

Family name, Given name

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Summary of Proposed Research

The summary of your research proposal should indicate clearly the problem or issue to be addressed, the potential contribution of the research both in terms of the advancement of knowledge and of the wider social benefit, etc.

For more than 30 years, a growing body of research has focused on quality of life (QoL). Essentially, QoL is the degree to which a person enjoys the important possibilities of his or her life. It is related to well-being, financial security, health, access to services, community conditions and opportunities for personal growth and advancement. About 80 percent of Canada's population now lives in cities, which are the major immigrant reception centres and where the majority of new Canadians reside. Given that the majority of immigration research has focused on Canada's major metropolitan areas, there is a pressing need to investigate QoL issues for immigrants in small and medium-sized urban areas. This proposed 1.5-year research project will be conducted in Hamilton (via McMaster University), Saskatoon (via University of Saskatchewan), and Charlottetown (via University of Prince Edward Island), in order to address the following three objectives:

OBJECTIVE A: To further our knowledge of immigrant's perceptions of QoL in 2nd and 3rd-tier immigrant reception cities (those outside the major immigrant reception centres of Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal) and in so doing, contribute to the understanding of immigrant integration and adaptation.
OBJECTIVE B: To identify significant pan-Canadian predictors of QoL among immigrants in different cities across Canada, and determine if differences exist across cities and populations (i.e. general population and immigrant population).
OBJECTIVE C: Determine how the research results can best inform federal, provincial and municipal policy and programs related to immigrants' adaptation/integration while informing/expanding broader academic discourse.

The three cities sites chosen not only represent three of Canada's major geographical regions (Western, Central and Atlantic), but also all recognize the importance of immigration for population and economic renewal and the need to successfully retain and integrate immigrants.

A mixed method approach is proposed, encompassing both a telephone survey using a tested QoL survey and follow-up focus groups. The QoL survey instrument captures information specific to socio-economic determinants of QoL, such as sense of place, neighbourhood conditions, housing quality, access to community and public services, and environmental problems.

The following three strategies will be employed to meet the three research objectives:

1. Conduct quantitative and qualitative data collection in all three city sites.
2. Further develop partnerships between the universities of concern and the local and civic organizations representing immigrants as a way to link research to policy.
3. While simultaneously disseminating via the traditional academic outlets, hold a virtual 1-day forum to identify how the research results can best inform federal and provincial policy and programs related to immigration and diversity while also informing/expanding the broader academic discourse. Further, this forum will define a range of KT activities to target the above.

Two trainees will be involved in this work; one Masters student and one Post-Doctoral Fellow. These trainees will be involved in all aspects of the research and be well versed in community-university partnerships. The monitoring of QoL for immigrants has clear policy relevance. Working in conjunction with community organizations, both residents (e.g. through local and civic organizations) and policy makers need to be informed of the results of the research in order to devise appropriate strategies to improve QoL in their communities. Ultimately, the goal is to contribute to pan-Canadian research and practice addressing immigrants' successful integration and adaptation.