brings serious changes and challenges. Resettlement in a western country is connected to a variety of adjustments, in the context of lacking support from kinship relationships as well as established social networks, occupational changes, language insufficiencies, and in-family role-reversals between spouses or between children and parents. The adjustments that refugee families have to

undergo are the results of challenges that mostly stem from the cultural differences between the western host country and the refugee's country of origin.

Chapter Seven: Families and Traditional Values in Arabic, Muslim, and African Cultures

7.1 Introduction

Each individual is born in a cultural environment, and grows within the cultural setting that consists of a variety of social institutions. Since each culture has its own specific socialization process, the individual may consider how to adjust his/her own actions and behaviours within the demands and requests of the prevailing culture in the society within which he/she lives. If culture determines beliefs about the father, the family, and the behavior of men as fathers, then one must first understand the cultural contexts of refugees. Working with refugees as a whole requires knowing their cultural backgrounds, where they were born, grew up and how the cultural contexts regulate their behaviors after resettlement in a Western country.

The figures of refugees who have resettled in Manitoba in 2013 reveal that “about 46 percent of government-assisted refugee came to Manitoba from Uganda, Kenya, Somalia and South Africa. And about 73 per cent of privately sponsored refugees came from Eritrea, Somalia and Ethiopia” (Manitoba Immigration Facts: Statistical Report, 2013, p. 3). In this regard, studying the culture of the refugees’ home country becomes important for refugee serving agencies while considering the following: first, “culture influences when and how parents care for children, the extent to which parents permit children freedom to explore, how nurturing or restrictive parents are, which behaviors parents emphasize, and so forth” (Benedict, 1938; Bornstein, 1991; Erikson, 1950 cited in Bornstein and Cheha, 2006, p.7).

Second, cultures also provide the attitudes and roles attached to family members, for example, the father as disciplinarian and mother as caregiver. More importantly, families are to a

great extent responsible for teaching, interpreting and enforcing the cultural expectations of the society where they live. By and large, parents are the primary caregivers of their children and are in charge of instilling values and behavioral expectations. As Whiting and Edwards (1988, p. 35) point out, parents are “organizers” and “providers” of culture. In this regard, Baumrind’s work on parenting styles is useful. Baumrind (1987) classified three types of parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting styles. The authoritarian parent is rigid, harsh, demanding and not responsive. Abusive parents usually belong to this category. They can also be stable but not inflexible, responsive to a child’s needs but not indulgent (Moghaddam et al., 2013, p. 45-6). The permissive parent is very responsive to the child’s demands, and rarely applies consistent rules. The “spoiled” child often has permissive parents. Authoritative parenting style is characterized by moderate demandingness with moderate responsiveness. They are firm but not rigid, willing to make an exception when the situation warrants (Moghaddam et al., 2013, p. 45-6). Maccoby and Martin (1983) identified the involved parent as fourth type of parenting style. Harter (2006) points out that involved parenting is characterized by inconsistent and/or conditional approval. The situations involve parents or peers telling an adolescent to act in ways that might be considered morally wrong (i.e., not to befriend another of a different race; to physically confront another who is teasing him or her) ... and directives about personal issues with prudential or pragmatic considerations (completing homework; not riding a motorcycle) (Turiel, 2006, p.840). A study conducted by Patterson and Forgatch (1995) demonstrated both a strong correlation between parenting style (disciplinary practices and monitoring) and antisocial behaviors of children, and also between parental behaviors and the children’s negative, coercive behavior at home and in out-of-home settings.

If the values and norms of a culture are passed on from one generation to the next through childrearing practices (Keshavarz and Baharundin, 2009), then the study of cross-cultural parenting in families and refugee fathers may help understand the values and norms at work in parenting styles both in the family, and in fathers in refugee communities that have resettled into a Western country.

To do this, within the context of the current study, one must first briefly outline the cultural characteristics of the refugee population from the Middle East and northern and central Africa. The Arab world consists of 24 countries and territories with a population of some 325 million people over more than 12.9 million square kilometers (5 million square miles) in northern Africa and the Middle East. It is also a predominantly Muslim culture. Central Africa, on the other hand, has equally specific cultural values which will also be discussed.

7.2 Arabic and Muslim Culture

The Arabic world has strongly entrenched cultural and familial values which by and large come from two pillars of influence: Bedouin in northern Africa, which emphasizes hospitality, generosity, courage, honor and self-respect in societal relationships and family structure, and Islam, which provides the basis of instruction for life in Arab Muslim societies via the Quran (Gregg, 2005). Most aspects of daily life of an Arab Muslim are ruled by a firm religious code, making Islam not only a religion but a way of life. The Five Pillars of Islam to which a Muslim must adhere are: Shahada, a testimony to one God and to Muhammad as the Messenger of God; Salat, ritualized prayer five times daily while facing Mecca; Zakat, an annual obligatory contribution for charity and promotion of Islam; Saum, observance of Ramadan, the traditional abstinence from food, drink and sexual intercourse from dawn to dusk during the ninth month of the Muslim year; and Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca during the twelfth month (Gregg, 2005, pp. 113-116).

Also, in traditional Arab society, men are responsible for providing the family's material welfare, and women are to bear and raise children. Women are the decision makers in the home including expenditures, upbringing and education of children, and sometimes the arrangement of marriage. The father is to be treated as the "legitimate authority for all matters of the family" (Al-Krenawi and Graham, 2000, p. 11). Erickson and Al-Timimi (2001) infer that a wife and mother can use influence in ways that we may not see or notice—such as withholding work and favour until the husband and children show more respect. Similarly, Arab society also prizes the extended family, often over friends or job demands due to familial security. Moreover, the good name of any family member reflects on all other members. As Nydell (2006, p. 72) states, one person's indiscreet behavior or poor judgment can damage his or her relatives' pride, social

influence, and marriage opportunities, making family honor a huge pressure to conform to accepted behavior patterns. Many decisions—including health care—are considered a family rather than individual decision (Nydell, 2006, p. 74)

Likewise, children are perceived as the social security of their parents with grown sons responsible for the support of parents, while brothers are responsible for unmarried sisters if the father is absent. Respect for adults as a prevalent aspect of the socialization of children and is considered a lifetime commitment as parents are commonly credited with children's successes and blamed for their failures (Okasha, 2003). In turn, in Arab homes, premarital sex is unacceptable for females. Thus, a woman's virginity and unbroken hymen are considered extremely important (Mourad and Carolan, 2010), discouraging the use of tampons and douches, or visiting a gynecologist before marriage (Al-Oballi Kridli, 2002 cited in Mourad and Carolan, 2010, p. 180). Once a daughter reaches womanly status following menarche, strict behavioral expectations are often set, including no socializing with males and modest attire (Al-Oballi Kridli, 2002 cited in Mourad and Carolan, 2010, p. 180).

In the same way, marriage—often arranged—is considered a union of families, and each family will contribute to loyalty, emotional support, and even financial aid to each other rather than simply to the bride and groom (Al-Krenawi, 2005). Mothers play the most revered role in family and community and are the ones responsible for first nurturing religious observance and orthodoxy among children (Abu-Ras, 2007; Al-Krenawi et al., 2004 cited in Al-Krenawi and Jackson, 2014, p.118). They must also maintain a strong interdependence and emotional bond with their son(s) in the case of a lack of intimacy and companionship with the husband, to ensure their future security as son(s) will likely inherit the property. Mothers also depend on their control over daughters-in-law her son(s) bring into it (Gregg, 2005, p.225). Daughters are

expected to act as the mother's primary workforce and social companions, "until they marry and the arrangement of 'close' marriages may enable them to sustain those roles" (Gregg, 2005, p. 225), while the eldest son or male extended family member assumes the patriarchal role in the case of the father's absence (Abudabbeh, 2005). First-born children thus "tend to receive more attention, are likely to carry the family's ambitions, and are assigned a dominant role with respect to later children" (Alexon, 1999, p. 285). Interestingly, parents treat boys more negatively than they do girls in the form of rejection or hostility (Punamaki, Qouta, and El Sarraj, 1997).

In comparison, Islam regards sexuality as a dangerous force that needs careful regulation, for when it flows outside the bounds of marriage and reproduction, it violates the order of the world [and] is a grave 'disorder,' a source of evil and anarchy. Islam therefore remains hostile to all other ways of realizing sexual desire. As a result, the divine curse embraces the boyish woman and the effeminate man, male and female homophilia, auto-eroticism, zoophilia, and so on. Indeed all these deviations involve the same refusal to accept the sexed body and to assume the female and male condition. Sexual deviation is a revolt against God (Gregg, 2005, p. 273). Al-Krenawi and Jackson (2014, p. 129) assert that "in Muslim cultures, men are inflicted by the will of God (Insha'Allah), and women may be possessed by evil Jinns (spirits)." According to Gregg (2005, p.127-128) Jinns are a central part of a folk theory about mental illnesses and emotional conflicts (i.e. immoral thoughts and nightmares), and children are taught that these beings are real to evoke fear and respect. This can encourage externalized anxiety and protective measures through exorcisms and other "cures" rather than professional self-analysis and prescription.

By the same token, family problems are expected to be dealt with in private—quickly and quietly (Abudabbeh, 2005); otherwise, religious and other community organizations are the first to try and identify and deal with problems (Al-Krenawi and Graham, 2003). Men are expected to not show signs of weakness. In times of family stress, they will assist in helping others but rarely seek help for themselves (Al-Krenawi and Graham, 2005). In the case of divorce, women are particularly disadvantaged and even outcast. Not only does sharia law not provide for alimony—thereby encouraging subjugation as a second or third and less valued wife to another man—women often lose access to children (Abudabbeh, 2005; Al-Krenawi et al., 2004; Erickson and Al-Timimi, 2001 cited from Al-Krenawi and Jackson, 2014, p. 123). Divorced women therefore suffer from greater psychological and social stresses than single or married women (Al-Krenawi, 2005).

7.3 African Tradition

African parents view that children are the vital source of old-age support, labor, prestige, and marital stability and, as Caldwell (1982) stated, that it is pitiable to have no children. In this regard, having numerous children may be usual for parents because on one hand, it costs them little, and on the other hand, other people help with childcare and foster arrangement (Isiugo-Abanihe, 1985). Also, Respect for elderly by children in varying settings and contexts are traditionally emphasized, such as offering a public seat or bundles of firewood/buckets of water, and avoiding interference in elder conversation. In addition to the father, the whole community and older persons are qualified and licensed to punish and discipline for delinquent behavior of a child (Nyarko, 2014). In Congolese culture, for instance, values are very strict including respect for the elderly and rulers, and social status from birth to death. Fatherhood and motherhood are considered social functions and must be adhered to (Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre, 2009;

Matondo, 2012). In central Africa, the appearance of a strong father and family man is essential in the political world, with the media are strongly encouraged to create the image of “kind, loving, solicitous individuals who were the father of their nation” (Schatzberg, 2001, p.8) This is also true in formal religion, business, sports, gender relations, and other contexts of power.

Also, Africans speak of power in terms of the capacity “to consume, or the ability ‘to eat’ as expressed both literally and figuratively in many African languages” (Schatzberg, 2001, p. 40).

“It is also worth noting that throughout middle Africa the language of corruption is often related to the language of food: *madesu ya bana* (beans for the children), and *un petit quelque chose à manger* (a little something to eat) in Zaïre; as well as the ubiquitous East African equivalent, *chai* (tea)” (Schatzberg, 2001, p. 26). So the father-chief has the right “to eat” a lot (that is, to accumulate quantifiable prosperity) as long as he simultaneously provides for his children.

However, as Schatzberg (2001, p. 151) points out that the political father has the responsibility of providing food, clothing, shelter, health care, and other basic necessities, people should view these as “gifts” from their generous and loving father. Schatzberg (2001) says the political father’s role is also as provider – he must nurture and care for his political children, and teach and raise them morally and ethically. Discipline and order are also integral to the father chief’s role, as well as reintegration and forgiveness. (p.149).Schatzberg (2001) also points out that “people in all spheres of activity are sure that sorcerers and spirits play an important role in everyday life, influencing larger political outcomes and affecting individual life chances and one’s various possibilities” (p.113). This can be the result of a soccer game, the growth of bank notes or the outcome of an election. Sorcery is an integral part of daily life for many middle Africans in both rural and urban areas (Schatzberg, 2001, p.118).

Chapter Eight: Post -Traumatic Stress Disorder and Refugees

8.1 Introduction

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is often viewed as an outcome of living in hard conditions and experiencing atrocities. Refugees are more likely to live in such conditions and are more susceptible to PTSD. In this chapter, I briefly examine the symptoms of PTSD and note the impacts of PTSD among refugees.

8.2 Refugees and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

The history of many refugees is one of military attacks, penitentiary, mass killings, separation from family, and unjust legal treatment in the pre-migration phase. In the case of those displaced to refugee camps – specifically refugee camps in Africa and Asia – it often also includes a history of the lack of food and clean water, poor health and no access to medical care, lack of shelter, violence (including beatings, suffocation, drowning, and torture) forced isolation from family members or others, detainment or prison, and witnessing murder (often of a family member or someone they knew).

These experiences can trigger PTSD and other psychiatric disorders in refugees. PTSD happens if a person has been exposed to a traumatic event. PTSD can develop if a person has “experienced, witnessed or was confronted with event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others” and if the person’s response involved “intense fear, helplessness or horror” (Baisch, Schenk and Noble, 2011, p. 915).

Such traumatic events are re-experienced as follows:

(1) Recurrent and intrusive distressing recollections of the event, including images, thoughts or perceptions; (2) Recurrent distressing dreams of the event; (3) Acting or feeling as if traumatic event were recurring (e.g. a sense or reliving the experience, illusions, hallucinations and dissociative flashback episodes, including those that occur on awakening or when intoxicated); (4) Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external reminders of the traumatic event; (5) Physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external reminders of the traumatic event (Baisch, Schenk, and Noble 2011, p. 915).

A person who experienced a traumatic event tries to respond to the re-experienced traumatic event by:

(1) Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings or conversations associated with the trauma; (2) Efforts to avoid activities, places or people that arouse recollections of the trauma; (3) Inability to recall an important part of the trauma; (4) Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities (“psychic numbing” or “emotional numbing”); (5) Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others; (6) Restricted ability to feel emotions (especially those associated with intimacy, tenderness and sexuality); (7) Sense of foreshortened future (e.g. does not expect to have a career, marriage, children or a normal life span). (Baisch, Schenk and Noble, 2011, p. 915)

The traumatic event can exhibit corporeal symptoms such as: hypervigilance, flashbacks, nightmares, exaggerated startle response, concentration problems, avoiding traumatic cues, body heat, sitting, and staring (Rasmussen et al., 2007, p. 271-2).

8.3 The Impacts of PTSD among Refugees

The impacts of PTSD on refugees are diverse and protracted and affect all aspects of their life, from psychosomatic illnesses to marital relationships. There are numerous examples of the impact of PTSD on refugees. For instance, Carlson and Rosser-Hogan (1993) conducted research on the mental health status of Cambodian refugees ten years after leaving their homes. They

found that Cambodian refugees experienced high levels of PTSD, dissociation, depression, and anxiety years after their resettlement in the United States (p. 223). Refugees may also suffer from sleep paralysis which is associated with PTSD. Sleep paralysis, as Solomonova et al (2008, p. 49-50) state, refers to brief episodes of inability to move or speak combined with waking consciousness.

During these episodes of paralysis, there are often intrusions of frightening, dreamlike hallucinations. Episodes frequently occur either at sleep onset, when they are termed hypnagogic, or upon awakening from sleep, when they are termed hypnopompic. Feelings of fear and terror are the most prevalent emotional reactions during PTSD experiences. For example, Hinton et al (2005, p. 50) conducted research on sleep among Cambodian refugees, and concluded that Cambodian refugees displayed high rate of sleep paralysis with the following characteristics: (1) long in duration, (2) hallucination (3) prolonged panic attacks. In addition, as enumerated in the points below, existing research has pointed to a number of other potential effects of PTSD on refugees, including:

- There is a potential association between the effects of PTSD and the challenge of acculturation demands over time among refugees. Knipscheer and Kleber (2006, p. 350-351) conducted research on a sample of Bosnian refugees who have lived in the Netherlands for 10 years to study the effects of PTSD on their acculturation process. They found that the level of post-traumatic stress got even worse among this sample of refugees as time went by. They also found that following to posttraumatic stress, acculturation demands are also conducive to the reporting of mental health problems

among refugees. Further, the mental health condition of refugees may be exacerbated because of a combined impact of pre-migration experiences and post-migration problems.

- Refugees who have been separated from their families, and their family members are still living under extreme threat (such as massacre, genocide), experience substantial psychological challenges. In this regard, fears about the safety of family additionally contribute to PTSD, depression and mental health disability of refugees and go beyond the effects of past trauma and other difficulties that they face while they resettle in a new country. In other words, fears for family who are left behind in dangerous settings additionally contributes to influencing the mental health dysfunction and adaptation of refugees and particularly the severity of future-directed fears despite their secure environment. For example, Nickerson et al (2010, p. 233) found in their research on a resettled Iraqi refugee community that refugees with family remaining in terrifying settings experience intrusive symptoms in relation to potential future traumatic events. However, they stated “that fear for family may not be an independent construct contributing to ongoing posttraumatic distress, but rather may reflect the generalized concern that traumatized people often have about their future.”
- Ellis et al (2006, p. 550) studied the association between PTSD and depression among a sample of Somali adolescents living in New England. They concluded that there was “a significant positive correlation was also found between PTSD severity score and depressive symptoms.”
- An entire refugee family can be exposed to traumatic events and losses by systematic persecution which leads the whole refugee family to breakdown. Under such

circumstances, there is no supporting network that can facilitate coping mechanisms for the family. This lack can aggravate the psychological conditions (complicated grief, depression, and PTSD) of the family and the members of the family. Complicated grief refers to a set of symptoms including longing and yearning for the deceased, difficulty moving on, difficulty accepting the death, a sense of emptiness, feeling as though the future has no meaning or purpose, and related impairment (Prigerson et al., 1995; Nickerson et al., 2011).

- Generalized anxiety disorder as well as PTSD seems to be a common part of refugee mental disorders following trauma. Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) refers to “a chronic anxiety condition characterized by excessive and uncontrollable worry and associated somatic symptomsand involves diffuse anxiety in the absence of a specific feared object, class of stimuli, or situation.” (Stevens, 2008, p.10),
- Hinton et al (2011, p. 1822) conducted research on the relationship between worry and PTSD among a sample of Cambodian refugees in in the American state of Massachusetts. They concluded that among traumatized Cambodian refugee patients worry was common, and that worry caused panic attacks, catastrophic cognitions and trauma recalls (flashbacks). Second, the research also showed that worry-induced panic attacks (and GAD) were highly associated with PTSD. Third, the research confirmed that worry deteriorates PTSD through the stimulation of various psychopathological processes (e.g., somatic arousal, catastrophic cognitions, trauma recall, inability to control worry, irritability).

- Trauma may be intergenerationally transmitted. Vaage et al (2011) conducted a study on Vietnamese refugees who fled to Norway, and included parents and their offspring aged 4-23 years. The study attempted to: 1) examine the association between the mental health of Vietnamese refugee parents and their children in Norway after 23 years of resettlement; 2) and to analyze paternal predictors for their children's mental health. Among other findings, the study showed that there was an association between probable cases of mental health problems in offspring and PTSD suffered by their fathers. The authors stated that the association between fathers' PTSD at arrival in Norway and their children's mental health 23 years later suggests a specific vulnerability of a subgroup of children. The implication of this study is that children living with a traumatized father may experience a disrupted family life that threatens the fundamental secure base needed for psychological development and secure attachment.
- Families with fathers suffering from PTSD may exhibit dysfunctional circular interaction. This refers to the assumption that interactions between people are circular, such that they build upon one another. Thus, a family member suffering from symptoms of PTSD brings distress into the family; however, rather than alleviating the individual's distress, the family may in fact reinforce it due to dysfunctional interaction patterns; the individual and family distress then continues to build. Related to this are disturbances in communication, in which family members do not accurately decode the emotional messages behind verbal expressions. Since most traumatized individuals do not readily discuss their emotions about the trauma in a straightforward manner—either to protect other family members or inability to express oneself—such communication disturbances can readily occur. Further, overprotectiveness can cause family members to act in rigid

ways in which they adopt stereotypical roles such as protector and victim. “Because they [were] unable to protect each other from external violence a form of overprotection develop which impedes communication and emotional support. It seems as though the family is falling apart. In reality, it is an artificial distancing stemming from a mutual concern” (van der Veer, 1998, p. 43 cited in Potocky-Tripodi, 2002, p. 324). In refugee families this has the additional aspect that the children may take on the role of emotional caretaker for a traumatized parent; i.e. parentification.

- A final phenomenon is that the effects of traumatic experiences may be transmitted trans-generationally. This means that children may experience symptoms of PTSD even though they were not the ones who experienced the original trauma, either via impacted attitudes and feelings towards others and huge expectations placed on children’s achievements in hopes of redeeming parents’ original suffering. All of these family phenomena are likely to lead to additional intergenerational conflict in refugee families in addition to those conflicts arising from differential acculturation (Potocky –Tripodi, 2002, p. 324).
- Research was conducted on the anger of traumatized Cambodian refugees directed toward family members who have lived in Lowell (Massachusetts). The sample consisted of 143 Cambodian refugees. They found that in nuclear families (NF) anger was frequent and often directed toward children and that NF-type anger was severe and met panic-attack criteria on the basis of somatic arousal. Also, the anger episodes often resulted in trauma recall and catastrophic cognitions. They also discovered that language barriers between parents and children existed, and were perceived to hinder conflict resolution. Further, they found that there was a wide range of causes of anger toward NF members, and that trauma recall was common (particularly of performing slave labor in the Pol Pot

period). Anger episodes may contain retrieval cues, that is, aspects of the anger episode may resemble a trauma event, and so recall it to mind. They explained how the retrieval cue hypothesis can be used to explain why anger so often caused patients to recall performing slave-like labor during the Pol Pot period as follows: The retrieval cues of slave labor that frequently occur in an anger episode are the following: Somatic-type retrieval cues. Patients report that performing slave labor while starving during the Pol Pot period often induced palpitations, dizziness, and other symptoms, so when an anger episode induces these same somatic symptoms (which commonly occurs, as the study demonstrated), these symptoms may act as retrieval cues, recalling this slave labor. Emotion-type retrieval cues. Patients often report how angry they felt that they worked so hard and were given almost no food to eat during the Pol Pot period; in the United States, an experience of anger may serve as a retrieval cue of that event. Cognitive-appraisal-type retrieval cues. The retrieval cue of the trauma event may be not just the emotion of anger, but more specifically, the very cognitive appraisal that gives rise to anger. When talking of children's misbehaviors, such as not going to school, or arriving late to school, parents often remark that they were given so little during the Khmer Rouge period and had to work so hard to survive, whereas their children are given so much, but do so little. That is, there is a sense of a "lack of reciprocity," of a broken contract, which may recall doing slave labor under near-starvation as another case of a broken contract. (Hinton et al., 2011)

Refugee-serving agencies and those working with refugee populations should be aware of the effects of PTSD on refugee populations. This chapter has attempted to shed light on the problem by introducing examples of research conducted on the potential and

actual effects of PTSD in the life of refugee populations. This population carries a variety of predicaments mostly brought about by experiencing pre-migration atrocities and partly added by the post-migration quandaries while resettling into a host country. Their post-migration dilemmas are vivid and include housing problems, financial problems, security concerns (e.g., living in unsafe and unsecure neighborhoods), health concerns, concerns about family members in their home country and child-related issues. Moreover, refugees often have many acculturative stresses: for example, dealing with differences in culturally accepted behavior as children acculturate to the host culture, problems of language communication, and other challenges. These factors all need to be considered in terms of perceiving and comprehending their problems as holistic, i.e. comprehending their problems as a continuum and not as unrelated fragments of hostile events, and understanding the negative trade-off effects in their post-migration resettlement.

Chapter Nine: Fathers' Perceptions of Resettlement and Parenting in Winnipeg

9.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on interviews that were conducted with 24 diverse refugee fathers with varying resettlement times in Winnipeg. Due to the broad range of questions asked during the interviews, answers will be presented on a question-by-question basis in order to identify the similarities and differences of problems, perceptions, challenges, and experiences of each refugee father interviewed in my study.

Interview data revealed seven themes including: perceptions of major changes since their settlement in Winnipeg; perceptions of challenges of being a father in Winnipeg; positive points of being a father in Winnipeg; negative points of being a father in Winnipeg; issues around discipline and parenting; issues related to schooling children and supervising children's access to computers and the internet; how fathers have changed their discipline strategies; and, finally, fathers' aspirations for children. In my presentation of interview data, I cite responses collectively, enclosing their names in brackets at the end of sentences. All names are pseudonyms to protect confidentiality. Provided below is a table (Table 9.1) providing key demographic information on the participants, including their age at the time of the interview, marital status if known, their country of origin, the length of their time in a refugee camp if any, number of children, and the length of time of their resettlement in Canada and Winnipeg.

Table 9.1: Pseudonyms and Demographic Information on Refugee Fathers

Pseudonyms of the Participants	Age	Marital Status	Country	Time in Refcamp	Time in Can/Wwp	# of Children
Abraham	46	Married	Sierra Leon	4 Months	1 Year	3
Ahmad	51	Married	Sierra Leon	-	12 Years	8
Al Baghdadi	46	Married	Iraq	15 Months	15 Months	2
Ali	33	Married	Afghanistan	8 Years	3 Years	2
Azarias	49	Married	Rwanda	12 Years	7 Years	5
Deng	42	Common Law	South Sudan	15 Years	10 Years	3
Dejewry	51	Married	Ethiopia	27 Years	4 Years	1
Didier	44	Married	Congo	11 Years	32 Months	3
Dungen	35	Married	Buthan	21 Years	1 Year	2
Karim	59	Divorced	Iraq	7 Years	4 Years	2
Mahen	42	Married	Congo	9 Months	9 Months	3
M.B.	28	Married	South Sudan	13 Years	10 Years	7
Meshe	58	Married	Congo	10 Years	1 Year	3
Mostafa	60	Married	Iraq	4 Years	4 Years	4
Jean Pierre	37	Married	Congo	13 Years	1 Year	6
Joe	31	Married	Central Africa	8 years	1 Years	5
John	44	Married	Equatorial Guinea	17 Months	2 Years	5
Richard	46	Married	Congo	5 Years	1 Year	6
R.A.	49	Married	Iraq	4 Years	4 Years	3
Samir	28	Married	Erithria	3 Months	3 Years	2
Seraj	46	Married	Ethiopia	14 Years	4 Years	7
Shamsudin	51	Married	Iraq	6 Years	4 Years	4
Soccer	50	Married	South Sudan	3 Years	12 Years	2
Vim	58	Married	Iraq	3 Years	39 Months	5

9.2 Perceptions of Major Changes since Their Resettlement in Winnipeg

Different fathers experience change differently. Factors that influence the different experiences include: the duration of settlement in the refugee camp; the degree of severity of life before and during the settlement in refugee camp; education; and finally, the time span of resettlement in Winnipeg.

For some participants, security, basic sustenance, availability of services such as health care, learning English for free, free schooling for children, opportunities to go to university, and child-tax benefits, are vital to a positive experience in adapting to change in Winnipeg (Vim, Shamsodin, Al Baghdadi, Samir). For other participants, changes are experienced by noticing the manner in which people act toward one another, perceiving a sense of being a human being and a sense of humanitarianism in Winnipeg. Freedom of movement, gaining permanent residency in Canada, having a good life and being happy with family were all emphasized as manifestations of changes in Winnipeg (Mostafa, Abraham, Seraj, Jean Pierre). Some fathers noted the differences in local cultural expectations of male and female gender roles in society, overall gender issues and role reversal (Soccer). Still other participants' changes are perceived in their comments about clean water, food, a room and comfortable sleeping conditions compared with those in refugee camps (MB, Richard, and John).

At first glance, it may seem strange that one of the bigger changes experienced by refugee fathers is seeing their basic sustenance and food needs adequately met. That response, however, is noted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP) which announced that “funding difficulties, compounded by security and logistical problems, have forced cuts in food rations for nearly 800,000 refugees in

Africa, threatening to worsen unacceptable levels of acute malnutrition, stunting and anaemia, particularly in children. In addition, a series of unexpected, temporary ration reductions has affected camps in several countries since early 2013 and into 2014, including in Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Cameroon” (UNHCR the UN Refugee Agency, July 1, 2014). In my research, a significant portion of participants came from refugee camps in the countries mentioned in the UNHCR report.

Drawing from the aforementioned announcement and warning by UNHCR, Richard, a 46-year-old refugee father from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (hereafter DRC) speaks about food in a very eloquent way. He spent five years with his family and parents in the Nakivale Refugee Settlement in Uganda which, according to UNHCR is “one of Africa’s oldest and largest refugee camps. Situated in a highly volatile region, it shelters 56,000 refugees – many of whom have been forced to flee long-running violent conflicts in nearby countries such the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)” (Cited from UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency Australia for UNHCR: Life Lines for Nakivale). Richard says of his food experience in Winnipeg:

I am happy here in Winnipeg because I eat and if you do not eat you get crazy. Our problem is in our country we do not eat enough, only once a day. And maybe sometimes you have nothing to eat and if our government can solve the food problem, everybody can be happy. If you can eat, you can laugh otherwise you get crazy.

He noted the problems with food provisions at Nakivale: “UNHCR sometimes distributed the package of rice and the government of Uganda took the rice and sold it. Instead of that, they gave us maize that stored for a long time and was expired and we ate such crops like that.”

9.3 Perceptions of Major Challenges of Fathers since Their Resettlement in Winnipeg

The purpose of this section is to examine how fathers feel in their roles as fathers and husbands in the new socio-economic conditions of their resettlement in Winnipeg. The following responses relate in particular to the interview question asked regarding “what challenges do you face in Winnipeg that affect your role as a father and as a husband?” (See the Appendix A)

Some fathers in the interviews emphasized that they were finding themselves in different cultural and socio-economic contexts as well as they stressed that gender roles and gender specific notions have changed since they arrived in Winnipeg and these are perceived as unprecedented and new challenges for them.

Jean Pierre (37 years old), also Congolese, said there are exterior influences on marriages which lead to breakdown the marriages, unlike in his home country:

[Wives] want to exercise their power without reaching and achieving a common decision. They do the job by their own alone disregarding their partner. And when the women come here and know about the laws of women here, they say, ‘No, I am a woman and I know about my rights and I do not allow it, otherwise I sue you’. [African women] function and act like a group, they go to church and or if they go somewhere they build their group and in the group they talk about anything and if they come home, they apply what they talked in the group in the household affairs. And if you apply it in the house, it means you bring [a] stranger into the house.

Azarias (49 years old), a Rwandan refugee father, pointed out that a wife now has more power due to government assistance and child-tax benefit being issued in her name – leading to a role reversal in responsibilities and decision-making power. He adds that this leads to difficult situations in the household, including the wife’s ability to call 911 and lets taken away the husband, and the welfare and child support she receives for having the children:

Now, now wife has, for example, 7 children plus herself 8. She gets both welfare and child tax benefit which are a lot of money. She feels like a queen, [whereas husband has to live with \$ 570 dollars that he gets from welfare system. With this amount of money he has to live which leads the husband to drive crazy], and wife has all things and she buys items and throw party and husband feels stressed.

[H]ere, there is a lot of stress because of this reversing role. Here we come to the system and we not choose the system and we have to accept it. Understanding the system is not easy. You have to navigate the system due to volumes of information which is not easy and husband is perceived here as follows: first women, second kids, third, cats and dogs (pets) and finally husband.

Richard, a Congolese refugee father, expresses his perceptions of the empowerment of women in Winnipeg as follow:

If I have a problem I send my wife to the doctor at the hospital and says to her please tell the doctor about our living conditions because the doctor does not talk to me but to my wife. Apparently, man is not welcome like woman.

Ahmad (51 years old), a refugee father with eight children from Sierra Leone, expressed a similar opinion on this role reversal, adding that if he tries to “control them [wife and children]”, they threaten to call the police.

From child tax benefit money they profit and this is a big problem ... They want what[ever] they like to do with the child money [child-tax benefits]. In our culture, father controls everything, father is breadwinner in our system and is in charge for everything as they come to this part of world, they lose [everything] and the money they have, they have no control over it. You cannot control them if you try, they call cops and says to the cops that my husband harasses me, and they says to you if you do not like, pack your staff, which is [very] embarrassing in our [culture].

Ahmad also comments on his perception of women’s lack of proper financial management in his community:

If a woman gets a cheque, it is her own money, but [if] a man gets money it is for the family. Most women in the black community in Canada are doing two, three jobs to get a big money in order to live luxuriously by buying fancy items in order to impress people, but [this big money] is not really for the family. If African women come here [to Canada], they do not try to know and [to understand] what is happening here. Some of them [the African women] try to gain money because of the economic condition in back home [the country of origin]- you can read in between lines- the more money they earn, the more they face economic problems. They [the African women] earn more money than the man here, but they are unhappy and [therefore] have more financial problems because they have a credit card and they use it in order to insult the husband. They go shopping, and [subsequently], they have a lot of debts as well. [However], they have to pay back their debts. One job is not enough for them [in order to pay back their debts] and thus they look for other jobs.

R.A., 49 years old and an Iraqi refugee father, expressed his own experience on gender role reversal, stressing that as a father he must take care of his own problems while his wife has the support of the community: “If father calls, they do not care. Sometimes if there are family needs, they go back to my wife than me and ask my wife to call back, and as a man they do not care if I call them.”

Deng (42 years old), a refugee from South Sudan, talked about working as a janitor on entry into the country and the failure of his marriage:

I said my role as father was to make sure that the food is on the table. I did not have to cook and take care of [the] household. As I came here, I was expecting to do that because of the pressure of my girlfriend to force me to cook, to take care of the babies. At the top of my mind, she was not working, but I had to go to work and when I came home, I was tired, I needed to take rest, but she did not accept.

Seraj, a 46-year-old refugee father from Ethiopia, said he helps out around the house. “In Canada, it is supposed [that] the husband respect his wife and inside the house when she works I am supposed to help her clean the dishes and vacuum the house and I like to help her in household activities. I know how life in Canada works.”

9.4 Positive Points of Being a Father in Winnipeg

How do refugees fathers think of themselves as fathers? What are the positive points about being a father in Winnipeg? The essence is expressed by Abraham, 46 years old and a refugee father from Sierra Leone:

Positive point [of] being a father: I and my family are helped by the government of Canada. If you come from Africa, you do not have food to give to your children and imagine if you go to bed and your child is sick, and in the morning you are supposed to take your child to the hospital but you do not have money for that nothing can be much more frustrating than this and you cannot fulfil your responsibility as a father.

Abraham remarked that in Canada, he can take his sick children to the hospital and see them treated well. Food is also a benefit: “And here at night, if my child is sick, I can take her, him to the hospital in morning, she, and he returns [with] his/her health which is very positive things. My child perhaps feels hungry and I or my wife can go to the fridge and feed the child.”

He added that some things make his job as a father easier in Canada:

There are a lot of things that I can offer to my children that I was not able to offer them in Africa. So these are positive things that have happened in my life as a father. I have a sense of dignity and a sense of taking care of my children and if they ask for the bicycle, I am able to go out and look for that and buy it for them, whereas I was not able to buy it in Africa. These things make my job as a father much easier and ... make me give more love to my children, more happiness, and more joy for myself and my children.

Abraham also believes that his children benefit from being here:

Anything is good about fathering in Winnipeg. I live my life secured and protected by the government of Canada. ... The best thing for my children is that they can change for good. Here, they can go to school and university and graduate and have a good job and become independent. Nobody can stop them. In Africa when a child is born, we begin to worry about disease, dying, sicknesses. Here, these are not my problems anymore. The security that my children have here is the most important thing in my life. I can go anywhere and do anything I want to do and I know my family and my children are safe and I have no concern about them. We have no such opportunity in Africa.

Azarias echoed Abraham's positive points, particularly in setting a stronger example of success for his children about being a father in Winnipeg:

The positive points are: [Y]ou are able to become a role model, give education to the kid, you give a good example to the family, support family and love both wife and kids to provide the essentials. I told my kids: 'Look at me, at this age I am going to go back to the school, get education as the only way of succeeding in Canada'; consequently, children think, 'Oh, I can follow my father.'

Azarias adds that he has become more flexible as a father to his children:

[Not to] be a brick in the wall and command, 'Do this and do that', but understand [that] communication with wives in the house and kids is important. ... We don't need to discipline and punish our children. We need to dialogue with them and to show them this is wrong because we cannot command our children to do this and this and finish. Kids will not question but here it is a dialogue and you should talk to your children and explain to them because children say, 'Why?', and you should tell them because of this and that and so on, otherwise child does [it anyway]. For example, [a] child will touch fire if you do not explain [to] them, he does but if you tell them because of that, he/she will understand and this is a positive attitude, positive changes.

Azarias noted that these are important changes he and other refugee fathers have had to make on relocating to Canada, in a positive way: "We have to change. We see the

laws of Canada and common understanding if you beat your child and not teach him. We needed to change our culture but [it] comes slowly.”

9.5 Negative Points about Being a Father in Winnipeg

When refugee fathers come and resettle in Canada, and Winnipeg in particular, they face negative issues as well, including cultural disconnects around backtalk, perceived lack of respect for elders and parents by children, physical discipline and corporal punishment, monitoring children’s behavior, schooling methods of children in Canada compared with the home country, lack of support from family and friends, and other factors that negatively impact a refugee’s self-perception as a father.

For example, 51-year-old Ahmad of Sierra Leone lamented the lack of respect shown to parents and other adults, calling it “adult abuse”. Understanding traditional culture of Ahmad’s country of origin is required to appreciate his perception of “adult abuse”. Traditional African patriarchal societies place a high emphasis on respect and honor for husbands, fathers, fathers-in-law and their ancestors, who are considered sacred and high status. Women and children who ignore these rules may be ostracized. A father who is not respected by his wife and children will be disrespected by other people. Sons learn respect at home by observing their fathers’ behavior so as to act in culturally accepted ways when they become fathers in turn (Mchunu, 2005). In this regard, Ahmad stated:

What I am saying about adult abuse, for example, [is] by the way children call you by dad and mom when I call [- in my case - my son [his name is John], he says to me in a such tone “what” which is disrespectful]. This is an adult abuse and thus it is not respectful which starts from this simple example and goes further on. If you say to the kid, ‘Go and do this’, he says to me ‘No’. This is a kind of adult abuse, and [it is not just confined] to parents. The idea is this that

kids have to respect the parents as well as adults, and adults [should] show sympathy to them and support and help them. But here [in Canada], it's not like [the case] because here [in Canada] everybody is capable of being independent, but ... it is not the child that [can be independent]. Benefit money comes from adult work and the taxes of parents so they [children] are not independent. [W]e live on one another so [you're] supposed to show me respect and I show my sympathy.

Deng, a 42-year-old refugee father from South Sudan, felt restricted in his ability to discipline his children in the way his parents disciplined him in his home country. He stated that:

Negative point is to discipline your kids, and I did not know how to discipline and [it] is different from how my parents disciplined me. They disciplined me ... by scaring me, by spanking me on my butt. In Winnipeg, doing such things is crime.

Meshe, 58 years old and a Congolese father, had a similar grievance. He described the negative aspect of being a father in Winnipeg: "I am much more limited talking to children, giving children the discipline because I have to do things with a lot of control".

Didier (44 years old), another father from the DRC, also had difficulties with restrictions on his fathering styles: "[T]oo much restriction to the parents that cannot be given to child at a certain age."

For M.B., 28 and a South Sudanese refugee father lamented the lack of elder guidance and role models in his new life:

Negative points about myself [include] is that I am a young father, but I have not had parents whom I can learn from here [in Winnipeg], but in back home, I used to have them. [I]f things happen, grandparents jump in which is culturally acceptable. They gave you their advice and they helped you and [this is] how life [was a] long time ago ...therefore I said we live through role model... you know, to me I see, the lack of elderly people in my life as a negative point that affect[s] me in my married life.

Richard, 46, from the DRC, is a father of a family with five kids and lives together with his brother who in turn is a father of four kids in an apartment. Richard and his family live in upstairs and his brother with his family live in downstairs. Both families share the only kitchen. These forced living conditions create chaotic situations that require persistent demands on the children by Richard to restore order in the home. Richard commented on the extra burden on him as a father resulting from a lack of support and other positive role models for his children.

The negative point for me as father I am talking too much. ... [A]s a father I have to explain everything and, if I keep quiet, you can see that bad things are growing in the house and in the brain of the kids... You must talk like a teacher; you must talk too much even in sleep. You cannot keep quiet. No, you cannot do it. If you are single, you can keep quiet. ... When you study and you come from the school you need to study, including reading. You have to do your homework and if there is noise, you cannot do it and therefore you must talk, you must speak.

Richard adds that the restrictions placed on child discipline make this even more so. “You can try to beat [your children], but you think [about] the government policy of protecting the children and avoiding getting [in] trouble, therefore, you must talk a lot.”

9.6 Issues around the Use of Physical Punishment

Many fathers feel restricted from physically punishing children due to dealing with authority and getting in trouble, which is a big challenge for them. On one hand, they want to correct and rectify the misbehaviour of their children, and on the other hand, they fear if they physically punish their child, they may themselves be in trouble with authorities or have the

child taken away and put in a foster home which creates a big challenge and a big problem for the family as a whole.

For example, Meshe, 58, of the DRC, expressed this issue in this way:

[T]he way [that] children are raised in our country you can rebuke your child if the child does something wrong. You can beat your child in a lovely way because as a father you cannot tolerate that your children go wrong way and do something wrong and here in Winnipeg, in Canada, you cannot even knock on the shoulder of your children and say to them, 'Please, listen to me'. [I]f you rebuke your child in Winnipeg, you knock your child, the police come and pick up the child. [H]ere, this thing is not really good, and this a real challenge.

Vim, 58, of Iraq, suggested that this level of government support can lead to rebellion:

[T]he government support[s] the child in any case whatever they do, [when] there is some debate inside the family. For example, specially call 911. They tell the children whatever happens ... if they (parents) beat you, if they bother you, you can call 911. This will encourage the children to rebel against the fathers.

He adds that while his family now understands the concept of calling 911, other families struggle because of the perceived consequences associated with calling the service:

[T]he idea of [calling] 911 is so exaggerat[ed] especially at the beginning. We did not completely understand the idea about 911, but after two years, we get what call 911 means. There are some families who could not understand the condition of 911. They do not have ability to raise their children in the way that they like and if the children stay late [out at] night, they cannot pressure the child to come home earlier because they think they [the children] can call 911 and they can make a big problem for them.

9.7 Issues Related to Schooling Children and Supervising Children's Access to Computers and The Internet

Mostafa (60 years old), an Iraqi father with three years of resettlement in Winnipeg, claims that school is responsible for the disobedience and rebellious nature of children toward their fathers:

When we arrived here, school began to teach our son something new. Here in Winnipeg, the school started telling him the following: 'The government of Canada is going to support your life in Canada.' The sons began to debate their fathers. They are less than 12 years old. If they need something, the father has to get them for them. The children want to have an iPod, laptop, and things like these ... these items cost \$400 and the school implant[s] the idea in the head of the children that the Canadian government supports your life here. [The children] want to buy things and if the parents refuse to buy, they start telling the parents, 'Where is my money that the Canadian government pays you in the form of child tax benefit?' ... [H]ere, there is nothing to oblige the children to obey the parents because the children think the government is responsible for them and not the parents.

Jean Pierre, a Congolese refugee father with one year of settlement in Winnipeg, expressed a similar sentiment about the influence of schools on children, saying children are taught that if they are yelled or shouted at, punished, or beaten, they can call 911.

You see this is a big problem and challenge for the parents because it is our tradition, a kind of genetic that makes very difficult for us to transfer and change our childhood education automatically to the Canadian way of childhood education. It cannot happen overnight and it takes time to adjust to the systems. That is the big problem ... when they go to school and be with other children and they come back home, they start challenging the parents and make a big problem for the parents and they go to school and say that 'My parent tells me this and this and my father tells me so', and the government have to do the job.

He shared a tangible daily event that happened recently.

I saw a lady who wanted to go to work but her kid did not want to go to the school and she shouted at the kid roughly to go to the school because she has to go to work to feed the family and for the benefit of the family. [The] child went to the school and was the whole day frustrated. The school staff noticed the problem and asked the kid what happened ... and [the] child told them, '[M]y mother yelled at me [in the] morning and forced me to be prepared to go to the school and I did not want [to]'. The school held the kid at the school and called the mother. The mother arrived at the school and said to the staff, 'Yes, I yelled at my child because it was urgent and was a positive one and I wanted to go to work and nobody was handy to take care of my kid because I am working to support my family and my child.'

Azarias, a refugee father with seven years of resettlement in Winnipeg, also shared his problems associated with calling 911:

People living together always have problems this is normal, but solution is not to call 911. They can work together, talk together and find a solution. And even the community can help ... if 911 comes in the case of the children and if the children go and say, 'My mother beat me', they come and without investigation they take away the child which is frustrating.

Azarias shared two examples of children taken away from their families after being spanked, describing one mother who was not notified that her children were taken from the school and put in another family home and a father who experienced a similar situation when his 17-year-old son was advised to go to a friend's house without contacting the father. He talked to Child and Family Services (CFS) about the problem, saying this was resulting in a bad image for them and emphasized the importance of community:

[S]ome of the members of the community do not know what is happening here. We have our culture. And we want to raise the children and we will not be against the law. And we follow the law but please understand the people and community. This is very encouraging and CFS (Child and Family Services) agreed to put two members of reference group in the board of the directors and we hope the CFS help the community and train the frontline workers, the way they do things, and we hope the thing will be changed. The intention of CFS is very nice they want to protect the children, but the way they do it is very problematic.

Ahmad, originally from Sierra Leone and now in Winnipeg for 12 years, also talked about the cultural differences: “There are here rules about child abuse, but not about adult abuse and I do not know how to deal with it... Here they give children more facilities and no responsibilities for them and we cannot change them in the way we like.” He added that of his eight children, only three live with the family.

[O]nly when they have problems and cause problems they come back to you. ... we treat our kids as RRSP like a money deposit in bank and put in the bank and if you are old you can use it and they can care of you if you are old.

There are numerous external influences, Ahmad said: “The most important thing is, here, there is a lot of distraction. ... there are many inducements which take the kids from [the] right direction and put them in [the] wrong direction.” He added that one of his children is in prison and another left home in February 2014 and has not been in touch with the family since.

9.8 How Fathers Have Changed Their Discipline Strategies

Are fathers stricter toward their children due to adjustment challenges in Canada, or do they become less strict because better life conditions and Canadian child protection laws?

Jean Pierre described the importance of being a friend to his children rather than being a paternal authority:

[T]ry to be a friend of your children so this [is] how I am trying to be. I do not know where the helps are. Sometimes I am consulting with teacher, I asked teacher regarding my children how my child behaves and how her grade is and ask teacher to help me. About money, I am not going to someone because we try to manage our money and what we earn and get and if we get \$1,000 we tell them and they understand sometime approach our counselor

Al Baghdadi, a 46-year-old Iraqi father, expresses this thought: “Here we are more relax[ed] and much more flexible while we discuss. As father, I catch the stick in the middle. I do not want to suppress my children too much and not to lose the control.”

Joe, 31, of the Central African Republic, explained that he takes a more relaxed approach to his children:

I do not give strict command to my kids, I am raising my kids and my wife in the way that if I see that something is wrong, I am looking at my wife and my kids, and if my wife and my kids see my look that convey the message that I am not happy with that. Sometimes I talk to my kids but I don't beat my kids, I talk to my kids in such way that my kids understand that I am not happy with what he does or did. In Africa if you look at a person who is older than you and who are superior to you like a child to his father, you cannot look at each other like this, but here if you look at a person like this, is a sign of respect, and it is to say that I understand what you are telling me. For me, I throw my look moderately, not a look that means offending the kids or begging the kids.

Meshe (58 years old), a Congolese refugee father, talked about the challenges of exterior influences on his children, such as friends, other families and schools: “[S]ometimes my children go to another house and see what another children talk to their parents and they tell me that, and I say to them you cannot talk to your parents like that.”

Congolese father Didier, 44, notes that it can be a two-way street: “I try to respect my children and be a friend of them. I try to be as possible as for them and [I and my children] are trying to work together.”

Richard, a Congolese refugee father, echoed this sentiment:

[Y]ou can be happy and play with the children and they will be relaxed and they can talk to you some [about] difficulties that they have. If you are like a lion it is very difficult to hear the voice of the children. [I]n the night [before] we are going to sleep I ask them, ‘What problems did you have at the school?’ and you must be like a judge.

Abraham of Sierra Leone described how he is now able to be a better father to his children:

I am much more lenient to my children in Winnipeg now because of varying reasons: first, providing food and bring[ing] it on the table is not [any more] my primarily concern because in Africa, sometimes if you wake up and look, you see you have no food to give to your children. Second, when they come to you with their needs and you see you are incapable of meeting their needs, you feel [embarrassed]. You shout at them since you are under stress. You want to meet their need, but you do not know how to do it and you shout at them. However, I do not have [any problem concerning meeting the needs of my children] here in Winnipeg. In Africa, I was strict to my children because I was under stress and here, not.

Soccer, 50, a South Sudanese father, expresses how he and his wife share the duties: “It is a combination of tough and lenient (or not tough) at the same time. I see if my wife is tough to my kids I am lenient and if my wife is lenient to the kid, I will be a little tough to them and we exchange the roles.”

9.9 Fathers' Aspirations for Children

Aspiration is the driving force to improve and develop based on values and norms in a given society. Achieving and realizing aspiration hinges on first, the existing contingencies and provisions and second, the availability and accessibility of the means to materialize the aspiration. It is important to know the aspirations refugee fathers have for their children. How fathers let children pursue goals that might differ from culturally common aspirations practiced in their home countries? Further, it is important to know how fathers allow their children to strive towards their own goals while disregarding the cultural norms and the prevailing values of their home country.

Virtually, all fathers interviewed expressed their desire that their children become successful in their life by pursuing academic careers and becoming positive citizens in Canada.

The comments of Abraham from Sierra Leone express the general consensus:

I want my children to grow up as responsible citizens as an African-Canadian and do important contribution to this society. I want them to become important persons in this society. By responsibility I mean responsible is somebody who is doing right things at the right time and makes right decision and does the right thing that is expected of you that is responsibility. Regarding the aspiration for my children I want my children to become influential [personalities] in this society and be able to graduate. It does not matter to me what profession that they like [to choose]. I do not tell them what to do, but if they ask me I will tell them what and give them advice.

Richard had very specific expectations of his children, stating that:

I dream my children to finish [Grade 12] and ... university and I have 5 children. One of them should be a lawyer, because in family we have to [have] a lawyer and if you have somebody who can talk and defend, you can solve [problems]. ... And a good business here is to build a house since everybody needs a house. And

in our family we must have an engineer, and regarding the problem of health we must have a doctor in the family and that is my dream for the children. And I tell my children about these areas and your English must be very good ... because you have to defend the people and as a lawyer you should know how to speak. And as an engineer you should be very good at calculus, physics, mathematics, and if I make them happy the society is happy also. And if I make them gangs, society gets problems. Society comes to parents and if you have a good parents society becomes very good in the future.

Chapter Ten: Perceptions of Challenges Related to Adjusting to New Parental and Family Roles and Expectations

10.1 Introduction

Chapter ten focuses on key themes that emerged during the interview process, which highlight my participants' challenges related to adjusting to new parental and family roles. This chapter discusses three themes: difficulties adjusting to new parental role expectations; how fathers deal with challenges of adjusting to new family/marital role expectations; and coping with marital disagreements.

10.2 Difficulties Adjusting to New Parental Role Expectations

In the interviews, fathers spoke about the difficulties of adapting to different expectations of parents. Difficulties were particularly felt in the decreased power of the father over his children and the increased influence of exterior influences including school, other families, peers, popular culture via TV and the Internet, and the community at large – in short, the greater freedom of the child in Canada.

For example, Azarias of Rwanda said grandparents in his home country could command whatever they needed of the child, and now, children: “say ‘We know our rights’, and we parents become helpless.”

Ahmad, a refugee father from Sierra Leone, said: “[H]ere, I cannot use my culture system and we have to follow the Canadian culture with different rules. There are here rules about child abuse but not about adult abuse and I do not know how to deal with it.”

Al Baghdadi, an Iraqi refugee father, stressed the responsibility of schools in teaching children important values in addition to standardized education:

I think our children need more education regarding life and discipline by the schools. The schools should teach children how to behave in general, how to behave in the family including with others. What is good and what is bad. More important, the school should teach the children about the importance of the roles of father and mothers within the family. They should tell them if your father tells you that you should not be too late, you should come home at the time that your father says to you. They should teach the children to listen to the parents and understand what the parents want.

Shamsodin, a 51-year-old Iraqi refugee father, explained that there was a lack of schooling in cultural adjustment:

I noticed that during the last three years my kids have gone to the school ... they have gotten the normal education. There have not been special materials and curricula that teach them how life is different from the back home country and make them aware of the problems and difficulties here and how to adjust to living here.

Didier, a Congolese refugee father, expressed his frustration with the increased privacy in schools:

I really do not understand in the Canadian system if, for example, a child is in grade 10 or grade 12, parents have no rights to check their academic performance without their permission. It is crazy, really crazy. Sorry, to me, it is nonsense ... as parents it is your right to know what he/she is doing and helping them, but to check their academic performance I need their permission. That is nonsense. ... I am sorry, I cannot accept that.

10.3 How Fathers Deal with Challenges of Adjusting to New Family/Marital Role Expectations

It is to be expected that parents might have different opinions on how to raise their children and how to make decisions. Just like any family, refugee families have different opinions on raising their children. However, the majority of refugee fathers expressed the same – or similar – opinion in talking about their resettlement in Winnipeg. This pertained, in particular, to the role of husband and wife and their respective roles in parenting and family management. The general consensus is that husband and wife work in tandem.

As Vim, an Iraqi father, said:

Sometimes my wife has [the] right to make [a] decision, and sometimes I have right to make [a] decision. For example, how to spend money, what to buy and what not to buy, where to go, or my daughter can stay longer at school or go to [a] picnic or she goes for some parties all the matters are being discussed.

Jean Pierre of the DRC echoed this sentiment:

We decide together. We always think of our past and apply to our current situation and help our children to see the future and our current situation help us to take care of our children and this is a must for people to be together and discuss the issues together and work together.

Azarias of Rwanda agrees, stressing the importance of a harmonized message for children: “We go over the mentioned issue and discuss but not in front of children. We agree together.”

10.4 Coping with Marital Disagreements

Having disagreements and differing perspectives is normal among human beings, including in any marital relationship. Refugee families are not exempt from this, so refugee fathers were asked about the problems that caused disagreement and what they did to solve the situation.

Vim from Iraq talked about his disagreements with his wife:

She is a mother and I understand that she sometimes because she loves our children she spoil them and always mothers think that they are the best to make a decision. I give her the chance but I try to modify her decision, if not so bad, I give her chance to make a decision if the decision resulting good, there is no problem, but if decision goes wrong I blame her. For example, why our son goes for play and why did you buy something and this thing this not good way to raise them and our son spend a lot time on playfield. But not always she is right and not always she is wrong.

R.A. of Iraq talked about his own difficulties with exterior influences on his marriage:

My wife always listens to other women and they encourage my wife not to listen to me not to respect my decision, they live for about 20 years here as if they come here now from back home. I discussed this issue with my wife and I am scared that to cut and stop relationships with these people. And she said; 'But if I stop the relationship with them, where can I go? Those are [the] only people that I know.'

Deng of South Sudan preferred to continue the traditional way of coping with marital disagreement as in his home country, comparing it with the lack of community intervention in similar circumstances in Canada:

Back home, you involve elderly uncle, your best friends, that you can see as a family member and talk to them and say that is I am saying and what that my wife is saying and both of you can see who is right and who not and you can solve the issue. Unfortunately, it is not the case here. Back home, it used to be let know the family, particular[ly] husband[']s] family and they sit down and discuss. If they agree what to say, your wife follow[s] you. But here is not the case. If you are lucky, you can solve your problem ... if not the marriage fail[s] and collapse[s].

Joe of CAR notes that in his home country, there is an expectation of submission by women to men and wives to husbands. But, here, after going to workshops and learning about cultural norms in Canada, the newfound freedom of a woman can lead to great confusion about the roles of husbands and wives in the household:

A lady can go out, and no can control her. A lady can leave you for some jobs, a lady can arrange the house, take care of the kid ... but here, a lady can ask; ‘Do you cook, do you take care of kids, do you arrange the kids?’ In Africa, African women are not used to this system when they come here they become confused, and when they confuse, they want to use this system here in the household affairs. And as they use the system, and the man get confused and say my wife goes out and does whatever she wants this and that. And if you react, this becomes a problem.

Congolese father Richard talked about disagreeing with his wife regarding the purchase of items he felt weren’t needed, and after learning that he cannot “object her loudly”; he understands the importance of a mutual arrangement:

I show her everything regarding our chequing and savings plan and every night we plan ... and we work together and our idea must be together. We are two and must have one idea. [I]f I make my idea, I am like a dictator and a president it is not good. In house, there is a president and a minister and minister is the wife and we need [to] work together, for example, I will buy a car because we have children and I go to buy the car.

Richard adds other discussions including sending money back to his parents, and that sharing together is important “if you want to have a family for long time.”

Abraham would agree with Richard’s emphasis on mutual agreement and discussion for the benefit of the children around the table in the house. With the exception of bringing in a pastor or counselor for other needs, he says it’s important to keep decisions within the home because:

It is impossible that some members of the community - a man or a woman - who her and his eyes is upon you or your wife, give you advice, they give you wrong advice. I do not do that. People come to my relationship and keep them away because I cannot trust their opinion.

The lack of trust happens the other way, as well:

When we give advice we are selfish, they have an evil agenda, if you come to Canada and you make wealth they do not like it. They do not like your marriage and try to destabilize your marriage.

So, Abraham prefers to keep the issues within the family and between himself and his wife. As he states:

Therefore I believe nobody can intervene in our marriage relationships and marriage is a matter between you and your wife. Get the position and problems solved. That is what I think. Even I do not give to my extended family from both sides to intervene in our marriage, if you give them an inch they take you a yard, so I do not give the opportunity. Since I came here, I have not told to my community what is going on in my home and whatever happen[s] here is between me and my wife. We solve our issue without allowing intervention of first second and third party. That is the best way.

Chapter Eleven: The Challenges of Housing, Welfare Income, Illiteracy, and Credential Recognition

11.1 Introduction

An analysis of a refugee's housing situation reflects their economic integration and is an indicator of a given society's housing policy. By the same token, the generosity of welfare given to refugees is a further element of helping refugees to integrate into the economy while they are in a stage of transition. However, the total distributed amount of social assistance can be a mirror of the general policy of helping refugees and the economic successes or failures among Canada's refugee population. Similarly, the amount of social assistance given to refugees is an indicator of how post-arrival integration policies affect refugee economic performance.

This chapter discusses four interviewee themes including: challenges of housing, issues related to welfare income, and issues related to illiteracy and credential recognition.

11.2 Challenges of Housing

Housing problems are mentioned often by the fathers. These include the relatively small size of the dwelling place, living in unsuitable neighbourhoods, and the lack of accessibility in apartments for disabled persons. Some interviewees mention the high rental costs in the private housing market in Winnipeg, and problems they had with the housing department at Welcome Place, one of the major immigrant and refugee service organizations in the city.

Vim, an Iraqi refugee, described his difficulties with the Welcome House, explaining the lack of choices refugees have in choosing accommodation:

[The Welcome House] does not help refugees because its job is to help them but housing department in this complex make always a big problem for refugee and newcomer. They do not give them a chance to think which housing is suitable for them they suppress them to accommodate in such housing to get rid of refugee they suppress them to accept them housing and give it to them.

While stressing that the service is helpful for refugees, Vim says it does not understand the financial needs of refugees and newcomers to have a relatively affordable home.

Shamsodin, a 51-year-old refugee father from Iraq with a disabled child, was frustrated with the house he was given. He listed several reasons for this, including accessibility for his child and:

[T]hese houses are in a [un]safe neighborhood, and there are bedbugs, mice, cockroaches ... when my disabled child sees the cockroach, he gets anxiety. I informed authority to come and see the problem and they happened nothing indeed, they come and insecticide but the problems are still there. I bought the chemical material to get rid of it, but no change. My house was built 100 years ago.

Jean Pierre, a Congolese refugee, experienced similar problems as Vim and Shamsodin particularly with the home he was given after four months at Welcome Place:

[T]hey put you in any house by any way in some location where is drugs and it is not safe in place where people can beat you, hurt you, disturb you. Welcome Place does not care about you even if they put you ready in the house they do not follow up your situation. If they [are] done their jobs, they finish with you. Housing is a big problem here and if the government bring people here, the government at least make sure that people receive services that help them find a place where is secured and safe especially for the parents, wives and kids feel safe and this is a big challenge.

Jean Pierre continued to describe his frustrations with the services at Welcome Place:

They tell you at Welcome Place that as a newcomer you have a counsellor that helps you [to find a house] but you actually have to look for the housing. However, you do not know Winnipeg enough. Winnipeg is too big to figure out which area is safe and secure. You do not know English enough. Nevertheless, despite of my little English, I was asking and moving around to find a place and my counsellor did not help me at all.

Jean Pierre added that the counsellor did not inspect the conditions of the home he and his family moved into. “This experience is not only mine but also many newcomers,” he said.

Concerning the size of the places assigned to refugee families, Jean described the experiences of a seven-person family living in a two-bedroom apartment as well as his own experiences living with six others in a one-bedroom apartment at Welcome Place. “And my children were lying on the living room [floor] and for Joe [a fellow refugee father] there was only a bed in the living room and if somebody came to visit them they should lay on the bed in the living room and it is not easy and this a big challenge,” he said.

Mostafa, an Iraqi refugee father, also talked about the small size of apartments:

The bedrooms are very small and the size of the bedrooms is very small. Six in nine square feet that they offered to us. The rent in private sector is very high. Since we have a very long winter in Winnipeg, children have to stay for long time in the apartment and they cannot go out. We just have a short summer and only in summer we can go out of the apartment. [Children] move and are active inside the apartment. There is no entertainment activity inside the apartment complex. There are no places where children can go with the families and also are cheap. Therefore the children are nervous due to aforementioned reasons.

Rwandan refugee father Azarias talked about the high prices in the private housing market that impacted the overall morale of the family:

For [a] one-bedroom apartment you have to pay between \$700 to \$800; two bedrooms between \$800-\$1,000; and for three bedrooms you have to pay over

\$1,000 and much more. For the newcomers who arrive here they are facing lot of challenges and problems and for some families due to the impossibility of paying the rent, they have to force to live and stay together that affect both families because there is no privacy, resulting in stress among member of families and igniting conflict between two families which lead to frustration.

With respect to availability and affordability of the subsidized housing in Winnipeg, Azarias stated:

If you get a subsidized housing and apartment you pay 27% of your gross income, but to get this housing is not easy. There are Manitoba housing and Winnipeg housing and Sam management housing and so many others which are subsidized. Many people filled the application and you have to wait for a long time which is very frustrating. Average time is about one to two years. It is not easy to get them.

He expressed his concern about welfare-dependent refugee families and their difficulties in finding affordable lodging in the private housing market:

It is a big concern ... The welfare income which is allocated for food goes for the rent in the private market and therefore they are really stressed. This shortage of money for the food creates a big problem because they cannot eat well and as result of that it creates some disease like malnutrition. More important, they have to take out their child-tax benefit which is allocated for the children and put for the rent. They also cannot buy proper clothes and enjoy entertaining as well. The people say back home we had stress but not like here. Imagine a three-bedroom apartment costs \$1,200 and a family refugee – if they want to rent this – they have to disregard many household things to pay the rent and therefore they go to food bank to collect the cheap food. People are crying. People come here [and] some people do not know about this.

Didier, a Congolese refugee father, professed his own experience pertaining housing problem in Winnipeg:

The government gives you \$590 per month to pay [for] a house to accommodate five people and we cannot go anywhere. With \$590 you cannot get anywhere and therefore we are trying to crutch maybe to Manitoba health food to help us to pay off our housing ... after two months, which job do you do to take the money and pay for the housing?

Private housing is not an option, says Didier:

[T]hey know you cannot sustain the payment of the rent. [T]hey know about your monthly income. If you have no job it means you have no social insurance number card and permanent resident card and without these, you cannot get a job. And many people have no job, which means no money and thus no housing, and this a vicious circle and I was lucky to get a transitional housing for three years, and after three years you have to vacate to private housing and the question is; how much money can you earn to pay the expensive rent in private housing which is very, very difficult, and it is a dream for us.

Richard, a Congolese refugee father, says the welfare he receives is not enough for his family with five children:

We got money from the federal [government] for one year and now we get welfare which is not enough for 5 children because ... all money spent (\$1,500 dollars) for the rent. The house is a two-storey house. I am upstairs, my family with 7 heads, and my brother, a family with six heads) live downstairs because we came together in Winnipeg and I get \$1,600 dollars and as we share the apartment every of us pay \$750 and with utilities, TV, the Internet and water I pay monthly \$1000. And left \$600 and you must buy food for 7 persons around \$200.

He notes that having children actually helps his situation:

[T]he government give some money for the children about \$1,000 but if you do not have the children, you have [a] problem. And I am just surviving because of the children and the money of the children help me to survive a little bit because I have to take out their money and add to the rent.

The problem is worsened, however, because Richard still has family in refugee camps to whom he sends money plus he needs to have a car:

Here without car, you cannot survive because you have children. You have to go to store to buy food, and go to the school to drop or pick up your children particular in winter; you have to have a car. And car is expensive as well. We have only two rooms and in the first room my 13-year-old girl and my 10-year-old boy live together in one room and I and my wife in another bedroom and the rest of children in living room, the kitchen is in downstairs and for cooking we have to go down stair and we move every day like that.

Richard added that he felt misled about the benefits of life in Winnipeg and Canada:

We did know not about the rental conditions. ... As we were in camp we thought Winnipeg is OK and everything over there should be OK and now here is not like that. They welcome you and push you to take the very expensive house and give you the money and take all of the money back. And you are eating only. Life is not eating life is to plan.

Neighbourhood safety was also a major concern as 49-year-old R.N, an Iraqi refugee father, explains:

Usually, they offered us a house that is located in a bad neighbourhood. But if you think of the whole area it is in general good but my location is not good. In this location six families live who are making problems all the times. Some times in the late night and early morning, I see the police standing over there. I have seen many times police came and started investigating or smashing the door of any of the neighbours and entered the house in order to take or arrest somebody. These things give a very bad impression and I get scared since I think they are drug dealers. They sit outside of the house and drink.

Shamsodin (51 years old), an Iraqi refugee father with a disabled son and a paraplegic wife, expressed his concern about his unsafe neighborhood, and also described his neighbourhood and lack of options in moving to another area:

I see many times girls and boys stay on the street. One day, they broke and smashed my car on the glass and stole something from my car. Here, is a dangerous area. They stay in the front of building and take drugs. We cannot talk to them because we are refugees and we cannot change the apartment. We cannot pay the high rent if we move to another area. ... I live here because the apartment rent is cheap otherwise if I change I have to pay all welfare income only for the rent. And I have to accept their Winnipeg housing. There is Manitoba housing outside of downtown but they do not offer us it.

11.3 Issues Related to Welfare Income

Welfare income is the only source of economic support that refugee families receive from the provincial government of Manitoba. Most interviewees in this research were government supported refugees (GSRs). They expressed their discontent with the meagre welfare that they receive.

Vim (58 years old), an Iraqi refugee father with five children, expressed his opinion on welfare:

I don't like to be seen that we came here to take everything. I don't like to be on welfare. I am thankful for welfare and thanks Canada for welfare, but welfare is not enough for us. In general, a family with four children get around \$1,450 to \$1,500 dollars per month, included rent of course, and you have to pay for utilities, phone, and life sustenance ... and if you get child-tax benefit, you should take out the child-tax benefit to pay your rent to cut them. If they have money they would not go to the food bank they go to it with feeling of shame because they have to feed the children it is not enough but is helpful. If you buy something for \$8 in the store you can buy from the food bank sometimes the same item for \$4. You can sometimes buy for 50% off the same item from the food bank like vegetables; biscuits are in the food bank. If you get something from the food bank, you should at least wait for hours (at least 2 hours, under such weather

condition) in the line. Although inside is enough space to enter, they do not allow you and you have to stay outside the building in the severe winter in Winnipeg.

Dungen (35 years old), a Bhutanese refugee who spent 21 years living in a refugee camp, asserted his view on welfare and its restrictions: “Money is enough for the current rental housing and also for food on the table, for a simple life. But money is not enough for other things, for example, for buying, for entertaining, going to bar, going to disco.”

R.A., an Iraqi refugee, stated:

I have problems with my knees, heart and other problems and have six kids and they are under 12 years, and I am busy to go the hospital to care of the kids, and many other things. For sure the welfare is not enough for a family of eight persons what we get together goes for rent, Electricity, hydro, and water. I have to pay for food, hydro, and for kids and I have twin[s] and every two day I have to buy baby milk and baby diapers, which are too expensive. With this money, I have to buy RESPs (Registered Education Savings Plans) and transportation every month for phone, day care every month \$80. Every day I buy lunch for four kids to go to school.

Similarly, Deng, a South Sudanese refugee, stated: “The money was not enough but sufficient as I was working I had to subsidize my income.”

Shamsodin, an Iraqi refugee father with a disabled son and partly disabled wife, echoed the limits of welfare money: “The amount of welfare is not enough for such families regarding the expenses they have and problems they face the welfare is not enough for a normal family what they get as welfare it suffices only for food and rent.”

Joe, a refugee father from Central Africa with a family of eight members including a disabled child also said all of the money was spent on bare necessities:

Sometimes it not left anything after you pay rent and other things. My disabled kid is nine months and I am not getting money for my disabled child until now because Welcome Place is in charge of my file and it did not do anything for the case. After nine months, I do not know where can I go and how to address the issue and to whom talk.

Richard, a Congolese refugee father with a family of seven members said: “We get welfare which is not enough for 5 children because of housing problem, rent and all money spend (\$1,500) for the rent the house.”

11.4 Issues Related to Illiteracy and Credential Recognition

The problem of illiteracy was cited as the major challenge by two participants. They must rely on refugee service agencies to help them to fulfill their requests and meet their needs, particularly filling out applications and helping with office papers.

Dejewry is a 51-year-old refugee father from Ethiopia who spent 27 years of his life in various refugee camps in Africa and was resettled in Canada for four years (since 2011). He has one 16-year-old son. He mentioned that his wife got hurt in a car accident and is under medical treatment. He works in a turkey factory at night and works at home to help his wife:

My job is a very heavy job and I have to carry very heavy turkeys and the machine work very fast. This is my life and because I do not have any education, I cannot look for another job. Because of the accident, I am relying on the Family Dynamic to help my wife’s case (filling in a lot of paperwork) because I do not know English enough.

He also mentioned because of his wife’s accident, it was no longer possible to live in the apartment where they were because it had no elevator and his wife could not use the stairs.

Consequently, they had to move into a new apartment with an elevator with a higher monthly rent.

Seraj, 46, an Ethiopian refugee father with seven children, lived without shelter in many places in Somalia for 14 years. He arrived in Canada in 2010. He is also illiterate and for this reason he works as a janitor.

Two other refugee fathers had university degrees but experienced problems with credential recognition in Canada. Didier from the DRC noted that:

I went to several offices, WELARC [Winnipeg English Language Assessment and Referral Centre] and many places, and I did not get any clear direction where can I go exactly and what can I do exactly and I had been telling around and I spent one year and half to figure out to the enter point to get the job ... It was difficult.

Vim, an Iraqi refugee father, had similar difficulties and found little support in trying to find work:

I applied for teaching, because I was teacher for more than 35 years and I applied for the credential recognition of my teaching certificate. I gave them my documents. I have some pictures while I was teaching, they told me; ‘The pictures are very old and we cannot accept them’. They said to me that; ‘You can ask somebody in your back home country to send new documents’.

This was difficult for Vim to do as he was a refugee who had fled his native Iraq and lived in a refugee camp in Syria for three years – and many if not all his family and friends had fled as well. “I have no body over there to help me,” he said. “Iraq is not a country like Canada, or Denmark to make a copy of my documents and send to me, the conditions in Iraq is total different from here.”

When Vim requested that they visit a specific government website with access to his university and the related documents, he encountered further problems.

“They refused,” he said, adding that he was told that this was his job, not that of the Welcome House. He gave them documents that he did have, only to be told they were too old and that he should obtain new ones.

“I gave my best shot. They cannot provide me a casual job for \$10 or \$12 per hour.” Vim added that he would have liked them to put themselves in his position as a father with children looking to make it in Winnipeg.

Chapter Twelve: Fathers' Views on Personal Needs and Needed Refugee Services

12.1 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on fathers' views of the needs and existing services for refugees who have resettled in Winnipeg. For instance, what are the worries and the needs of refugee fathers and how do refugee fathers articulate their needs? How do they know about the existing services if any, and how do refugee fathers meet their needs in order to overcome the challenges of adjustment in Winnipeg? And finally, are refugee fathers satisfied with existing services and what are their suggestions and recommendations for improving services?

12.2 Perceptions of Personal Needs

The process of resettlement will bring about a range of discontents, worries, and concerns around a variety of challenges such as language acquisition, language efficiency, housing, networking, child-rearing and coping strategies, law acquisition and so on. Each challenge can generate further worries and concerns which are added to already existing concerns related to severe conditions in the refugee camps.

The majority of refugee fathers report that finding a job is their primary concern, particularly Vim, Mostafa, Dungen, Ali, Joe, Richard, and Mesh. Fathers also emphasized that a primary concern was a secure job, for example, working for the provincial government as opposed to insecure work in the private sector, which was expressed in particular by Azarias.

However, not everyone listed finding a job as the primary concern. Instead, maintaining and preserving some values from the country of origin was the primary concern for them. For example, Jean Pierre from DRC said: “My main concern is [the] current culture for our children [who] are exposed to [an] outside system [of] education to me which corrupt children. ... For example, a child came home and obliges the mother to buy a cellphone for their birthday. The child was in the room and the parent never thought that child watched porno on cellphone and it is not a myth but a fact. The problem started because child was told; ‘It is your choice.’”

He also expressed cultural issues around daughters bringing boyfriends home in Canada, stating that this was not the accepted norm in his own culture:

How can I allow my daughter to bring her boyfriend to home? If you say to her and she says that is my right to enjoy and this causes a challenge and problem for me and my children. I want my children to grow up to educate to study well and to have a job and to become someone that she will be and then marriage him that outside education is my problem which is negative.

Jean Pierre also talked about consumer habits and cultural trends:

You should buy this and this because if you do not buy it for your children, children feel neglecting and you should think of the usefulness of the item that you buy for that child at school. Today, children become addicted to the music, they go in their home and listen to the music dumb dumb for \$.50 cents. You see boys wearing clothes and pants that are very loosely and unfitting and walking is very odd way. Today, children say to parents, ‘I want to buy for me this and this and this’.

He called this a ‘negative outside education’. While he clarifies that buying is not a bad thing, he says he wants children to focus on education above all else. “All things come after that it comes the time that they can buy what they want.”

The complications associated with the integration into Canadian society were another concern. Azarias of Rwanda explained that some elements that are an everyday part of Canadian life can be difficult for newcomers, explaining that some newcomers do not know about using credit cards. “The system is so complicated and it is really too much for us. Information and knowledge is power and if you do not know the information your position become weaker in society.”

One refugee father from Sierra Leone described the unique challenges of trying to return to his home country after 12 years of resettlement and having a low-wage job in Canada, describing the perceived lack of success in his new life compared with his compatriots back home:

I will leave Canada and go back home but the expectation of people is high. They think you live in a developed country and you should have a very good life and good money, and you are a rich man and if you go back and collect dollars and if you go over there without money they ask; ‘What happened to you? You lived for such a time in Canada and you could not become a rich man.’ (Ahmad)

For some fathers, a major concern was that their sons becoming involved in illegal activities and particular in drug activities because of the prevalence of the drug trade in Winnipeg, and the money and profit involved in this business made it relatively easy for drug dealers to recruit the young people. Didier, Soccer, and Shamsudin especially described this issue.

Al-Baghdadi of Iraq expressed his concerns:

I am afraid of the gangs, drug dealers here and my sons might involve in and be affected by these groups. In the last two years, I noticed that my son is more affected by their friends than me, so we need someone to tell him; ‘You should

not prefer your friends over your father and mother.’ So it is the role of the schools to talk and teach the children, so I think. Sometimes our sons don’t listen to us, and I am afraid he does something wrong so we cannot shout at him, cannot beat them, and we do not know how to impress them.

Richard, a Congolese refugee father, expresses his concern about housing conditions and its impacts on his children as follows:

Our housing is not good. Our sleep condition is very bad. I cannot accept a girl and boy share the same bedroom because my girl is 14 year old and she has periods and is menstruating at night and has to clean it. For my boy, it is not a good education. This is a bad education. They both should have their own rooms to maintain their privacy. Nobody comes to our house to inspect and see our problems. There is no organization I can go and complain about it and why my family is being forced to live under such condition. Why? I do not know.

Dealing with a fast-changing world without the needed preparation and knowledge was another expressed concern for many refugee fathers, particularly MB (28 years old), a South Sudanese father:

My main concern is that everything is quickly changing, you can see the change everywhere you are working and you can learn everywhere the life is going on and the gay the lesbian all everything, and this country is free country and anything you want it is up to you just live it not worry about it. But for people like immigrants, who came they just jump in the middle of tunnel.

While some may welcome the freedom of choices that come with life in Canada, MB found challenges in the lack of direction and guidance offered him and other immigrants:

This is a free country and I can do what I want [in] it. I live with my son and live with my wife, and I can do this and that, but there is no more clue where are you going, what that means to you. This reflect on you and if anything connect to you going in there, so I just can talk about being an immigrant when I saw the people,

but not everybody. [T]his is a concern for all of us, for immigrant people ... I know people in Canada do this. [W]hy not me? [B]ut they do not know what they are doing, what is the fact of it. [Y]ou want to go there to do, it is too complicated, we need more education for immigrants. [W]e need more orientation, more subsidize when you come here.

The influence of technology, video games and electronic gadgets on children was another major concern, according to Samir (28 years old), an Ethiopian refugee father. He also expressed concerns about the educational system:

I am looking around the schools and kids in the schools, they learn more at the home and as a father and as a mother you should help your kids to be a good student and get a good knowledge instead of relying only on the school and I have to help my kids regarding homework, reading and life and anything because the school does not care much about homework and when kids go to school they get less homework and will play all the day if they go to the school, and when they come home you have to check what they have as homework and what they have to do, and you have to help them to do their homework.

For privately sponsored refugees, there were a variety of concerns, as outlined by Ali (33 years old), an Afghani refugee father who moved to the Immigration and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) and was concerned about whether he could find reliable and safe housing:

[W]e worry if we can get an affordable house to move into or not. Because I have no any job and if I move to private housing because I have no job, I am not qualified. I applied for the subsidized housing in those area where are safe and secure. And the chance to get a house in those areas is low and I do not [know] if I can get it or not otherwise, this is a big concern for me and my family.

He was also concerned about schooling and medical care:

I do not know if I graduate from the college [if I can] get a job or not. Regarding our health and social insurance, because we have no insurance, particularly extended health care for dental problem. We are not able to pay the expenses for any kind of dental issue. For example, my wife has very easily breakable teeth and I have no money to help and no health care that partially can cover the dental issues. ... Another concern is my eyes vision which is deteriorating and I need new eyeglasses every year but I cannot afford it. If I cannot wear new eyeglasses I get headache because I notice my eye vision fade and I need new eyeglasses but I have to tolerate due to my limited financial budget.

Private sponsorship comes with its own challenges, adds Ali:

The government of Canada does not help them after one year and we were private sponsored. I think the government should support private sponsored refugees regarding the problems that they face problems like job, housing, English, cultural shock health care and they should treat by the government like the government sponsored refugees. I was under stress to some extent that my wife told me to sell all valuable things to go back to Afghanistan, Pakistan.

Culture and language were mentioned as other priorities:

My another concern is about my children and there is no any centre to teach my children Farsi with respect to grammar, reading and writing skills I like my children grow up bicultural. I like my children maintain our language, religion and intercultural marriage.

Like Ali, Soccer (50 years old) from South Sudan emphasized the importance of traditional values passed on to the next generation:

We have [our] own values and carry it. We hope our kid follow it. Here is the problem. One of the problem[s] is the value of homosexuality and a lot of other things that the society won't condemn, but allow to happen.[Another issue is the following]: if the kid go [to school or] daycare, you can see that most of teachers, or workers and [caregivers] are women... which is a good thing and not all a bad one. They care and believe in humanity...[However,] sometimes for me is problematic because the value like a child at this age whether a girl or boy just

sees this context all the time and the child get more confused and ... [adopt] feminist ideas, feminist values which are very problematic and make [me] concern. I try to [cope] by taking them to church and talk with them about gender roles and the stuff like that [so] they know about limitation[s] and values that we carry.

For Mahen (42 years old), a private sponsored refugee father from DRC with a back injury, financial assistance to treat his back in particular was a major concern:

I am private sponsored refugee who financially is supported by my sister and I am trying to hook on the social assistance by the government of Canada which takes time. My second concern is to focus on the training after getting recovery concerning my back injury. My third concern is related to my bed which is not all good for my back and I feel it encumbers the process of recovery because the bed is too old and too soft and I cannot afford to change and buy a new one. My fourth problem, I am alone and I applied for the family reunification and heard of taking long time for the family reunification which makes me concerned.

Family reunification and the protracted process of reunification that has taken four years has created a major concern for Karim (59 years old) from Iraq, who explained his worry in a tangible way:

My main concern is my family reunification. I am 59 years old, a refugee father, and lost my son in the civil war years ago. I got divorced. Due to civil war in Iraq and the continuous aggravating of the security conditions over there and many other problems I had to leave my country and went to Lebanon and lived over there for 7 years. I came here four years ago as a government-sponsored refugee and applied for family reunification because I have nobody here and I have been living alone by myself here. I am away from my country and the only wish that I have in my life is to bring my daughter to here through family reunification.

The long process of application for reunification of his family has had a taxing effect on his health:

I have applied for the family reunification four years ago and until now nothing has changed and happened. I got depressed and I am taking a lot of medications due to this uncertainty. My health conditions physically and mentally are worsening and I do not know what to do.

12.3 Coping with Problems

When refugee families arrive and begin resettling in Winnipeg, they face many challenges. The question then arises as to their coping mechanisms and where they go to for help in overcoming their problems.

The most popular strategies centre on talking to friends, getting help from friends, going to refugee service agencies, attending a variety of training courses including language, job applications, etc., talking to teachers at the school. Attending church and talking to the authority were common coping strategies for refugee fathers.

One father, Jean Pierre from the DRC, described the importance of teaching religious values to children:

[B]ecause we are Christians, I bring the Bible and read for them from the Bible and say to them that God says this and this. Do not be a model; do not copy from somebody that says to you. ... if you want to be a good child, do this and this. I educate them. It is a seed that I cultivate to them imprint to their heads. Someday, they won't be with us, they are at university, but they remind of me that my parent told me this and this.

Azarias from Rwanda took a pragmatic approach to dealing with the new challenges:

To cope with the challenges, I have firstly to accept the challenges and be optimistic, and see what others do. [I]f I see that people at my age go to Red River College, I can tell myself I can do it. So cope with the challenges otherwise you go crazy. Accept the reality, as coming here as an engineer and your credential is

not accepted and you have to work as janitor, accept this job. Accept work as a dishwasher and as a taxi driver. Accept this situation, and [at] the same [time] move forward. [T]his is not our country and our culture. And try to restart studying. As I came here, I have no money not even one dollar in my pocket, and look at me, I am working, and I bought my house, I am supporting my family. You should be decisive, have a goal and work very hard on it.

Ahmad of Sierra Leone opted for a more spiritual approach:

According to my spiritual opinion, I should not be a rich man only to meet the basic need of my family and maintain myself. That is my own destiny. If I go back home, that is my destiny, I cannot change it. If I go home, I am with my relatives.

12.4 Seeking Help, Where?

Refugee fathers were also asked how they sought help and how they ensured their needs were met. The answers varied, ranging from reaching out to public services including the NEED Centre, Welcome Place, Mount Carmel Clinic, Family Dynamics, the Immigration Centre and other public and private service centres. Teachers, friends, the local community and churches were also consulted by many refugee fathers.

A common grievance expressed by refugee fathers was that they were often unaware that some services existed.

Concerning the types of services for refugee fathers and their awareness of the existence of such services, none of the refugee fathers were aware of services for refugee fathers in Winnipeg. Because services for refugee fathers do not exist in themselves, the use of such services was not mentioned – unlike services for refugee youth and women refugees.

12.5 Fathers' Recommendations on Needed Services

When asked, participants offered a range of suggestions and recommendations to help ease entry into Canada. While getting involved in the local ethnic community is important for any newcomer, questions were raised as to the efficiency and transparency of that community. If the community in question is perceived to be dysfunctional and run by favouritism for the purpose of private business and personal benefit, then the ethnic community loses its efficiency and sense of benevolence for newcomers.

Vim of Iraq attested to this:

There is a big problem here in Canada because communities have been established by some people who have been living here for long time and nobody knows what they do. They make benefit for themselves from the member of the communities. They have a good social and political position in Canada. Whenever they go anywhere, they say 'I am the manager of community and run the community', or 'I am on the board of the community', but in fact they do nothing for the community. They earn sponsorship from the newcomers and they get money from some member of the ethnic community to bring their relative here and they get \$10,000 or \$15,000 from them to bring them here. There is nothing free. I heard of it. If you say to them, '[M]y relative, brother is over there, can you help me to bring them here?', they say 'OK', and it costs money. If you come as a newcomer in Canada, nobody from your community welcomes you.

Vim proposed a possible solution to this:

The Canadian government should ask any community to do the election at least every four years because the people who run the community, they do not accept any new election. They know if they accept election the election changes their position. Newcomers and specifically refugee families when they come to Canada, they face the painful process of challenges of adjustment to new society that called the shock of acculturation. One of vital provisions that help refugee to overcome much better the terrifying process of acculturation is organizing workshops and information sessions with different topics, not once a while but

often by the refugee serving agencies particularly in the first year of their settlement.

Pertaining to workshops and information sessions, Azarias and other refugee fathers proposed that they be formed around the following topics:

- Refugee fathers need frequent information sessions on the diverse and essential aspects of life in Canada in order to ease adjustment to the country's culture. Didier notes that he had only one such workshop about fatherhood in about the three years since he's been in Winnipeg.
- Because refugees are inexperienced in financial management, this leads to a wide array of problems including lack of knowledge of how money is spent and lack of understanding of maintaining a sound budget. Azarias also considers this a major trigger for conflict within the family. Because of this, Azarias suggests a service that focuses on the importance of budgeting and money management.
- Many refugee families come from war-affected countries and substandard conditions in refugee camps living under constant fear, threat and anxiety. This leads to a tendency of anger and frustration, particularly when a professional does not understand how to talk to parents about child-rearing tactics. So, anger-management classes are a must (Azarias).
- Workshops on housing services and rental strategies, i.e. how to rent, how to buy, how to negotiate the best interest rate, lease contracts, and other necessary information about housing policies in Canada (Azarias).
- Education on proper and positive discipline of children in line with Canadian standards (Azarias).

- Didier emphasizes that psychological evaluations should be included in the medical examinations that all refugees receive on entry into Canada, particularly with respect to PTSD and subsequent treatment of such (Didier).
- Empowerment services for attending universities and other life-improvement goals. There are numerous services for women but not for men, and this leads to an uncomfortable imbalance in self-confidence and empowerment between men and women in the household (Azarias).
- Information workshops and classes on family law in Canada, particularly family conflict management and domestic issues as to reduce the instances of domestic violence within refugee families (Didier).
- An NGO that offers fatherhood services specifically dealing with the challenges of refugee fathers in Canada, staffed by professionals who understand the problem. Without such a service, refugee fathers have no place to go to talk about their own problems and challenges which can lead to health issues (Abraham).
- An employment-related service that assists refugee fathers in securing and retaining work through orientation, types of work in and around Winnipeg, guidance on how to reach career goals via education, apprenticeships, workshops, etc. (Meshe).
- Low-cost driving lessons for refugees without licences, particularly for women, as well as overall support by government in issues related to jobs, housing, English-language learning, cultural shock, health care, etc. (Ali).

12.6 Analysis of Interview Data by Cohort

The concept of a cohort is essential in research on the topic of cultural adjustment among refugee fathers. One of the goals of my study was to interview three cohorts of refugee fathers with different time spans of resettlement in Winnipeg, in order to find out the challenges of refugee fathers at three intervals. The first cohort included those refugee families who recently arrived in Winnipeg, with a time of residency of between one month to three years, and ten refugee fathers fit into this category. The second cohort included those refugee fathers who have lived in Winnipeg from three to five years, and included nine of the refugee fathers I interviewed. The third cohort included five refugee fathers who have lived in Winnipeg for more than five years.

The purpose of creating and interviewing members of the three cohorts was to explore similarities and differences in adjustment challenges among refugee fathers during the length of their resettlement in Winnipeg. In the following section I offer an analysis of the interview data I collected that gives attention to the responses of fathers who fit into the different resettlement cohorts.

In my study, I found that each cohort of refugee fathers perceived their experience somewhat differently, although there were also similarities across all three cohorts. For example, my research found similarities between the first cohort and the second cohort in facing challenges such as employment, housing conditions, insufficiency of welfare, problems related to children calling 911, and restrictions they felt regarding the use of corporal punishment on children. On the other hand, the research showed differences in the views and perceptions of refugee fathers in the third cohort. For those fathers, the aforementioned challenges were not

their primary challenges. Rather, their foci were related more to helping newer refugees, for example, by helping to familiarize them with Canadian culture, and educate them about living in Canada (MB, Azarias). In addition, refugee fathers in the third cohort revealed they took on advocacy roles, for example, through requesting the government and refugee-serving agencies to share decent information with new refugees about life conditions and housing issues prior of arrival in Canada (Deng), and requesting early intervention by agencies to help refugee families experiencing intergenerational conflicts (Ahmad). Overall, the findings of my research suggest that refugee fathers in the third cohort did not have acute worries about primary livelihood, and were capable of meeting their families' needs for sustenance. Over the length of their time in Canada, they developed a different perspective mainstream Canadian society. It is also significant to point out that all of the refugee fathers in the third cohort had a university or a college degree in Canada, and all were economically integrated.

Despite these differences, a considerable number of interviewees from all cohorts expressed some similar concerns and fears. One of these was fear related to government intervention in family affairs leading to the separation and breakdown of the family. This fear was related to fathers' perceptions that they were not allowed to discipline their children anymore because of the legal restrictions on the use of corporeal punishment of children in Canada. A number of fathers expressed the fear that their children might call authorities as a tactic to override their parental authority, and they believed that this made parent-child relations more difficult. Moreover, refugee fathers worried that if their children went to authorities claiming corporal punishment, they could be taken away by Child and Family Services and placed in foster homes. A number of refugee fathers had difficulty accepting this restriction on

the parental authority and felt it had negative effects on families and the refugee community at large.

Another topic that refugee fathers in all three cohorts mentioned often was the importance of adequate housing. Housing, in general, can meet many essential functions such as being a foundation for dignity, self-respect, and the improvement of health. It can also help provide the conditions needed for improving ones education, and gaining better jobs and a career. As we will see in the next chapter, the refugee fathers I interviewed also made specific recommendations on how they felt the housing situation of refugees in Winnipeg could be improved.

Chapter 13: Recommendations

13.1 Introduction

Refugee-serving agencies which work with refugee communities from a wide range of ethnic populations, age groups and family networks have to face a range of challenges that refugee communities encounter regularly. Although refugee families have attracted scholarly interest, refugee fathers have not received adequate and proportionate academic attention. Refugee fathers can be categorized into two levels: first, the individual level, that includes their personal characteristics such as age, education, skills, expertise, time spent in refugee camps, and the intensity of their trauma and other negative experiences; and second, at the family level, which incorporates their presumed position in the family including work responsibilities, social relations, network, authority, and ideological legitimacy.

It seems that post-migration circumstances have contributed to a reversal of most – if not all privileges and entitlements that refugee fathers enjoyed prior to migration. However, due to circumstances imposed during settlement and resettlement in a new Western country, refugee families have not adequately been equipped with the practical resources to adjust to their new environment.

The underlying issue in the collapse of refugee family cohesion that comes with forced migration, including mishaps sustained by the acculturative stresses in a host country, gradually demoralize refugee families. Refugee fathers become marginalized within the family and in mainstream society, and incapable of restoring their previous position and prerogatives. In this regard, refugee fathers need support services to help them restore their personal sense of integrity

and responsibility for their family while at the same time helping them to redefine their new roles in the family and in their matrimonial relationships.

Services for refugee fathers can be discussed through the lens of: family dynamics, language, education, and economic well-being. All four are interconnected and reciprocal, i.e. a change in any can constructively improve the adjustment process. Thus the whole family, particularly the father, can benefit from changes and improvements in services. In the following sections of this chapter, I outline recommendations for improving services to refugee families and fathers that derive from the literature and interviews.

13.2 Practices for Various Family Issues

As Tripodi (2002, p. 165) pointed out, in order to perform culturally important practices, intervention alternatives should be multilevel, taking place in the macro, micro, and meso systems. Macro interventions refer to the involvement of legal advocacy or community organizing. Micro interventions target only the individual or family. Meso interventions require the involvement of the local community, such as church and community support systems. Because many refugee family issues take place at the macro and meso levels, it is appropriate to begin with macro interventions. The aims of macro interventions are: first, to improve the accessibility of refugee families to services; second; to prevent problems; and third, developing policies and programs to serve the specific needs of refugee families.

Key practices are detailed in the tables below. Note that these practices are not listed below in order of importance, nor in a sequence that reflects how practices are to be applied and delivered to refugees.

Table 13.1 Assessment and Interventions for Marital Conflict

Recommendations for Service Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess the language ability of each member of the couple• Apply cautionary approach not to be overly influenced by more fluent member's version of the marital situation• Apply standardized questions in order to assess the degree of marital conflict or violence• Establishing a telephone hotline targeted for a specific refugee group to provide crisis intervention in an anonymous manner• Educating refugees about the problem, prevention strategies, and legal aspects and helping resources through educational articles in ethnic newspapers• Enlisting an ethnic community's elders in helping to intervene in the problem in communities where elders are considered wise decision makers• Establishing consciousness raising discussion groups• Focus on anger management or anger control• Developing skill for successful communication and nonviolent conflict resolution• Education fathers about sex-role socialization and their belief about entitlement to power and control in relationship

Table 13.2 Assessment and Interventions to Strengthen Families

Recommendations for Service Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of access to family service agencies that support families • Classes and activities to support parenting skills, including information about Canadian cultural and legal issues, e.g., parental interaction with schools, family recreation, discipline practices, practices of corporal punishment, intergenerational conflict, child abuse, child protective services • Cross-cultural training for child protective service agencies, courts, government agencies, private businesses, and other organizations that work in this area • Orientation and information regarding Canadian family structure, roles of men and women, divorce practices, intra-family violence intervention, sexual harassment and coercion, techniques for protection and agencies for refuge and support • Training for staff and/or bilingual staff development for domestic violence or runaway youth shelters, etc. (ORR, 2000, pp. 7–8) • Using a combination of multimedia presentations, small-group discussions, role-playing scenarios and other strategies facilitated by parenting experts, counsellors and psychologists to enhance both effective parenting and relationship skills • Facilitating an increased understanding of child development and needs (e.g., social and health needs, peer relations, parent-child relations) at different developmental stages in the new environment • Helping the child develop self-confidence (e.g., realistic and developmentally appropriate expectations, positive attention/praise, etc.) • Improving children’s communication and language (e.g., speaking, listening, reading, writing, etc.) • Working with refugee families to sustain healthy family relations (e.g., how to communicate feelings, conflict resolution, family rules/limitations, etc.), and best manage family stress (e.g., family mediation, neighborhood mediation, community leadership, etc.)
<p>Source: Renzaho and Vignjevic (2011)</p>

13.3 Meso Interventions

Meso-level interventions aim to enhance the efficiency of refugee serving agencies. As described above, the issues of refugee fathers have been ignored and their concerns have been remained unheard in refugee-serving agencies. In order to productively serve refugee families struggling with father-related issues, agencies should allow fathers the opportunity to actively participate in their program planning. Refugee-serving agencies should consider the questions below:

- How many refugee fathers serve on program planning and implementation committees?
 - How many refugee fathers monitor program effectiveness?
 - Do refugee fathers involved accurately represent a cross-section of the community?
 - How many refugee fathers work in the agency in decision-making and leadership positions?
 - How many programs specifically target refugee fathers and are offered at times and places readily accessible to all fathers?
 - How many male interviewers and interpreters are available?
 - Is outreach to fathers being conducted to increase their participation?
 - Are agency staff members adequately trained on gender sensitivity, gender equity, and human rights issues?
 - Are refugee fathers being informed directly of their human rights and legal rights?
 - Are mechanisms in place through which fathers can report physical abuse confidentially?
- (Women's commission for refugee women and children, 1997, p. 6–7).

13.4 Language, Education, and Economic Well-Being of Refugee Fathers

There is a close connection between language capabilities, educational levels and economic well-being in general, and particularly for refugees. Refugee fathers with local language proficiency have a window into the job market, and likewise, educational attainment means refugee fathers achieve upward mobility, paving the way for overall economic well-being. Yu et al (2007) concluded that “in terms of economic integration, although refugees’ employment rates and earnings improve with time, they continue to perform less well than skilled-worker immigrants” (p. 26). As Lamba (2003) pointed out, refugees largely remain unemployed compared with their pre-migration status, particularly for those who were previously in a managerial position. Even strong family and ethnic ties are not enough to compensate for the decline in employment. As Smith et al (2009) found, refugees and immigrants with poorer English skills were more likely to be employed in more physically demanding occupations two and four years after arrival in Canada that may pose particular risks of workplace injury. Therefore, as Tripodi (2002, p. 386) concluded

the best way in which most social workers can impact their clients’ English proficiency is at the micro level, by encouraging clients with limited English proficiency to participate in ESL programs, referring them to such programs, engaging in case advocacy to ensure enrollment, and maintaining follow-up with clients to assist with continued attendance.

Tables below are recommendations on the improvement language efficiency for refugee fathers.

13.3 Recommendations for Policymakers on the Improvement of Language Efficiency

- Provide adequate financial support to refugee fathers
- Fund ELS courses beyond functional literacy levels (i.e. beyond employment or job training needs) for proficiency and enhance integration
- Initiate formal government policy on interpreter/translation services and interpreter training programs. Stewart et al (2008)

Table 13.4 Recommendations for Service Providers on the Improvement of Language Efficiency

- Encouraging refugee father with limited education to advance their education
- Facilitating and helping fathers obtain information about various educational options through referral and brokerage
- Assisting fathers with admission applications and financial aid applications
- Assisting fathers with related issues such as scheduling, transportation and child care
- Hire more teachers/tutors to aid fathers facing language barriers
- Increase quality of ESL teachers and education
- Increase flexibility in ESL programs
- Offer language assistance to elderly fathers in daily domestic tasks
- Encourage fathers to stay in school to get necessary skills and qualifications for employment
- Make interpretation services readily available

Stewart et al (2008, p. 149) Tripodi (2002, p. 388)

Recertification is also an option aimed at providing opportunity for refugees and immigrants who had education or training for a specific occupation in their country of origin and therefore they need to be recertified or licensed in order to practice the occupation in the new country. However, recertification usually requires further education including taking examinations in order to obtain licensure. Another component of helping refugee fathers concerning enhancing their economic well-being is to pay attention meticulously to their house composition and their certain types of households which are not subject to change through social-work intervention.

For example, refugee families also face a major impediment to employment due to the lack of child-care options. Morantz et al (2013) conducted research on the lack of access to child care for refugee claimant families in Quebec. They concluded that refugee claimants are not qualified for subsidized child care in Quebec. Child-care policy can play a key role in facilitating the adjustment of refugee families in Canada. Fidazzo et al (2006) identified that regardless of regions, child care is a significant issue impacting employment and ultimately self-sufficiency of refugee families in Canada. They also pointed out there was little contact between refugee serving agencies and mainstream child-care services.

Below are tables containing recommendations on child care for policymakers and service providers to take into consideration.

Table 13.5 Recommendations for Policymakers on Child Care Policies for Refugee Families

- Designing and considering services to identifying automatically child care needs of refugee families, and particularly when refugee parents or children have additional health or educational needs
- Providing information about child care services, assisting families in applying for subsidies, where available, and advocating on their behalf
- Including universal child care services for refugee claimants and other temporary residents, prioritizing policies for affordable, high-quality child care for refugee families
- Aligning Canadian provincial policies with the principle of the best interests of the child and the UN conventions to which Canada is a signatory state: the rights of children to benefit from child care services should not be jeopardized because of their parents' immigration status, or lack thereof. Morantz et al (2013, p. 325)

Table 13.6 Recommendations for Service Providers on Child Care Policies for Refugee Families

- Partner with employers who offer flexible spending account and advocating for on-site child care at companies that employ large numbers of refugee fathers
- Provide refugees with information about child and Dependent Care Tax Credit
- Assist refugees in organizing a baby-sitting co-op
- Support refugees in reducing transportation costs and schedule constraints
- Help refugees apply for state child care subsidies. Build this step into case management and allow time for the process
- Help refugees become licensed child care providers
- Build strong relationships with child care providers located within the neighborhood where refugees live. Fiddazo et al. (2006, p. 58)
- Familiarity of social provider with and advocate for subsidized child care and tax incentives aimed at making child care more cost effective for families
- Advocate for home-based child care with the following merits:
- Providing child-care by non-immigrant providers to refugee families serves as connecting bridge of refugees to the new culture. This type of child care is intrinsically culturally congruent and linguistically appropriate. It increases cross-cultural experiences of both: It can serve as a source of income to the providers, thereby serving as an option to outside employment. Hein, Allen, and Else (1999)

13.5 Enhancing Financial Capital

There are a variety of policies that can help refugee families enhance their financial capital by policymakers and service providers concerning refugees in Canada, firstly, individual development accounts (IDA). IDAs are, as Sherraden et al. (2000, cited in Potocky-Tripodi, (2002, p. 409) pointed out

are special savings accounts that are designed to help people build assets for increased self-sufficiency and long-term economic security. Account holders receive matching funds as they save for purposes such as buying a first home, job training, going to college, or starting or expanding a small business. IDAs can begin as early as birth and they are progressive (that is, low-wealth individuals and families receive greater matching funds). Funding for IDAs can come from public, non-profit, and/or private sources (funding partnerships are common).

Office of Refugee Resettlement (2000, p. 2) notes that this program is perceived as an anti-poverty strategy aimed at the following: (1) asset accumulation for low-income refugees (individuals and families); (2) endorsing economic independence of refugees; (3) increasing the saving ability of low-income refugees; (4) supporting refugee participation in the financial institutions of this country; (5) helping refugees in advancing their education, home ownership and gaining access to capital. The second policy is microenterprise development, which can help refugees who neither have financial assets nor Canadian experience nor therefore are not qualified for commercial loans in order to start small businesses. This policy is described as follows:

The purpose of microenterprise development is to assist refugees in becoming economically self-sufficient and to help refugee communities in developing employment and capital resources. . . . Project components may include one-on-one business consultation and training, training in classroom settings, access to business credit, individual or peer group lending, and follow-up technical

assistance to help stabilize or expand refugee businesses. Microloans consist of small amounts of credit, generally in sums less than \$15,000, extended to low-income entrepreneurs for start-up or very small microenterprises. ORR (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2000, pp. 3-4)

The success of refugee microenterprise programs relies on many factors. These include the program's mission, market, staff, training, technical support, partnership, business, financing, administrative capacities and practices, the target population, the type of businesses developed, adaptability and flexibility, and start-up time (Else and Clay-Thompson, 1998). It has been noted that more than 89% of such businesses (more than 800 micro-businesses in all) survived during the eight years in the United States leading to 2000 (ORR, 2000, p.2). More recently, according to a MED (Microenterprise Development Program) Annual Report for February 2011

ORR assisted over 3,000 refugees in this program. Assistance included providing refugee entrepreneurs with small business related trainings, provision of pre-loan and post-loan technical assistance, and capital. 558 refugee entrepreneurs received loans totaling \$4,615,800 for the start of new businesses, and expansion or stabilization of existing businesses.

Research conducted on the prevailing public policy and promising practices for the resettlement and integration of refugees and immigrant through contract funding in Canada shows although immigrants and refugee are more self-employment than the native-born Canadians, their entrepreneurship as a significant economic resource is not being full realized because of frequently identified barriers to immigrant entrepreneurship, which include: language, culture, and perceived discrimination; financing; marketing and market penetration; and lack of experience and business connections specifically in the Canadian context (Chamberlain and Rosenow –Redhead, 2010). Knowledge and experience of business practices

in Canada, knowledge of business development support programs, recognized assets and credit history are all also important factors in the ability of refugee and immigrant entrepreneurs to access financing. (Fester et al., 2010)

Below is a table of recommendations for enhancing financial capital of refugees.

Table 13.7 Recommendations for Policymakers on Enhancing Financial Capital for Refugees through Social Enterprise

- Support the implementation of the business plans being developed by demonstration immigrant social enterprises through the provision of funding and business consultation.
- Document the success of the demonstration enterprises in providing settlement supports.
- Develop an information and education plan to reach settlement organizations, social enterprise and co-operative developers, and business organizations about immigrant social enterprise.
- Design a coordinated national blueprint to support the development of more immigrant social enterprises. This blueprint would:
- Recognize and support the conditions for success particularly the benefit of supportive partnerships with both settlement organizations and social enterprise and co-operative organizations
- Have the flexibility to accommodate and support a range of strategies to develop immigrant social enterprises
- Support enterprise development at different stages - prestart-up, start-up, and consolidation and scale-up
- Build on and coordinate existing resources within government, private sector, and community levels

Source: Chamberlain and Rosenow-Redhead (2010)

13.6 Enhancing Housing Conditions for Refugees

As participants revealed, one of the major challenges is housing, including the relatively small size of the dwelling place, living in unsuitable neighbourhoods, the lack of accessibility in apartments for disabled persons in Winnipeg, and the high rental costs in the private housing market. The findings I have from interviews with refugee fathers concerning housing issues are identical to other findings reported in other research completed in Winnipeg as well as in Calgary (Carter et al., 2008; Pruegger and Tanasescu, 2007; Madariaga-Vignudo, Miladinovska-Blazevska, 2005).

Housing is the important first step in the resettlement process of refugees who often live in a risky housing situation which hampers refugees to access to employment, education, medical and community services (Carter et al., 2006). Refugee serving agencies seem incapable of meeting the housing needs of refugees in Winnipeg.

Below are the tables with recommendations directed at policymakers and service providers aimed at enhancing housing conditions for refugees.

Table 13.8 General Housing Policy Recommendations for Policymakers

- Provide additional funding supports for housing government-assisted refugees through Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- Commit to ongoing funding of essential long-term settlement services housing
- Investigate policy options for allocating funds directly to immigrants based on province of residence rather than point of entry
- Review the parameters of the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) with a view to expanding its ability to serve newcomers.
- Create a federally funded 24-7 welcome centre at major points of entry appropriate information on housing, employment, language and job training, child care, education, and health care
- Review the Resettlement Adjustment Program for government-sponsored refugees with a specific focus on housing and social integration
- Fund programs that provide a process for newcomers to access a guarantor, two- month deposit, information, basic needs allowance and the start of credit rating. Pruegger and Tanasescu (2007)

Table 13.9 General Housing Policy Recommendations for Service Providers

- Consider that supports to maintain housing need to address: unfamiliarity with Canadian mainstream institutions and cultures, English as a Second Language and upgrading opportunities to increase employability
- Offer culturally appropriate supports to permanent housing access, where services can be delivered in first languages
- Provide families with the opportunity to choose their neighborhoods particularly considering the importance of social networks and ready access to religious and cultural centres
- Consider means of ensuring immigrants and refugees have access to affordable housing units proportional to their needs
- Ensure proximity to bus lines (as well as schools, shopping, recreational and community facilities) for new housing stock, as immigrants are more likely than Canadian-born individuals to use public transit
- Build new affordable housing stock to accommodate the needs of newcomers, who have a greater tendency to live in larger family units
- Provide information regarding home ownership and home buying assistance
- Seek to improve housing conditions of immigrants and refugees living in unsafe, overcrowded and inappropriate conditions
- Develop tenant-landlord resolution programs that prevent eviction and ensure linguistic and cultural appropriateness. Critical information about tenants' rights and responsibilities must also translated into other languages
- Target refugees through strategies different than those employed with economic immigrants as refugees are at higher risk for homelessness, have lower education and language ability, and a higher incidence of poverty
- Use cultural brokers to disseminate information and help facilitate access to ensure better uptake of resources. Information should also be made available in multiple languages
- Facilitate better coordination between service providers and funders, and between government levels and departments in the affordable housing, homelessness, immigration and settlement systems. Pruegger and Tanasescu (2007)

13.7 Enhancing Employment Conditions for Refugees

Research conducted by Citizenship and Immigration, Canada (1998) shows that refugees who had been in Canada for twelve or more years reported average employment earnings at or near the Canadian-born average and also reveals that refugees had the highest rates of unemployment benefit usage when compared with any other immigrant category or the Canadian-born population. A study by Yu et al. (2007, p.20) on the degree of the integration of refugees in Canada shows that the employment earning of refugees at first and fifth years since landing are much lower than skilled worker immigrants and Canadian. Wilkinson et al (2014, p.2) point out that the unemployment rate among refugees is twice as high as the national average for Canadian-born and they are more likely to have difficulty producing evidence of their education and work experience. It takes an average of 14 years for a refugee's income to meet that of a similarly educated Canadian citizen. There are major barriers to employment for refugees in Canada: non-recognition of foreign qualifications, lack of Canadian work experience, under-recognition of foreign work experience, inadequate job search skills, lack of knowledge of Canadian laws, bylaws, and regulations, and language difficulties (Stewart et al., 2008).

Below are tables that include recommendations for enhancing employment of refugees.

Table 13.10 Recommendations for Policymakers on Enhancing Employment for Refugees

- Create opportunities to acquire professional job-related experience (e.g., co-op programs, internships, or voluntary system), and to study and work
- Decrease bureaucracy in provision of professional licenses, and evaluation of overseas qualifications
- Provide wage subsidy programs
- Recognize skills and abilities of refugee fathers bring from their homelands
- Find ways to make skilled workers and well-trained professionals' past experience transferable to their new home
- Set quotas for refugee fathers participation in management positions
- Work with regulatory bodies to improve access to trades and professions
- Develop exams to address accreditation problems and verify knowledge and experience
- Shift voluntary work in agencies to paid positions in order to cope with demand

Stewart et al (2008 With some modifications)

Table 13.11 Recommendations for Service Providers on Enhancing Employment for Refugees

- Significant effort to determine the prior work experiences of refugee fathers in order to fit into current labor market in Canada
- Urging refugee fathers to consider realistically their interests and motivations in seeking specific occupation
- Helping refugee fathers understand the first job they obtain will not necessarily last for the rest of their working life time
- In the case of a low level job, refugee fathers should be urged to look forward advancement in the future
- Considering the interrelationships between employment status, health, mental health, and family dynamic of refugee fathers by social providers
- Providing refugee father with holistic services addressing the complexity of their situations applying case management, crisis intervention, mental health treatment and marital and family therapy as needed (Tripodi, 2002, p.407)
- Prepare refugee fathers to find employment in Canada
- Build employment centres to help newcomers find suitable and desirable employment
- Provide entrepreneurial help in getting access to the mainstream markets, as well as financial assistance in establishing businesses
- Offer internship programs for professionals to facilitate recognition of their credentials
- Implement training, testing, or apprenticeship programs that facilitate recognition of foreign credentials
- Initiate programs that recognize child poverty by enabling parents to find employment

Stewart et al (2008)

13.8 Recommendations for Refugee Families with Children with Disabilities

In interviews, some refugee fathers told me they have a child with a disability. As Sen and Yurtsever (2007, p. 239) pointed out, the family who has a child with disability may react in the following forms:

first, shock that refers to a state that is generally characterized by crying, lack of response, and feelings of helplessness; second, denial that is caused by fear and concern about future of child, discontentment, and anticipation of the responsibilities; third, suffering and depression with its withdrawal and avoidance of social activities that can be seen in families; fourth, feelings of guilt causes that parents think they are responsible that their child is disabled; fifth, indecision about the situation can be the cause for mutual blaming or neglecting of the members of the family; sixth, anger can be a major obstacle to parents' acceptance of their disabled child; seventh, shame as a state of experiencing embarrassment comes about to families when they face concern from others about their children.

Fathers in particular who have a child with a disability experience negative feeling about their psychological well-being in the following ways: they may experience existential conflicts as they strive to get a feel for the situation that they have a child with disability (Blacher, 1984); some may experience poorer psychological functioning like higher rate of depression or personality difficulties (Brown and Pacini, 1989).

Also these fathers may have lower self-esteem (Cummings, 1976) these fathers often talk about feelings of guilt, disappointment, lack of control, inferiority, and isolation, which contribute to lowering their overall sense of well-being (Davis and May, 1991); for many fathers of a child with a disability it is disappointing that they may not know how to assist and care for a child with unusual needs (Davis and May, 1991).

Similarly, these fathers often talk about their feeling of being cut off from sources of social support and thus many of them talk about their anger at others including neighbours, coworkers and others who fail to offer such support (Lamb, 1983). In a like manner, fathers express that they are mainly worried about the financial costs associated with raising a child with a disability and with the future success of the child in adulthood (Lamb and Billings, 1997); and these father may experience higher levels of marital distress (Brown and Pacini, 1989).

Burke (2008, p.31-32) stated that “disability has the potential to socially exclude a disabled person from social experiences (as with the issue of spoilt identity in stigmatization) and consequently, as with mental illness, the family and siblings of the disabled individual experience an impact akin to that of the person with the disability.” If families with children with a disability who belong of mainstream society experience of being socially excluded then, as Philips (1998) pointed out, ethnic minorities who have a child with disability suffered a double disadvantage, due to the combined impact of childhood disability and ethnicity.

Below are tables with recommendations for service providers and interpreters working with refugee families who have disabled children.

Table 13.12 Recommendations for Service Providers Working with Refugee Families with Disabled Children

- Service provider training in culturally sensitive cares as well as different perceptions of disability and health
- Service providers need to be aware that refugee families may not ask for help or alternative treatment options because of their perceptions of authority
- Use of translators. It would be beneficial for service providers to be trained on how to work with translators, to be aware of the language services available to refugee families, and to be aware of the importance of using a translator in meetings with families. It is important to offer language support to families and not assume that the family knows that such support exists.
- Service providers from diverse backgrounds. Hiring service providers from diverse backgrounds may be a useful strategy to break down barriers between refugee families and service providers
- Taking extra time with refugee families. Refugee families need extra time to be able to ask questions. Service organizations should consider giving explicit permission to service providers to take the extra time to talk with refugee families about their health histories and their contexts before resettlement to Canada. It is important not to assume that families have knowledge of the services, supports, equipment, funding, and possibilities for their children.
- The importance of support. Community services need to support the creation and maintenance of refugee parent support groups for parents who have a child with a disability. Service providers need to be aware of parent support groups and refer families to them.
- Help in navigating the system. If possible, service providers should link refugee families with a social worker or settlement worker who can help them navigate the system, including finding services, helping them fill out forms, and getting them supports.
- Home visits. Families have positive experiences when service comes to them and they receive services in their homes.

Source: King et al (2015)

Table 13.13 Recommendations Regarding Interpreters Working with Refugee Families with Disabled Children

- Professional interpreting and translation services should be provided, with attention given to proper training for staff to avoid a clash of expectations
- Auditing should be undertaken to identify areas of low uptake of services
- All purchasers/providers should evaluate the effectiveness of existing services in the context of recent legislation.
- Campaigns can be conducted with outreach workers and community-based teams to inform refugee parents about legislation and how it affects them and their children. Special efforts should be made to disseminate information through the ethnic minority press and organizations to highlight particular issues and to inform communities about particular services and their need to participate.
- Ethnic monitoring can be introduced to assist in the analysis of service delivery, employment of staff, and parents' satisfaction with services
- Information should be translated into minority languages as a minimum standard. There are some refugee parents who are illiterate in their mother tongue and this must be addressed accordingly, perhaps by interpreters or bilingual workers.
- Training should be provided to assist staff through the process and enable them to manage change in the way that they provide services to the refugee population.

Source: Shah (1997)

13.9 Summary of Recommendations

In general, social policy aims at meeting the needs of vulnerable communities and disadvantaged social groups in order to improve their status by providing services through public or private organizations. Because there are different kinds of vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups, it is essential to have diverse models of social work. In this regard, recommendations should be made based on information and knowledge about the specific characteristics of vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups, so that the services can adequately meet their needs. The recommendations described in this chapter should be implemented, observed, appraised and the findings disseminated to promote further recommendations. Implementing these recommendations would contribute to more effective social and psychological adjustment of refugees in western host countries. Governmental and non-governmental organizations should consider the following: first, the assessment of the outcomes of their strategic programs and second, the accountability to their funders and refugee communities. According to Ahearn (2000) program evaluations, follow-up case histories, process assessments, organizational case analyses, and studies of interventions within the context of local culture can add greatly to our understanding of what services are and are not beneficial.

Chapter 14: Conclusions

The challenges of refugee fathers are twofold: the challenges of refugees as a whole and as well as the challenges of refugee families when they resettle in a Western country. My study shows refugee fathers face numerous problems, including:

- Ignorance of fathers about how to care for children, role reversal between husband and wife, the lack of relatives
- Extended families and kinships for support
- The burden of self-reliance
- The differing paces of acculturation by different members of the family
- Marital issues (i.e. related to multiple jobs of women, money management, outside interventions in marital affairs by others or members of the same ethnic community, general shifts in economic power of women, etc.)
- Parenting children in a drastically different social, cultural and legal environment (e.g. children's knowledge of laws that speak to their rights and freedom that are protected by law through school and other networks)

My interview findings are similar to others reported in scholarly research in other Western host countries (Burns et al., 2000; Burns 2004; Renzaho and Burns, 2006; Renzaho et al., 2011; Hyne, 2012). Adaptation problems are often rooted in the fact that the “new” culture is very different from the culture of the country of origin and therefore reinforce the tensions associated with the adaptation and adjustment of newcomers to their new environment. Add to that their agonizing histories and experiences, and the problem of adapting becomes much more complex than for other immigrants.

Multifaceted challenges confront refugees, i.e. the previous familiar ambiances and habitual socio-cultural and economic contexts in which the refugee families had lived for years

hamper their efficiency gradually on resettlement in a new host country with profoundly different customs, laws, social etiquettes, expectations and skills. All call for a prompt revision on habitual comportment patterns in all contexts for the refugee family and in particular for the refugee father: including in overall family relations, differing paces of adaptation, child rearing, acquiring the host language, adjusting to local job market demands, learning household management, credential recognition, institutional bias, discriminatory treatment, deprivation or shortening of care entitlements, etc.

Refugee fathers and their families will arrive in Canada either through a government-sponsored refugee program, as privately sponsored refugees or as an independent refugee claimant. What particularly makes their case so sensitive is that refugee families and refugees the world over are reluctant wanderers, pure survivors forced to endure indescribable circumstances and be in a permanent state of vigilance only to live for the sake of living. Even then, they are not treated in a humane way, for example, in refugee camps which often have miserable conditions.

On arrival in any Western country, there is a momentary – or temporary, at least – state of triumph as refugees feel they have finally arrived in a sort of paradise, a sort of truism when compared to the life they had lived before. However, reality on the ground in a western country means adaptation and adjustment to new circumstances; however, this desperate initiative of refugees in the adjustment to new conditions can end in failure. Additionally, that risk of failure is great for refugees and particularly for refugee fathers, whose dilemma is unique. Refugee fathers grasp any available opportunity to improve themselves because they are quick to observe that they are not actually living – only surviving – and that their time is over. This leads them to an attempt to live in more peace and under less duress than before. They try to adapt to, follow

and obey the law as much as they can. They particularly request training and education in the indispensable areas such as parenting skills, family law, money management, anger management, psychological evaluation, and other important facets of society.

My interviewees were mostly over 40 years and this stage in their life seemed to force some of them to try to learn English as a key to a successful life in Canada in a short time in order to and in hopes of entering the job market and continuing as a breadwinner as before. This would then reestablish a refugee father's previous status in the family, but the differences, faster pace and complexity of life in their new home come as a rude awakening. In other words, they felt they were able to walk in their country of origin, and on coming to Canada, they found themselves in the midst of a vast ocean where they needed to learn how to swim and play by the rules of the game.

In short, there are new rules of the game in the host country. For the majority of refugee families and fathers, acquiring new roles and learning new "rules" is not easy, leading to minor as well major issues for the whole refugee family, including the father as the traditional head of the family. Therefore, the future may be not at all as promising as they think.

They are in a permanent state of learning in overcoming predicaments that refugee fathers and refugee families go through in their resettlement phases. The range of quandaries includes their hope of becoming an employee, improving their housing conditions, becoming familiar with the laws of Canada, gaining knowledge about money management, acquainting themselves with new parenting styles, building a network, catching up with the pace of acculturation of children, overcoming their inevitable dependency on their children for

conducting bureaucratic and administrative paperwork, etc. The list can be expanded and spills over to struggles of power over food, bilingualism and so on.

Helping refugee families requires two parallel approaches: first, an holistic approach by refugee serving agencies, i.e., considering the interconnectivities among all pre- and post-migration factors that every refugee family experiences, and secondly, looking at each family on a case-by-case basis in the context of refugee-integration policies of the host country. As I have shown in my study, social welfare institutions and refugee-serving agencies are not sufficiently prepared and equipped with adequate knowledge and information about the repertoire and realm of ordeals related to pre-migration events and post-migration acculturation stresses of refugee families.

The more refugee fathers are ready to be flexible and adapt to the changes related to globalization that are now reflected in Canadian laws that work to narrow the gender gap, and ensure child protection and women's rights within family and in society, the more they will succeed in adjusting to life in Canada. This responsibility not only falls into hands of refugee fathers themselves, but also refugee-service agencies. An egalitarian policy with regard to equal foundation, equal opportunity, equality of condition and equality of outcome are however missing for Canadian refugee policies as a whole and particularly for refugee fathers.

As I have also shown in my study, however, the historical context and institutions in Canada do not provide a very effective and constructive policy for refugee fathers focusing on integration. The overall socio-economic fact is that there is a long way to go to overcome the interrelated, systemic barriers of power, culture and institutions, in order to open the path for full integration into Canadian society.

When one looks at indicators such as the rate of income, the rate of employment and residence location, it appears that the socio-economic conditions of refugees have deteriorated or at least remained unchanged. When income level is an essential indicator for falling into or climbing out of poverty, one must note that it takes 10-15 years on average for refugees to catch up with their Canadian peers regarding income. Also, a recent study on the resettlement experience of privately sponsored refugees showed that 68 percent of privately sponsored refugees lived in poverty, more than three times the level of average Winnipeg households (Carter, 2009).

Foundational equality, one of the tenets of the egalitarian approach, has not been implemented for immigrants as well as for refugees. According to Olsen (2011, p. 44), foundational equality, or formal equality, refers to “the right to equal treatment under the law.” In terms of the equal opportunity or equality of condition, the policy of the government of Canada is, on paper at least, to allow those skilled immigrants and refugees with adequate qualification factors such as education, English and/or French ability, work experience, age, or previously arranged employment or proven adaptability, to start working almost immediately in Canada.

However, reality reveals the contrary. As I have shown in my study, a major working barrier is the Canadian credential system which prevents skilled immigrants and refugees from working in their declared professions, in which they are qualified. This has a huge negative effect on immigrants, not only psychologically, but also financially, and in their relationships. Therefore, the credential system is a major factor in the downward mobility of the skilled immigrant and refugee worker. Their experience is of working in settings that alienate them from

their previous professions, or working beneath their qualification which has a detrimental effect on overall self-esteem.

When refugee fathers look to adapt to a new culture and find insufficient levels of service to help them in doing so, this is in conflict with the Canadian government's adherence to equal opportunity between refugees and non-refugees, men and women, and other cultural and social groups. In this regard, combined with an absence of powerful labour unions and strong civic movements which might challenge the status quo of government policy, and the apparent lack of suitable education and guidance of refugee-service agencies, I believe that refugees and refugee fathers find themselves facing more overwhelming predicaments than originally expected when adapting to their new environment. The solution to this complex equation falls not only on the traditional head of the family in stepping forward and actively adapting to their new lives, but also on the government that brought them into the country in the first place – in the form of refugee services.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Questions

Background Information

1. What is your first name?
2. How old are you?
3. Do you work? Where? How long? What hours?
4. Are you married? If so, for how long?
5. Does your spouse work? Where? How long? What hours?
6. How many children do you have?
7. What are the genders and ages of your children?
8. What country were you born in?
9. How much education do you have? How much education does your wife have?
10. Were you in a refugee camp before you came to Winnipeg? Where? For how long?
11. What was life like in the refugee camp for you and your family?
12. What have been the major changes in your life that you have experienced since you arrived in Canada and Winnipeg?

Questions on Fathering

1. How is fathering in Winnipeg different than fathering in your home country?
2. What challenges do you face in Winnipeg that affect your role as a father?
3. What changes, if any, you have experienced in your role as a father and as a husband in Winnipeg?
4. What are some positive points about being a father in Canada?
5. What are some negative points about being a father in Canada?
6. Do you think you are stricter with your child/children here than or not as strict as in your country home? Why?
7. How do you and your wife /partner make decisions about how you should raise your child/children?
8. If you and your wife /partner have disagreements about how you should raise your child/children, how do you try to resolve these disagreements?
9. What are your aspirations for your children in Winnipeg and (Canada)?

Questions on personal needs and services

1. What are your main concerns and worries today?
2. How do you cope with these difficulties and challenges?
3. Where do you go when you need help?
4. What types of services for refugee fathers do you know about in Winnipeg?
5. How did you learn about these services (if the participant is aware of any)?

6. Have you made use of any of these services?
7. How easy is to access them?
8. What other resources and services do you think would help you and other refugee fathers in Winnipeg?
9. How satisfied are you with services for refugee fathers you have received in Winnipeg?

Appendix B

[RECRUITMENT INFORMATION HANDOUT TO BE POSTED AND GIVEN TO REFUGEE FATHERS BY STAFF AT THE NEEDS CENTRE]

REFUGEE FATHERS NEEDED TO VOLUNTEER FOR RESEARCH STUDY:

Refugee Fathers in a New Country: The Challenges of Cultural Adjustment and Raising Children in Winnipeg, Canada

This research is being conducted by Shahrokh Rezanian, a Master of Arts student at the Department of Sociology, University of Manitoba. The purpose of this research is to understand the experiences and challenges of refugee fathers living in Winnipeg. In doing so, it hopes to identify factors that refugee fathers perceive as barriers and predicaments of integrating into a new society and living in Winnipeg, Canada. In addition, the study will attempt to identify and make recommendations regarding the services that can be put to place to assist refugee fathers facing the challenges of resettling in Winnipeg and Canada with their families. Refugee fathers who are interested in volunteering for the study will be asked to participate in a confidential face-to-face interview at a time and location that is convenient for them.

**IF YOU ARE A REFUGEE FATHER WHO HAS LIVED IN CANADA
FOR LESS THAN 10 YEARS AND WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN
THIS STUDY, PLEASE CONTACT:**

Shahrokh Rezanian: University of Manitoba, Department of Sociology. Tel: (204) 417-7727 E-mail: rezanias@myumanitoba.ca

Appendix C

Chapter 6 Table: Challenges of Refugee Families Identified in Previous Research

Identified Challenges in Refugee Families	Research
Challenges related to parents and children interactions	
On one hand, refugee parents have difficulties influencing, monitoring, and managing adolescent behaviors; and, on the other hand, they blame themselves and have guilt for inappropriate adolescent behaviors. (Research sample: Refugee parents from Central America)	Merali, 2004
Factors such as their level of English language proficiency, familiarity with and ability to independently access/interact with host society systems, like the school and health care systems, and degree of interaction with members of other groups, may impact their degree of parental authority versus reliance on children for help.	Padilla, 2006
Parents also might have difficulty negotiating their role in their child's education. Since the children are learning in English, this prevents the parents from being able to help their children with their homework unless they know English. These language barriers often limit the access parents have to communicate with their child's teacher.	Leidy et al., 2010
In their new environment, migrant children may become familiar with structures that support an individualistic culture, such as state laws protecting the rights of a child. This may lead to family conflicts, because children are able to disarm authoritarian parenting practices (in the sense of the use of strict and punitive strategies (e.g., corporal punishment), close scrutiny of children's behaviors and social environment through imposition of an absolute set of standards, the valuing of obedience and respect for authority, reinforcement of expectations, and to some extent the discouragement of independence and self-assertion Clark 1999) by the threat that parental violation of state laws will lead to family separation. Therefore, the unfamiliar power of state intervention to separate a family for disciplinary practices is an omnipresent threat, which appears to have far reaching effects on the family functioning, including gender roles of the parents, of these migrant communities in Australia.	Renzaho et al., 2011 (b)
Research has shown that migrating families from Mexico to U.S.A. where the fear of having children 'apprehended' or 'placed in state custody' caused parents to avoid interacting with all government entities, even if they were victims of crime or health care was needed.	Boehm, 2008
Research exposed parents' fears that their children would lose their original culture, and expressed concerns regarding their children adopting conflicting cultural norms.	Lewig et al., 2010

Refugee children often learn their new language and customs faster than their parents, and these developments may place them in the role of interpreters or “cultural brokers” between their parents and the host community. This shift can also lead to role reversals that this can potentially compromise the respect children have for their parents.	Deng and Marlowe, 2013
Low levels of integration into the host society on the part of parents may also exacerbate fears about losing youth to the surrounding culture. Also, differences between parents’ and adolescents’ openness to cultural change towards Western behaviors may contribute to increased conflict in the parent adolescent relationship.	Padilla, 2006; Sue and Sue, 2008
Research has highlighted the role of fathers as the enforcers of the heritage culture identity among youth weak attachment to the ethnic culture may lead fathers to feel ineffective in the parenting role.	Organista, 2007; Sue and Sue, 2008
Children and parents report feeling embarrassed by the parents’ problems negotiating their environment, which can lead to rejection of parents by the children	Puig, 2002
Parents may insist on not providing choices to their children, while at the same time seeking to become involved in their children’s private lives, to assume control of their children’s activities, and to ensure parental demands are met.	Renzaho et al., 2011(a)
Research has shown where increased acculturation of migrants caused amplified behavioral problems for children. They speculated that this was caused either by the actual shift from traditional to egalitarian values, or from a familiar dynamic to a less familiar dynamic; the stabilizing effect of familiar values may become all the more prominent in families that have fewer resources to call upon during the post-immigration period of transition.	Lamb and Bougher, 2009
Money may be a source of family conflict: parents may maintain a dependency in their children through control of their children’s earnings. As a result, young people, whether working or receiving social security income, have a limited say in how their money is spent.	Renzaho et al., 2011(a)
Research was conducted on the challenges faced by refugees parenting in a new culture, i.e. in Australia. They found that one particular concern to parents in this study were the factors perceived to support this independence including, children’s rights, government financial support for children, the perceived role of schools and police in encouraging children to challenge their parents’ authority.	Lewig, Arney, and Salveron, 2010
In Africa, raising, caring and educating of infants, children and young people are a communal responsibility with distinct roles, that is to say, fathers are providers for the families. Mothers, other female adults, and older siblings take on caregiving roles which are different from the patterns of childrearing in a western country; thus, the new life styles place refugee families under pressure to work within norms of a western country where they live in.	Mitchell and Ouko, 2012
Refugee parents try to control their children and are suspicious of children’s daily activities and friendships. Since parents have no familiarity with new surroundings, they	McMichael et al., 2011

are anxious about their children's lives outside of the home. Also, refugee families experiences issues of eroding trust, attachment and discipline and increased conflict within families over the first 3 years of settlement.	Renzaho et al., 2011(a)
Research has shown that particularly in the third year of settlement in Australia, parental discipline and management begins to focus on boyfriends and girlfriends, and this is especially problematic for young women. This issue is complicated by the comparatively greater freedom that Australian society allows many adolescents in relation to expression of sexual identities.	McMichael et al., 2011
Youth refugees are having difficulties communicating with their parents to solve problems or disagreements. Some youth reported that their parents did not trust their ability to make decisions for themselves, and did not understand their needs or intentions. These issues came up most frequently among the 16 to 19 year-old females.	Hynie et al., 2012
Different pace of the process of acculturation among refugee parents and their children lead to rise of acculturative distance, that is, when parents strive to maintain and endorse their own cultural practices, whereas their children tend to embrace the cultural attitudes and behaviors of the host country. The rise of acculturative distance can lead to the cut-off of communication and insufficient parent--child relations.	Ying and Han 2007, Hwang, 2006
Some African parents tend to cling to their authoritarian roles (low in support and high in control) and try to control their children in the form of demanding obedience, expectations, and close watching of behaviors of their children.	Renzaho et al., 2011 (a)
In the third and fourth year of settlement, arranged marriage emerged as a source of conflict especially between girls and their parents.	McMichael et al., 2011
Refugee parents may expect that their children should be successful in their studies and pursue socioeconomic success and these demands place them under pressure.	McMichael et al. 2011
The existence of a cultural gap or generational dissonance, i.e., the lack of shared culture between parents and children caused disputes among them and escalating to sever anger.	Hinton et al., 2009
Refugee families may fail to understand the experience of schooling as well as children's extracurricular activities in the western countries and do not know how to respond to this challenge. Some refugee families may not permit that their children attend games and other team sports as the mainstream families do. This may create tension between refugee parents and their children at home especially if the child in question has to rely on parents of other teammates for transportation and moral support.	Yenika-Agbaw,2009
Bilingualism may create a challenge in some refugee families. Some families insist that their children speak only the home language at home which is perceived by them as a symbol of cultural survival and the mainstream language or school language as a means to an end – material survival, and save the mainstream language for school and other public domains. The transition between the home and school languages can be tenuous as well, as gradually some African children begin to regard the language spoken at home as inferior simply because many of their mainstream peers are unfamiliar with it.	Yenika-Agbaw,2009
In the African culture, food occupies important roles, one being its use as a tool in socializing children. As a result, food may become a main source of intergenerational conflicts among African immigrants and refugees. Children may tend to taste other meals which are away from home and may be a sign of adapting to the culture of that particular space. This polite or quiet rejection of traditional African meals can be	Yenika-Agbaw,2009; Renzaho et al 2011., (a)

insulting to parents and especially mothers. Reasons for this include, first, that Africa women claim that there is a great pride in cooking and feeding their families; and second, when a child rejects the food, it makes them feel inadequate and affects their sense of cultural pride and personal self-worth.	
In regard to imposing discipline, parents emphasized the consequences of bad behaviors, yet reported threatening children with punishment more often than actually giving it. Punishments are dependent on the severity of the perceived misbehaviors and may be implemented incrementally. Punishments reported for not complying with parents' demands included depriving children of food, such as a meal, or withholding pocket money, banning children from visiting friends or socializing, sending the child to a special corner or outside, and in some rare cases corporal punishment such as smacking.	Renzaho et al 2011., (a)
Challenges related to changes in the gender roles	
A study of Iranian refugees resettled in Sweden found that they had significantly different experiences and attitudes towards their new country. According to men, the Swedish lifestyle caused conflict in the family because the women gained more freedom socially. Both women and children in the family rejected attempts by the men to control the family. Men reported feeling misunderstood by authorities who, they said, supported the women.	Darvishpour, 2002
Changes in gender roles post-migration, that is to say: changing roles within the family for men (less responsibility, power), feelings of disappointment for men (depression and low self-esteem), limited work opportunities for men (exclusion from professional employment, lack of achievement, no access to structures of society, racial issues); and new roles within family for women (more responsibility) shared decision making (change from old culture), can lead to marital conflict and separation. When family stressors increase, the risk of spousal violence increases. Common Stressors identified included: learning English, finding jobs, women working away from home and having less time with their children, learning to share income and pay bills, learning to drive and negotiate busy city streets, renegotiating family and gender roles, and having no elders to consult for problem-solving and mediation.	Renzaho et al., 2011 (b); Wallace, 2004; Gustafson and Iluebbey, 2013
The influence of acculturation stress on marital relationships can be viewed within the context of individual adaptation to cultural change. The influence of family dynamics and the strategies each partner utilizes can lead to conflict. Conflict may occur when a low acculturated partner expects the other partner, who has already adapted to the dominant host culture, to continue to follow pre-migration values and traditions. A husband or wife who is less acculturated may perceive the behavior of the more highly acculturated partner as a threat, thereby increasing their own level of acculturative stress, which in turn leads to conflict. Men from traditionally patriarchal societies frequently find their dominant role is challenged following a move to a more egalitarian culture.	Milner and Khawaja, 2010 Nilsson et al., 2008
A study on Somali refugees in US revealed that women, who were independent and proficient with English language encountered a higher level of psychological abuse and physical aggression from their husbands	Nilsson et al., 2008
The financial issues and money are the significant challenges topics among refugee families that in many cases can lead to separations and the termination of the marriages.	Boyle and Ali, 2010
Women are often empowered both economically (by getting jobs outside the home) and culturally (through greater exposure to women's rights discourse) when they move to a Western country. At the same time, men's underemployment in a Western country	Boyle and Ali, 2010

United can erode the status men enjoyed in their country of origin. These status shifts can threaten men's masculinity and provide women with the freedom to leave bad relationships.	
Research conducted in Australia has brought to light that the government allowance was given in the most cases to the husbands. Women claimed that this was a cause of dispute since men did not share the money at all with their wives, even though they were expected to take care of their wives. Also, women claimed that men tend to waste money on their unnecessary items such as cigarettes, instead of household requirements. They also stated that this inappropriate spending by men led to financial difficulties for the families. On the other hand, men claimed that women mismanaged the money and therefore it is necessary to supervise them because in the country of origin women were not involved in managing money.	Khawaja and Milner, 2012
Research in Australia has also shown that the greater freedom of South Sudanese women in Australia was a significant trigger for marital conflict among refugee families. Men claimed that women misunderstood "freedom" as rights without responsibilities and obligations. It appeared from this study that freedom encouraged women to challenge the established authority of South Sudanese men as well as to retaliate against men in order to lead independent lives.	Bohem, 2008
Men and women were adapting at different rates, which led to several difficulties associated with acculturation stress.	Hwang and Ting, 2008
Changes in the roles led to disagreements over finances, which in turn escalated and frequently resulted in accusations of domestic violence and subsequent interactions with the police. This intensifying of emotions and reported physical abuse has been cited in the literature as the result of a difference in the stage of acculturation between partners or family members.	Nilsson et al., 2008
Also, finding has shown that men can feel disempowered and can experience an identity crisis following resettlement in a culture with differing cultural conditions from their own, where their values, norms and dominant role are questioned, which in turn creates a greater risk of marital conflict.	Nilsson et al., 2008
The exigencies of living in a new environment call for the involvement of women in paid work to support family financially, particularly if husbands have no permanent jobs. In this regard, women do both: They are involved in paid work and do household duties without getting assistance of the husbands which leads to stresses and emotional problems in marital relationships.	Renzaho et al., 2011 (b)
Miscellaneous Challenges of Refugee Families	
It may be the case that refugee families face the challenges of separation from other family or reunification of its members. In both cases, on one hand, people feel guilty, powerless and depressed about separation from their relatives who may have difficulties living in abroad, and, on the other hand, reunification is challenging for the reunified families as well because the family has difficulty establishing balance and resetting new relationships among its members (trust, attachment, challenging of modes of discipline and intergenerational dissonance).	Luster et al., 2008
Refugee families may have child(ren) with special needs. They have two major challenges: (1) not understanding their child's condition and managing a child with	Beatson, 2013

special needs. Not understanding encompassed etiology, treatment, and systems of care; (2) Managing special needs includes impact on work and supporting the child at home.	
The increased perception of discrimination against Muslims often causes especially men to increase their religiosity rather than succumb to pressure. Rather than assimilate, some Arab American men decide instead to assert their traditional identities more resolutely; some even against parents who may have become more assimilated.	Ghaffari and Çiftçi, 2009
The refugees generally do not feel skilled and confident enough to join the host society's events and activities. The difficulty increases when the host group, with already established ties, may not be keen to interact with those who are newly arrived. This social isolation combined with limited social ties due to being new in a country often leads to a sense of loneliness and significant distress.	Milner and Khawaja, 2010
Research has shown when refugees had insufficient information about how the "system" works in the host country (i.e., Canada), they have limited means for seeking and obtaining needed supports. They found it difficult to manage bureaucratic systems, which made them feel lost and helpless.	Stewart et al.,2008
Refugee migrants face when trying to secure meaningful employment, including: disadvantages in the local labour market; substantial downward mobility; lack of qualifications or difficulties getting their overseas skills, qualifications and experience recognized; lack of local work experience; lack of knowledge of the local workplace and employment conditions; discrimination; lack of targeted employment services; the refugee experience; proficiency in the local language; pressure from multiple caring and household responsibilities; limited access to affordable housing close to workplaces; and limited access to transport.	De Vroome, and Van Tubergen,2010
In their new environment, placing responsibility on young children to care for their siblings and corporal punishment could constitute neglect and abuse, whereas in Africa, older siblings and relatives will normally care for the younger ones while the parents and other members of the family go to fend for their families. In Australia, like most western countries, raising a child becomes an individual matter and not a collectivist responsibility. The emphasis is on valuing individual needs and achievements, and strategies put in place are to promote children's autonomy and independence as well as personal freedom.	Zervides and Knowles, 2007

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