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Organizations in a Canadian City:
An Exploratory Study**

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IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE SERVING ORGANIZATIONS IN A CANADIAN CITY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Government-initiated immigrant and refugee-related programs seem to have encountered problems that are, at least in part, due to a lack of research on the critical functions of immigrant and refugee serving non-governmental organizations in Canadian cities. Ethnic organizations not only provide culturally sensitive services but also, along with the mainstream non-governmental organizations, play key roles in facilitating the integration of immigrants. This study, based on a sample of 41 ethnic and mainstream non-governmental organizations, and government organizations, serving immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg, Manitoba, attempts to delineate the features, roles, issues and concerns of these organizations. After presenting relevant theoretical frameworks and the research methodology, this paper provides a descriptive analysis of these organizations involved in providing services to immigrants and refugees. Furthermore, this study looks at some policy implications and emphasizes the need to include ethnic and mainstream non-governmental organizations as partners in the immigration policy review process.

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Introduction

Community-based ethnic organizations not only provide culturally sensitive services and support systems that mainstream organizations seldom provide, but also play a key role in facilitating integration of immigrants (Weinfield 1997c). During the past three decades, Canada's 'cultural mosaic' has been enriched by a steady flow of immigrants from non-European countries, bringing with them their distinct cultural heritages. The federal government's policy of multi-culturalism¹ has further reinforced the process of immigrant integration without discarding the immigrant culture. Despite the policy of multi-culturalism which is intended to preserve and nourish cultural diversity, the government-initiated immigrant and refugee-related programs seem to have encountered problems in meeting the needs of immigrants because of the lack of sufficient research about immigrant cultures and the ethnic organizations involved in providing services to new immigrants. Among the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), ethnic voluntary (non-profit or charitable) organizations form a distinct category. The origin, structure, contributions, and dynamics of these ethnic organizations have not been adequately researched (Redecki 1979, Weinfield 1997c). This exploratory study of organizations (both ethnic and mainstream, as well as government) in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is aimed at developing an understanding of the nature and characteristics, goals and functions, and problems and prospects of the organizational complex involved in providing settlement services² to new and not so new immigrants.

The primary purpose of this study is to delineate the features, roles, issues and concerns of the major representative ethnic, and mainstream non-governmental organizations involved in the delivery of services to immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg. In this paper, the discussion on the role of the federal and provincial government departments of immigration refers to policies intended to attract more immigrants to Manitoba.

This paper presents relevant theoretical frameworks followed by the research methodology and sample used in this study. We shall provide a descriptive analysis of the profiles, goals, roles, and issues, and concerns of the ethnic organizations, and mainstream non-governmental organizations involved in providing services to the immigrants and refugees. The role of ethnic organizations will be discussed within the context of the federal government policy of multiculturalism. The concluding section evaluates the role of ethnic organizations serving immigrants and refugees, and argues in favour of a public policy aimed at providing services to immigrants

and refugees through ethnic and mainstream non-governmental organizations.

Theoretical Frameworks

The following review outlines the theoretical frameworks relevant to the role of immigrant and refugee serving ethnic organizations. There is a dearth of theoretical models related to the literature on immigrant ethnic organizations. The typologies of ethnic organizations, however, refer to such categories as: socio-cultural, religious, economic, recreational, informational, special interest, advocacy and so forth.

The classical theory of assimilation (Park 1930; Gordon 1964) and the upward mobility of immigrants argues that ethnic organizations retard the rates of assimilation by helping to preserve the ethnic community as a distinct entity and also by instilling, among their members, pride in their culture and heritage. Porter (1965, 1979) argued that immigrant ethnic culture is a barrier to upward social mobility in Canada. Isajiw *et al.* (1993) have contended that maintenance of ethnic identity need not be a drawback but it could be an asset for social mobility.

Breton (1964) examines the extent to which "institutional completeness", as represented by ethnic organizations has the capacity to influence the immigrants' integration into their new society. The direction of the immigrants' integration is influenced by "forces of attraction" exercised by the communities of orientation: one's own, that of the host society, and/or those of other ethnic communities. Breton demonstrates that the presence of organizations within the ethnic community sets out forces that have the effect of keeping the social relations of immigrants within its boundaries.

A major debate in international migration research revolves around the question of whether immigrants receive benefits by virtue of their attachment to ethnic communities and ethnic organizations (Majka and Muttan 2002). A number of studies suggest that the ethnic community actually hinders adaptation because the resources of the mainstream institutions are less accessible to minority group immigrants. However, critics of these studies emphasize the positive effects of ethnic communities and organizations on their immigrant populations.

The ethnic solidarity school (Breton 1964; Light and Gold 2000; Portes and Stepick 1993) argues that ethnic communities and ethnic organizations contain resources that have a significant influence on immigrant adaptation. This school contends

that institutionally complete ethnic communities and organizations help to facilitate immigrants in their social and economic adaptation. However, critics who question the ethnic solidarity school's findings contend that ethnic communities and ethnic enclaves either disadvantage all or some of these ethnic group members, have little effect on most of their members' lives, or at best provide mixed blessings (Desberats 1986; Sanders and Nee 1987; Zhou and Logan 1989; Logan, Alba and McNutly 1994, Johnson 1988).

Ethnic associations create social capital (Coleman 1988; Bourdieu 1986; Portes 1998), and help immigrants to adapt and succeed, and therefore reduce the need for government social welfare support. The Spanish government's immigration policy provides a good example of a policy that encourages the development of non-governmental organizations in an effort to incorporate non-European immigrants into civil society. These voluntary associations help immigrants to develop the social capital needed to help themselves. Immigrant associations have received state funding and have also been allowed formal participation in Spanish immigration policy deliberations (Huntoon 2001). Social capital in the form of ethnic community networks, friendship and family ties, is considered to be a key factor in the immigrant adaptation process.

A study (Marger 2001) of business class immigrants to Canada found that the quality of life, rather than the lure of financial success, served as their major incentive to immigrate to Canada. Furthermore, Canada's public policy of multiculturalism seems to provide immigrants the opportunity to become Canadian citizens as well as to retain their ethnicity. This is not to suggest that where multiculturalism is not a public policy, ethnicity is not retained. In fact, the United States, where multiculturalism is not a public policy, provides a good example of the existence of vibrant ethnic communities. Thus, ethnic identity retention need not necessarily be the result of the policy of multiculturalism or Canadian tolerance for that matter. However, the Canadian federal government policy of multiculturalism tends to foster ethnic diversity through funding various ethnocultural projects of a variety of immigrant ethnic communities.

It is argued (Rocker et al 1998) that to effectively build (Warner 2001) social capital, different levels of government must share autonomy with citizens, and shifting their emphasis from that of controller, regulator and provider to a new role as catalyst, convener and facilitator. In an effort to improve service delivery to immigrants in areas where social capital infrastructure is weak, the government can help build it by decentralizing programs to the neighbourhood level. Government

programs could be most effective in promoting community level social capital when they view immigrants as participants, rather than clients, and develop a facilitative, participatory structure. Government institutions are an important resource in terms of funding, power and expertise. It is observed (Kretzman and McKnight 1993; Crocker et al 1998; Potapchuk et al 1997, 1998) that hierarchically-structured programs are less likely to build community social capital than are decentralized programs which build on community assets through horizontal partnerships with community members. Ethnic community organizations and mainstream NGOs could play key roles in facilitating these new collaborative community-government partnerships. The issue of the need for social capital building and the problems regarding resistance to such a transformation in governmental institutions at the local, provincial and federal levels, require further research. Also, the foregoing theoretical and substantive issues, though important, are beyond the scope of this study.

Immigrant integration is a two-way process of accommodation between newcomers and Canadians. The federal government policy of multiculturalism encourages immigrants and refugees to adapt to Canadian society without requiring them to abandon their cultures; while encouraging Canadians and Canadian institutions to respect the cultural diversity that immigrants bring to Canada. Integration of immigrants involves shared citizenship values, accommodation and promotion of cultural diversity, and participation of newcomers in inclusive socioeconomic institutions and political processes.

Government-sponsored settlement programs assist newcomers with orientation, reception, adaptation services, language training, labor market entry, mentoring programs and so forth. In 2001-02, the federal government allocated approximately \$333 million to settlement programming for newcomers (Frith 2003). Furthermore, the federal government intends to spend \$400 million over the next couple of years to help immigrants and refugees to get settled in Canada. The settlement services are a key component of Canada's integration policies and programs that help newcomers to become active, participating members contributing to the Canadian economy and society. However, the settlement services provided by the federal and provincial governments are effective only when they are combined with the services provided by immigrant ethnic organizations.

Research Methods and Sample

This study portrays the development, goals, functions and problems of the ethnic community organizations, mainstream non-governmental organizations and provincial and federal government departments of immigration that are active in delivering services to immigrants in Winnipeg. Our primary focus is on those ethnic immigrant communities originating from South Asia, the Philippines, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. Immigrants from these parts of the world have been arriving in Winnipeg in increasing numbers since 1970 (ie. during the past 35 years).

This primarily qualitative study, which forms a part of a larger project on immigrant families, is based on face-to-face interviews with spokespersons (usually presidents or executive directors) of organizations, and was conducted during the 2000-2002 period. Our sample includes a total of forty-one organizations: twenty-nine ethnic organizations, ten Canadian mainstream non-governmental organizations, and two government organizations. We have also gleaned their annual reports, informational brochures, constitutions/by laws, magazines, special event publications, newsletters and so forth. We believe that our sample of ethnic organizations is quite representative of immigrant (most especially South Asian, Filipino, Middle Eastern, and Eastern European) ethnic organizations in metropolitan Winnipeg. However, since this study is not based on a random sample, the findings are limited to the ethnic and mainstream organizations that constitute our study sample.

Table 1: Research Sample

| Ethnic Origin | Ethnic Orgs. | GOs | NGOs | Total |
|----------------|--------------|-----|------|-------|
| | 29 | 2 | 10 | 41 |
| South Asian | 14 | | | |
| Filipino | 5 | | | |
| Middle Eastern | 2 | | | |
| Eastern Europe | 8 | | | |

We consider community-based non-governmental ethnic organizations (NGOs) as those bodies possessing a minimal organizational structure (i.e. a set of rules, a board of directors, including executive officers, voluntary or paid staff and members), which meet at least once annually, and which are identifiable as an ethnic organization by virtue of the aims and activities that are associated with the religious, cultural traditions and practices unique to a group of immigrants. Our sample also includes Canadian mainstream non-governmental and government organizations that are involved in delivering settlement services to immigrants and refugees. Ethnic business and commercial establishments such as ethnic stores and restaurants, travel and real estate agencies, and so forth also provide culturally sensitive services, such as employment, cultural products and ethnic foods to immigrants as well. However, we did not include these ethnic enterprises in our sample because of time and financial constraints.

Immigrants who are often of an ethno-cultural minority face barriers in becoming members of the voluntary organizations of mainstream Canadian society. As a result, they tend to either establish their own organizations or join existing ones that cater to their specific needs and interests. Ethnic organizations seldom limit their activities to a specific goal or function. On the contrary, they provide their members with a variety of services and opportunities reflecting a combination of social, spiritual, and material interests. The evolution of these ethnic voluntary organizations is based upon a common national origin, religion, language and/or regional culture.

Immigrants who join ethnic organizations demonstrate a sense of ethnic identity, and their participation, through membership, further reinforces this identity. Historically, immigrant reconstruction of social institutions and organizations in a new country has been a natural process of the evolution of resettlement. A large majority of immigrants, especially from the non-European countries, who have migrated to Canada during the past three decades, have established and maintained their ethnic organizations not only to meet their socio-religious and cultural needs, but also to escape or alleviate the isolation, alienation, loneliness, insecurity and bewilderment that they would otherwise experience.

Furthermore, ethnic organizations are characterized by dynamic structures and goals reflecting influences from both their ancestral land and the new Canadian environment. After arriving in Canada immigrants form new associations and institutions to replace the old ones that exist in their home country. However, the

institutions that immigrants build in Canada are hardly replicas of what exist in their homeland. Instead, they are responses to their new conditions based on the immigrants' need to forge a new identity drawing from the influences of both their countries of origin and Canadian society, for themselves and for their children. In their struggle to preserve their religion, family values, and culture, it is felt necessary to organize and act as a community and hold on to the symbols of their ethnic identity (Rangaswamy 2000).

Profiles of Ethnic Organizations

In this section, we shall focus upon the twenty-nine ethnic organizations from South Asia, the Philippines, the Middle East and Eastern Europe from the standpoint of their organizational goals, structure, activities and service delivery, and we will discuss their problems, concerns and prospects. A large majority of these organizations emphasize both religious and secular or cultural goals. Their primary objective is to preserve, foster and transmit their religion, family values and culture to the next generation. Of these twenty-nine organizations, eleven were predominantly religious-spiritual in nature, seventeen were cultural organizations, one was an ethnic professional organization. Of the total sample of forty-one organizations ten organizations were mainstream NGOs, and two were government organizations involved in providing services to immigrants. These mainstream NGOs, and government organizations will be discussed in the next section. However, an overview of the primary and secondary goals, organizational structure, revenues and expenditures of the total 41 immigrant and refugee serving organizations are also included in this section.

Table 2: Goals of Organizations

(This table contains the primary and secondary goals of the total sample of 41 organizations.)

| Organizations | Religious/Spiritual | Cultural | Professional | Settlement Services |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------|--------------|----------------------|
| Primary Goals | 11 | 17 | 1 | 10+2=12 |
| Secondary Goals | Cultural/Settlement | Settlement | Settlement | Cultural Integration |

Of all the ways in which ethnic identity is maintained with the home culture, religion stands out as one of the most important (Rangaswamy 2000). These religious institutions of immigrants cater to a wide variety of needs and facilitate the identity building process. Community life revolves around religion. Temples, Gurudwaras, churches and mosques are not just places of worship or places to conduct religious services. They are centres where much social interaction and socializing take place. Many religious institutions also provide ethnic language classes and religious education as well as organize youth camps, and sponsor cultural activities such as music, dance and drama. Festivals, birthdays, weddings and anniversaries are celebrated, and memorial services are conducted. These religious institutions give immigrants the opportunity to participate actively in their cultural heritage, and they have evolved as multipurpose community centres in response to the needs of their community. Their activities instil a sense of cultural identity and ethnic pride in their children.

The organizational life of first generation immigrants owes much to the view of the social world of the immigrants' country of origin. The relationship between organizations and families (Chekki 2003) is a symbiotic one. The parent-child bond helps keep families and organizations linked within an ethnic community. The first generation ethnic organizations see themselves to be upholding and preserving their culture and gaining a voice for their community in the Canadian mainstream culture, all for the sake of their children (Bacon 1996).

The ethnic cultural organizations are primarily concerned with the preservation and promotion of both their ancestral language and performing arts. These organizations are active in educating and training the children of immigrants, who are born and/or raised in Canada, in music, dance, theatre, crafts, cuisine, and so forth. Their active involvement in the internationally known ethnic festival, "Folklorama," and other events enriches the cultural mosaic of the city.

The organizational structure, and its development and vitality, are based on the numerical growth of the ethnic community, its range of interest and activities, the increase in human and financial resources, and the commitment and contribution of volunteers and leaders. An overwhelming majority of these organizations are run by volunteer members and leaders. The paid staff, if any, is part time. The board of directors of an organization, depending upon its numerical strength and resources, is composed of a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, a volunteer executive

director, and may also consist of a minimum of seven to a maximum of twenty-five members-at-large. The normal size of the board, however, is around ten or twelve members. The formalization of these organizations tends to correlate with the growth and complexity of their community as a whole. The majority of organizations hold monthly board meetings and an annual general meeting which is open to all members.

The membership of these organizations ranges from a minimum of fifty to a maximum of one thousand or more, and is primarily composed of those who belong to the organization by virtue of a common culture, religion or national origin, although most ethnic organizations are open to other interested persons as well. The membership fee, in most cases, is modest or nominal and most organizations also depend upon donations from members. The funding sources of these organizations, besides membership fees and donations, include government and the private sector, as well as charitable foundations. There are also fund-raising events to meet specific needs such as the construction of a community centre or temple, help victims of natural disasters, and so forth. The annual revenue and expenditures of most ethnic religious organizations range from a minimum of \$60,000 to a maximum of \$500,000 +. The ethnic cultural organizations have a modest budget of less than \$10,000.

Table 3: Revenues and Expenditures

(This table contains the revenues and expenditures of the total sample of 41 organizations.)

| In Dollars | Orgs |
|----------------|------|
| <10,000 | 9 |
| <50,000 | 5 |
| <100,000 | 5 |
| <500,000 | 10 |
| 500,000+ | 3 |
| Did not reveal | 9 |
| Total | 41 |

Of the forty-one organizations in our total sample, nine were established prior to 1960, and a few, such as the Czechoslovakian and Ukrainian organizations, came into existence during the second decade of the twentieth century. Of the remaining thirty-two organizations, six were established during the 1960-70 period, nine during the 1971-1980 period, ten during the 1981-1990 period, and seven after 1991. The majority of these organizations (25) were established since 1971. In terms of building space, twenty of these organizations own their buildings, eleven rent space in buildings, and ten do not rent or have any building of their own. Most of these ethnic organizations have linkages with the International Centre, the Folk Arts Council (Folklorama), and various other ethnic and mainstream non-governmental organizations that provide a variety of services to recent immigrants including counselling and information regarding job search, networking, temporary housing, and matters related to immigration and citizenship. The ethnic religious organizations are engaged in weekly prayers and worship and also provide instruction about their religion, ancestral language, religious music and so forth. They also organize picnics, sports events, youth camps and other recreational activities. Both the religious and cultural organizations actively participate in "Folklorama" festival with their distinctive dance, music, drama, cuisine, fashions, cultural exhibits and so forth. Furthermore, they interact with other ethnic communities in terms of interfaith and inter-ethnic dialogue, and contribute their time and talent to the Red River Parade, Diversity Day, Food Banks, the United Way fund-raising campaign and similar city-wide collective efforts.

Twenty of these ethnic organizations have libraries containing books, magazines, newspapers and videos related to religious and cultural subjects of interest. These institutions reinforce the multicultural environment of Winnipeg. In terms of achieving organizational goals, the spokespersons of ethnic organizations reported "success" measured in terms of the growth of membership; increased participation of members; the provision of services such as ethnic language classes; aid to new immigrants; upgrading buildings or planning new buildings/community centres; and a contribution to multiculturalism through ethnic dance, music, and other cultural activities.

A majority of spokespersons of these organizations, indicated that they still lack the adequate financial resources to either meet their operating costs, embark upon new building projects, or expand their services to meet the needs of their growing community. The lack of resources also prevents them from establishing a day school

or providing transportation to seniors. The ethnic organizations, as reported by their spokespersons, perceive a strong need for these services, and intend to expand their services to their seniors and children if additional funds are available from public or private sector sources. Some of these ethnic organizations have been experiencing a lack of interest and involvement of youth in their religious and cultural activities. For instance, some well-established ethnic organizations representing eastern European countries such as the Ukrainian community are encountering the problem of a stable or aging membership as well as a lack of interest among their younger generation. The organizations representing the South Asian, Middle Eastern and Filipino communities have been facing other challenges, such as meeting the needs of a variety of immigrants from different cultural regions of their homelands.

One of the foremost concerns of almost all of these ethnic organizations refers to the exorbitant immigration application and landing fees. The spokespersons of these organizations are unanimous in suggesting that these fees need to be reduced, since it is a huge sum that many immigrants cannot afford. Furthermore, they would like to see the elimination of barriers to immigration and believe that family reunion should be a priority in so far as immigration policy is concerned. They also think that the process of sponsoring family members and adopting children should be made less cumbersome and complex.

The spokespersons of these ethnic organizations also strongly emphasize the need to recognize foreign academic qualifications and experience, so that the skills of their professionals are not wasted doing unrelated work in Canada. For instance, some foreign qualified professionals are working as cabdrivers and telemarketers. Moreover, they believe that the policy of employment equity should be implemented in providing jobs to visible minority immigrants, and advocate that additional ESL (English as Second Language) classes, and job search/counselling are also needed. As well, many of these organizations argue in favor of the expansion of the relatively new and successful Manitoba Government Nominee Program. In addition, it is strongly felt that immigrant settlement must be done through ethnic organizations, and that governments should provide more funding to these organizations. They also believe that culturally sensitive services delivered by ethnic organizations are far more effective in immigrant adjustment and, if delivered by them, would be less expensive.

The future plans of these ethnic organizations, as reported by their spokespersons,

focus upon the improvement and expansion of their services to immigrants and all their community members. Educational and cultural activities related to ethnic language classes to children and youth, and ESL classes to seniors, and the provision of training in music and dance directed at their second generation, are of primary concern. The leaders of these organizations also emphasize the need to instil their religious and cultural values among their children and youth and expect the increased participation of youth in socio-religious community activities. Furthermore, some organizations are engaged in raising funds in order to own a building, or to renovate or expand existing buildings, and two major ethnic communities in Winnipeg (the Filipino and the Hindu) have raised millions of dollars and have almost completed the construction of new buildings to serve as community centres. Although many of these organizations may find it difficult to meet the needs of their ethnic communities, they also try to contribute (both in cash and/or kind), to various charitable organizations such as the United Way, Winnipeg Harvest, Agape Table, the Salvation Army, churches and so forth.

The Mainstream NGOs

The foregoing description and analysis broadly relates to the patterns and trends of ethnic organizations. However, the organizational structure of the mainstream NGOs is similar to that of ethnic organizations. Unlike ethnic organizations, the mainstream NGOs provide services to all immigrants and refugees irrespective of their ethnic background. Besides volunteers, there are also professional paid employees who form an integral part of the mainstream NGOs. Most of these NGOs rely upon funding from the United Way, the Winnipeg Foundation, the federal and provincial governments, and donations from the public. Among the mainstream Canadian non-governmental organizations (10) involved in the delivery of services to immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg, the International Centre, composed of the citizenship council of Manitoba, and the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council stand out as the forerunner in terms of immigrant and refugee resettlement services in Winnipeg. The International Centre has a distinct record of achievement with regard to ethnic community, government, and NGO cooperation in dealing with immigration policy and service issues. Almost all ethnic organizations in our study sample have close links with the International Centre.

It must be emphasized that the International Centre is a pre-eminent "one-

stop-shop" location that excels in providing client-based services to immigrants and refugees in the process of their integration and resettlement in Manitoba. The staff of the International Centre help immigrants and refugees with regard to family reunification; ESL (English as a second language) classes; job search; job training/counselling and providing temporary housing; counselling those traumatized by war, conflict, family violence, and/or loss of family members; and cross-cultural training. For its exemplary work regarding immigrants and refugees, the International Centre has received accolades from the United Nations.

Besides the International Centre, most of these NGOs have major programs directed at immigrant and refugee integration. The Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council, the Immigrant Women's Association, Success Skills Centre, Mt. Carmel Clinic (Cross-Cultural Program), the Salvation Army, Sexuality Education Resource Centre, and Employment Projects of Winnipeg have made special efforts to assist immigrants and refugees in a variety of ways. However, most of these organizations report a shortage of resources and lack of adequate staff in meeting the growing needs of immigrants and refugees, and government cut-backs in funding have adversely affected service delivery for some of these NGOs. Sponsoring refugee and refugee resettlement is a primary concern to some religious (church) organizations such as the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council and the Salvation Army. However, their present staff is stressed out because of heavy workload. Almost all these NGOs, as reported by their spokespersons, would like to increase or improve their services to immigrants and refugees, and plan to secure more long-term government funding, hire additional staff in order to provide these needed services. Some of these organizations are also thinking of entering into cost-sharing plans with the private sector.

Government Organizations

Our sample includes two government organizations: the provincial government department known as Manitoba Labour and Immigration, and the federal government department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (Settlement Unit). These government organizations have a primary responsibility of executing the immigration policy and process applications of potential immigrants. They also provide information to recent immigrants and refugees about the available settlement services.

Manitoba was the first province in Canada to implement a provincial nominee program. The Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP) is an immigration program established (1996) under the Canada-Manitoba Immigration Agreement which recognizes that the province of Manitoba has specific immigration priorities and economic, cultural and social needs. The MPNP seeks skilled workers and business people with a strong likelihood of becoming successfully established in Manitoba. Through this program, the provincial government nominates those potential immigrants who are best suited to contribute to the province's economy, and who intend to live and work in Manitoba as permanent residents.

For both economic and demographic reasons, the government of Manitoba also tries to attract and retain skilled immigrants through the co-operation of ethnic communities and ethno-cultural organizations. It is believed that immigrants will stay in Manitoba because of the presence of a family and an ethnocultural community willing to provide employment or housing support, and other individuals who share a common heritage. According to the 2001 Census, for instance, the metropolitan area of Winnipeg has the highest proportion of Filipino residents among all metropolitan areas in Canada (Duncan 2004). The Filipinos are growing in Winnipeg because, among other factors, new arrivals from the Philippines immediately feel they are a part of their ethnic community that is already relatively well-established. In recent years, the Argentine, the Jewish, Francophone, Chinese, and German organizations have made efforts to attract immigrants to this province through the provincial nominee program.

The provincial government nominee program appears to be successful at matching immigrants to available jobs. It brings together business, labour, professional organizations, and ethnic as well as mainstream community-based organizations to attract and retain more immigrants. In 1999, 3,702 immigrants came to Manitoba of whom 500 were provincial government nominees. This was an increase of 23% from the previous year. In 2004, 7,427 came to Manitoba of whom 55% were provincial government nominees. The top city of destination for immigrants was the metropolitan area of Winnipeg.

The Canadian mainstream NGOs, the federal and provincial government departments, and ethnic organizations seem to have a consensus that the number of immigrants to Manitoba should be increased from the present level of about two percent of the total immigrants to Canada. This rate of immigration to Manitoba is one of the

lowest in Canada. According to the census of 2001, the City of Winnipeg attracted just 1.4 per cent of all immigrants who arrived to Canada between 1991 and 2001 (Duncan 2004). The NGOs advocate that we should do a better job of reuniting the families of immigrants and refugees, and that the time it takes to process applications should be reduced. The NGOs also strongly feel that they should have greater input into the formation and revision of immigration policy. According to the spokespersons of some of these NGOs, a distinct refugee settlement policy is also necessary. Moreover, they indicate that there should be a consistency in the immigration and refugee policies.

Some NGOs think that the different levels of government should encourage competition among NGOs for immigrant settlement services, and stress the need to periodically evaluate those organizations involved in the delivery of services to immigrants. Above all, the NGOs express concerns about, and emphasize the necessity of both federal and provincial governments to establish a mechanism that recognizes foreign academic/professional credentials. The NGOs, as well as government departments dealing with immigration, are unanimous in voicing their need for more financial support.

A study (Budhu 2001) of visible minority communities in Canada observed that their organizational and human resource capacities are under-resourced and under-developed. Changes in the federal government funding policy resulting in reduced funding to ethnic organizations have had a negative impact on these organizations because of the particular needs of visible minority communities especially with respect to systemic racism in Canadian society. It was noted that visible minority ethnic organizations have either no or limited opportunities to strengthen their alliances and maximize their collective impact on national immigration policies. Moreover, most of these ethnic organizations indicated that policy development on issues critical to their community takes place without their participation and therefore without the representation of visible minority perspectives. This may be also true of non-visible minority ethnic organizations as well.

Ethnic Organizations and Multiculturalism

Our study of ethnic organizations suggests the need for more government support and program funding. This additional aid would help these organizations to build and sustain their necessary organizational and human resource capacities and

social capital. Furthermore, the spokespersons of these organizations emphasize the need for their greater involvement in the review of both immigration policy and settlement programs. Although there has been much consultation and many recommendations, they have been followed by very little action, thus leading to a sense of frustration on the part of the ethnic organizations.

Immigrant adaptation and integration into Canadian society is a gradual and complex process. In order to minimize the alienation and isolation they experience from the Canadian mainstream culture, and also to cushion the pain of separation from their extended families, friends, and community in their countries of origin, immigrant communities have established various cultural associations and religious institutions, and have also developed their own newspapers, magazines, and/or radio and television programs. In other words, they have attempted to recreate the community life they left behind. Although the majority of immigrants eventually become Canadian citizens, this acquisition of new citizenship does not lead automatically to their assimilation. An overwhelming majority of immigrants from South Asia, the Philippines, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe who, even after becoming Canadian citizens, still maintain their ethnic identity and also participate actively in their community organizations, be they sociocultural or spiritual in nature. The organizational network provides the main focus of orientation and identity for these immigrants and their families, and is a vital instrument for transmitting their cultural heritage to their younger generation.

What is the future of these ethnic organizations? The spokespersons of these ethnic organizations expect and hope that the Canadian-born generations will join and participate in those organizations established by their parents because of their shared identities, values, and needs. Organizational survival and continuity demands replacements for aging members. Unless there is new membership, gained either through an infusion of new immigrants or from the Canadian-born children of first generation immigrants, and beyond, the future vitality of these ethnic organizations remains uncertain. The younger generations tend to lose at least some distinct aspects of their cultural heritage, and the loss of their ethnic language(s); and the growing rates of intermarriage tend to reduce the membership within ethnic organizations. The younger generations, socialized through their schools, peer groups, and the mass media, are less likely to share the values and customs of their parents. The needs of the younger generation are different from those of their parents

and are not usually satisfied through membership in ethnic organizations alone.

However, the federal government policy of multiculturalism seems to encourage, among the younger generations, a positive self-image, awareness, ethnic identity (albeit symbolic in nature), and pride in their cultural heritage. Simultaneously, there appears to be a renewal of interest in their cultural background and heritage on the part of youth born of immigrant parents. One indicator is that the second and third generation cultural organizations devoted to the performing arts - for example, those composed of immigrants from India (Manohar), the Philippines, and the Ukraine, just to name a few - are quite active in Winnipeg. Another indicator of the strength of ethnic identity is the prevalence of ethnic organizations composed of international and first and second generation immigrant students on two university campuses in Winnipeg.

Summary and Policy Implications

This exploratory study, based on interviews of spokespersons of immigrant and refugee serving organizations suggests, that the ethnic and mainstream Canadian non-governmental organizations play a key role in providing services to immigrants and refugees. This study also reveals some distinct patterns and trends in their organizational structure, function, and dynamics. The spokespersons of these ethnic organizations continue to emphasize the importance of preserving and transmitting their religion, language and culture to the next generation by providing religious and cultural programs, information, counselling and aid to recent immigrants and their children in their process of adjustment to a new environment in Winnipeg. These ethnic organizations struggle a great deal to preserve and maintain their distinct culture not only among the first generation immigrants, but also among those second generation children born and/or raised in Canada. Moreover, they seem to have created significant amounts of social capital as they provide an opportunity for sociability and companionship, in order to meet the needs and interests of their members, while facilitating the process of immigrant integration and adaptation to the new Canadian urban milieu.

For recent immigrants, these ethnic organizations help to alleviate the shock of a strange new environment, reduce the stress and strain of immigrant adjustment and play an important role in reinforcing the immigrants' perception of their ethnic identity. In fact, the objectives and activities of these ethnic organizations

have a focus upon the adaptation of recent immigrants to the new Canadian culture and society without losing their ethnic identity. In addition, they represent their communities' distinct ethnic cultures, while also emphasizing their unique contribution to the Canadian multi-cultural mosaic. The active ethnic organizational life as manifested by members' participation in religious and cultural activities and by their volunteer contribution of money and time, children's participation in heritage language classes and cultural programs and so forth indicates that persisting ethnocultural bonds continue to motivate immigrants and their children, as well as satisfy specific needs and interests which would not be met otherwise.

The policy implications of this study need to be articulated. Most of the immigrant ethnic organizations established during the past thirty years have been suffering from a lack of adequate financial resources and cannot provide all the services needed by recent immigrants and refugees. Leaders of these ethnic organizations make representations to various levels of government and act as pressure groups. They also make efforts to influence city councillors, political parties, members of the provincial legislative assembly, and the members of the Canadian Parliament in order to gain access to needed resources. However, they continue to feel left out of the policy-making process. It is obvious that there is a need to include ethnic organizations as partners in the policy review process as it affects immigrant family and community life.

The issues of the lack of recognition of foreign credentials and experience, the unemployment and underemployment of many immigrants, the restrictive immigration policy, and the exorbitant application and landing fees are of primary concern to immigrant families and ethnic organizations. These issues demand attention at both the federal and provincial government levels.

The NGOs, including ethnic organizations in our study, are voluntary, non-profit charitable associations involved in service delivery to immigrants and refugees. They are manifest in a number of spheres and in a wide spectrum of programs aimed at empowering minority group immigrants in Winnipeg. There is a high degree of diversity and heterogeneity in their activities, and the roles they perform in the adjustment of immigrants are numerous. They not only provide much needed social capital and culturally sensitive services to immigrants, but also help them to develop social networks and reinforce their ethnic identity. Ethnic organizations also serve as sources of information, as well as educators, catalysts and advocates.

The advantages of providing services to immigrants through NGOs, including ethnic organizations, are many. In comparison to large-scale complex organizations, NGOs such as ethnic organizations, because of their small size, are in a relatively better position to personalize the provision of services they offer to immigrants. Their principal advantage lies in their social proximity to their people and their sensitivity to the needs of their community. In addition, flexibility and their small size help NGOs find appropriate solutions to the issues they handle. Micro-level operations provide greater opportunities for people's participation and for tailoring their services to the requirements of immigrants. NGOs are less expensive, informal, and personal. The humane and grassroots nature of NGOs enhances their quality of service in contrast to large-scale organizations, which are typified as impersonal, expensive, inefficient, and hampered by a bureaucratic delay in decision-making. In the case of NGOs, people are often involved in the process of policy-making and the implementation of programs, and they often use their resources economically and appropriately. It is in this context that we argue in favour of providing services to immigrants and refugees through ethnic organizations and mainstream NGOs, or there should at least be a greater degree of cooperation and partnership between the various levels of government and the NGOs. This partnership could bring to the immigrant community the combined advantages of both the government and the voluntary sectors.

This exploratory qualitative study, based on a non-random sample, has obvious limitations. The findings of this study are restricted to our sample. The reader is cautioned not to generalize or to stretch the findings of this study to other ethnic and mainstream non-governmental organizations serving immigrants and refugees.

To what extent do ethnic organizations function to preserve and maintain aspects of the cultural identity and distinctiveness of immigrants and refugees? Do these ethnic organizations facilitate or hinder immigrants' integration within and adaptation to the Canadian urban milieu? What is the extent of the social capital created by ethnic organizations and their impact on immigrant adjustment? These questions suggest major avenues for further research.

NOTES

1. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988) recognizes the diversity of Canadians in regards to race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion, as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social and political life of Canada. Multiculturalism policy encourages the full participation of all Canadians in every aspect of the life of the Canadian society. This policy enables the integration of minority immigrant Canadians while encouraging Canadian institutions to remove discriminatory barriers.

2. Settlement services are provided by mainstream non-governmental (voluntary, non-profit or charitable) organizations and ethnic organizations, as well as by government departments that deal with immigration. A variety of settlement services are provided to newcomers, such as: temporary accommodation; information, referral and support to help newcomers access various services in the community; information about the Canadian culture, customs and law, health care, educational system, transportation, winter clothing, etc.; employment and career counselling, and assistance with job search and placement; education and training, ESL (English as a Second Language) and transcultural training classes, and child care; marital and family counselling and conflict resolution; non-monetary aid and assistance to immigrants and refugees; translation services; cultural and recreational programs; and so forth.

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