

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

by

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the real experiences of young Bhutanese-Nepalese refugees who were admitted to Canada as Government Assisted Refugees (GAR). Five themes emerged during the research which helped me understand their struggle in schools :1) Language Barrier Leading to Frustration and Isolation; 2) Importance of ESL Classes; 3) Changing Dynamics Between the Teacher and Students; 4)The Importance of Sports for the Newcomers and 5)Hope and Resilience Among the Youths. The recommendations listed in the last chapter are in the words of the participants. They help us understand the current needs of the former young refugees across Canada and possibly frame policies which will help them have a sense of belonging in the school community and larger society.

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DEDICATION

To my family who never stopped believing in me.

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List of Symbols, Nomenclature or Abbreviations

ESL-English as Second Language

EAL –English as Additional Language

UNHCR- United Nations High Commission for Refugees

ELA- English Language Arts

MCAF- Multicultural Association of Fredericton

GAR- Government Assisted Refugees

PSR- Privately Sponsored Refugees

CIC- Citizenship Immigration Canada

IRCC-Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

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CHAPTER ONE-INTRODUCTION

Background

Imagine people who are unsure of their nationality, their safety, and their future. These are people whose hopes, happiness and aspirations are crushed due to their sufferings from war, torture, separation from friends and family, jobs, and most important of all, the freedom to live. These are people who are compelled to abandon their homes, country, and families to become refugees.

The incidence of people fleeing their homes in fear of persecution, violence, poverty, and calamities goes back hundreds of years. Similarly, the practice of granting asylum to people fearing persecution in foreign lands is one of the earliest traditions of civilization as the evidences suggest (UNHCR, 2014). The number of people fleeing their homes rose during the eras of World War I and II as thousands of homeless people were crossing borders and waiting to return to their homes after being displaced by war. The United Nations refugee agency, Office of the United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees (UNHCR) was set up in 1950 by the UN General Assembly in order to protect and help the victims of the wars (UNHCR, 2015).

The notion of a refugee has also changed over time in history as the political and bureaucratic structures of the countries in the world have changed since decolonization. While in ancient times, a refugee could be anyone ranging from a royal family member whose kingdom was destroyed by enemy forces to regular citizens expelled by their

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states such as the Jews and the Moors in the fifteenth century. In modern times, anyone fleeing their country for security and life can be a refugee (Sicakkan, 2012). The most modern definition of refugee that has been widely accepted is the definition adopted at the UN Geneva Convention for Refugees in 1951.

The 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as someone who,

owing to a 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 to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Article 1, Section 2, United Nations, Treaty Series, 1954)

The definition highlights the situation of the refugees from all over the world and is a basis of the definition of refugees for countries that have signed the convention.

The convention elevated the status of refugees by providing them with civil and social rights and also by creating an international law that would protect them from the violation of basic human rights (Sicakkan, 2012; Refugees, 2001). It also established the guidelines and framework for UNHCR to operate (Refugees, 2001). The convention was called by the UN after seeing the horrific damage that the two world wars had done to Europe. Millions of people died or had been injured and those who survived fled from their home countries for safety elsewhere. Millions of Jews and others were persecuted by Adolph Hitler in Germany and did not find a proper escape from the brutality. Hence,

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to resolve this human movement crisis, a convention was developed by the UN which until this day is known as the Geneva Convention for Refugees.

Despite the active involvement of the Office of the United Nations Human Rights Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to help and protect the refugees from all over the world, the number of refugees has continued to grow in an alarming rate every year due to the conflict in Middle-East Asia in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and Libya. By the end of 2013, 51.2 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide from persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. Of those people, 16.7 million persons were refugees. By mid-2014, UNHCR found 13 million refugees under their care (UNHCR, 2015). At present the Syrian refugee crisis alone has led to the displacement of over 4.9 million people from Syria to its neighboring countries and Europe (UNHCR, 2015).

The signatory countries of the UN Convention for Refugees 1951, of which Canada is one, help some refugees restart their lives afresh by integrating them within their society. Among the many groups of refugees that Canada accepts, are the Bhutanese-Nepalese refugee community who have been resettled in various parts of Canada as Government Assisted Refugees (GARs).

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Introduction to My Study

My study deals with the integration experience of Bhutanese-Nepalese youth in Fredericton, the capital city of New Brunswick, Canada. For the purpose of my study, it is essential to delve into the Canadian response towards refugees, its policies and programmes, and to understand the concept of integration.

The Canadian Immigration Act (1976) borrows the definition of a convention refugee from the UNHCR Refugee Convention that took place in 1951. The convention defines refugee as:

Refugee means any person who, by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion,

a. is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or

b. not having a country of nationality, is outside the country of his former habitual residence and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to return to that country

(An Act Respecting Immigration to Canada, 1976. Ottawa: SC 25-26 Elizabeth II, Chapter 52)

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By adopting the above definition of a refugee, Canada understands that a potential refugee has to be stateless because they have fled from their country of origin and be unable to go back to their country of origin because of fear of violence, death or persecution.

Canada annually admits one out of every ten resettled refugees in the world through the government-assisted and privately sponsored refugee programs (Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), 2014). The history of Canada accepting refugees dates back to the late 18th century when the Loyalists and Pacifists first landed on Canadian soil and Canada adopted the first Immigration Act in 1869(CIC, 2014). Canada Council for Refugees (CCR), an organization working for refugees in Canada, has included the history of refugees in the country on their. According to CCR, for several decades in the 20th century, Canada officially refused to accept refugees in the fear that they “cannot be deported.” Canada kept up the policy of not accepting refugees during the first and the second World Wars and also refused to sign the UN convention of Refugees in 1951. As the international community and humanitarian groups grew bigger, Canada was compelled to adopt a more open immigration policy and practice a humanitarian response to the thousands of displaced people in Europe and elsewhere. As a result of this, the government signed the UN Convention in 1969 and issued a “Guideline for Determination of Eligibility for Refugee Status” for use by immigration officers in the year 1970. A new Immigration Act was drafted in 1976, which happens to be the first Act in Canada to recognize refugees as a special class of immigrants. The Act also

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helped create a refugee determination system in the country, provided for admission of refugees on humanitarian grounds and enabled the private sponsorship of refugees. The legislation first came into effect in 1978 and under the requirement of the act the Canadian Council for Refugees was formed, formally known as Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees. The Act allowed thousands of refugees from war affected regions such as South East Asia, Uganda, Iran, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sri-Lanka, to resettle in Canada (Canada Council for Refugees, 2014).

According to Government of Canada website, at present, apart from granting refugee status to the people affected by war, violence and oppression within the country through in-asylum programme, Canada also supports the Global Resettlement Programme through UNHCR, Resettlement Assistance Programme (RAP). Through RAP, refugees are selected for resettlement in various signatory countries by the UNHCR. The programs to bring in the refugees are classified as Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) and Private Sponsorship (PSR) in Canada. The Government Assisted Refugee is taken care off by the government and all the necessary cost are borne by the government itself, while the PSR programme lets any individual, organization or religious group sponsor a refugee or refugee family after meeting the criteria. According to CIC, after refugees arrive in Canada through GAR or PSR programme, they are given necessary support and services to establish themselves in the country and adapt themselves within the community. For the GARs, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), with the help of various non-profit and government organizations

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provides them with essential services such as welcoming them at the entry point, providing them with lodging, helping them find permanent housing and providing them financial support for up to a year or two depending on the need of the refugees. IRCC also plays an important role in helping the refugees integrate by providing integration services such as language training, orientation to understand Canadian society, employment search, needs based assessment, child support, transportation assistance and counselling, to name a few (CIC, 2016).

Bhutanese Refugees as GAR

This thesis centers on the Bhutanese-Nepalese community who have had refugee experiences in the past and are now residing in Canada as resettled refugees. The Bhutanese-Nepalese people are also known as the Lhotsampas commonly called and understood as the “People from the South” in Bhutan (IOM, 2008). Lhotsampas were the Nepali speaking people who migrated from Nepal to India and later to Bhutan and resided in the southern border of Bhutan. They were originally recruited by the Government of Bhutan to clear the jungles of Southern Bhutan in the late 1890s. I use the term Bhutanese-Nepalese in my thesis which is also the term used by the community itself here in Fredericton. Lhotshampas prospered in Bhutan and became high-ranking government officials and educators over the years while practising their traditions as Nepalese Bhutanese. According to the 1988 census in Bhutan, they made up 45% of the population of Bhutan (IOM Nepal Report, 2008).

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A Bhutanese nationalization policy known as “One Nation, One People” was adopted as policy during the reign of the new King Jigme Wangchuck in 1989. It became the major cause for the conflict between the Lhotsampas and the government. The policy meant the Nepali speaking people had to give up their culture and adopt a majority one which included speaking Zhonkha and practicing Vajrayana Buddhism. People felt they were compelled to give up their identity which included their traditional Nepali dress, language, festivals etc. Nepali curriculum was banned in schools and those who could not present the land tax receipt from 1958 were labelled as illegal immigrants by the government. Many argue that the land tax receipt was only an excuse for the government to expel actual citizens. As a protest of the government policy, the Lhotsampas formed political parties to resist the policy and demanded the right to practice their culture and tradition. This resulted in violent unrest and strikes in the Southern part of the country. As a response to the unrest, the then Bhutanese government suppressed the parties and forced some 80,000 people out of the country compelling these people to go to Nepal as refugees (Evans, 2000). These refugees settled in Eastern Nepal in eight different camps; the number totaled to over 50,000 in 1992. The number grew to more than 100,000 over the years as the refugees settled in the camps built by UNHCR in the Eastern parts of Nepal. The UNHCR and international community came up with the third party resettlement programme for the refugees in 2007. Canada is part of a group of eight countries including Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the United States and the United Kingdom which are taking steps to address this long-standing situation by resettling some of these refugees.

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In May 2007, the Government of Canada announced that it would resettle up to 5,000 Bhutanese refugees over the next three to five years. Since the initiation of the resettlement process in 2008, close to 6,600 Bhutanese Refugees have settled into more than 21 communities across Canada, including Charlottetown, Fredericton, St. John's, Saint-Jérôme, Quebec City, Laval, Ottawa, Toronto, London, Windsor, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Lethbridge and Vancouver (CIC, 2016).

After living in camps for over fifteen years and having experienced a different kind of life altogether, moving to a new country can be challenging for newcomers. Newcomers face problems such as under or unemployment, language issues, separation from former social networks, loneliness, discrimination, family conflict and cultural incompatibilities (Dachyshyn, 2008). Moreover, refugee families with young children face other challenges such as guilt, failure or grief of their children, separation from or of family members and fear for the lives of relatives left behind. Experiences related to the terrors of war such as death and torture often including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and lack of hope of returning to their country of origin due to war or other devastation (Orozci & Suarez, 2001).

When I moved to Fredericton from Nepal as an international student in 2012, I got an opportunity to interact with some of the young refugees and their parents. They made me feel very welcome in Fredericton at the time when I did not have many acquaintances from the Nepali community. In the year 2013, I got an opportunity to work for a project which looked at how newcomers understood civic engagement in New Brunswick.

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During this project I was able to speak to some of the young people from the Bhutanese-Nepalese community about their engagement experiences. They were very open to sharing their experiences and ideas which inspired me to focus on them and their experience for this research.

It is in this context that I will draw the meaning of the experience of the young Bhutanese-Nepalese who were resettled in Canada as Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) with their parents. I have used the words “newcomers” and “refugees” interchangeably in this thesis. Generally, newcomers are used to describe immigrants and refugees who have been in a foreign country less than 3-5 years (newyouth.ca).

This research will explore various theories and policies related to the process of integration in its review of literature in the next chapter.

Research Objective

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 (1948) states that education is a human right. Every individual should have the free access to at least secondary education regardless of their nationality, culture, race, religion, gender identity for the full development of one’s personality. This also means that the signatory nations of the UN Geneva Convention for the Refugees, 1951 have a legal responsibility of ensuring education to all the refugee children and youth as UNHCR (2000) stated that education is the fundamental aspect of refugee resettlement programme. Similarly, Ager and Strang (2001) identified education as one of the four essential themes that contributes to the

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integration of refugees. Many studies have indicated that education is crucial for restoring social and emotional healing for refugee children and youths (Eisenbruch, 1988; Huyck & Fields, 1981; Sinclair, 2001 as cited in McBrien, 2005). Educators and the school environment are very important in facilitating socialization and contact for the refugee children to make them a better citizen (Ager & Strang, 2008). Similarly, Holdoway and Alba (2003) argue that the successful integration of the newcomers depends a lot on their performance in the education system.

Research Questions

The following will be the guiding research questions for my research.

1. What is the experience of the Bhutanese- Nepalese newcomers in the Canadian education system (schools)? How do they differentiate their schooling experience in the refugee camps in Nepal and schools in Fredericton?
2. What were the difficulties faced in the school in Canada? What did they like and dislike about the school?
3. How do the newcomers subjectively assess their overall integration experience in the school?

CHAPTER TWO- LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews some of the theories related to immigration and how people settle into a new society. Multiculturalism and its evolution is the key focus of this chapter, for this is the policy and philosophy that has guided the Canadian immigration system. The chapter also looks at studies that are related to the field of multiculturalism and immigration.

Introduction

The process of migration is not new to human history. The first humans on Earth dispersed to various parts of the world from Africa, creating a variety of races, civilizations and culture. Current sociological theories of immigration have evolved from the classical theories of assimilation in North America. They were introduced by the Chicago School of Sociology, U.S.A., led by sociologist, Robert Parks (Alba & Nee, 1997 in Lee 2009). Although assimilation was first used as a term in 1677 to signify conformity to a new environment, it was not properly discussed as a theory until Park developed it in 1928 (Sayegh and Lasry, 1993).

Assimilation

Robert Parks was one of the first Sociologists who developed theories on human immigration by looking at immigration trends in the United States in the early 1900s. Parks (1928) asserts that migration is one of the important catalysts in human history to have brought humans together in a fruitful competition, conflict and co-operation. This is

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how different societies have formed with their distinctive features such as culture, language and norms. Parks (1928) uses assimilation and acculturation to explain how new migrants adjust to new societies when they first come in contact with the host society and posits that the process includes competition, conflict, accommodation and finally assimilation. Parks asserts that after assimilation, people who were hostile before gradually come to a formal like-mindedness (p. 623). According to the definition given by Parks and Burgess in the International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (1968),

Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons or groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups and by sharing their experience and history are incorporated with them in a common cultural life. (p. 438).

Parks' assimilation theory is often used with the American melting pot theory which became an American anthem for few decades to attract immigrants from all over the world. The theory basically says that American society would be homogenized when different groups come together and contribute in roughly equal amounts to create a common culture and form a new, unique society.

Building on Parks's work, Gordon (1964, 1978) gave a detailed assimilation model that describes the gradual process of absorption of immigrants and members of ethnic minorities into the dominant culture at the individual and group levels. Gordon was an anthropologist and he used the term acculturation often to describe Park's assimilation theories, often using the terms interchangeably (Gordon, 1964). Gordon classified

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assimilation into seven types and their sub-processes: (1) cultural assimilation and acculturation (change of cultural patterns to those of dominant culture); (2) structural assimilation (large scale entrance into institutions of dominant culture); (3) marital assimilation or amalgamation (large scale intermarriage); (4) identificational assimilation (development of sense of peoplehood based exclusively on the dominant culture); (5) attitude-receptional assimilation (absence of prejudice); (6) behavioural- receptional assimilation (absence of discrimination); and (7) civic assimilation (absence of value and power conflicts) (Gordon, 1964).

On these classifications, he argued that a minority first starts the pattern by learning the language, adopting the clothes, values and lifestyle of the dominant culture, process, which he calls cultural assimilation which is followed by structural assimilation where the group enters into public sphere such as schools, workplace etc. After the first two assimilations, there comes intermarriage and so forth until the minority eventually becomes completely similar to the dominant group.

Acculturation

The first official definition of acculturation was proposed by Redfield, Linton and Herskovits in 1936 (Lakey, 2003). The trio define acculturation as,

Acculturation is a culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems. Its dynamics can be seen as the selective adaptation of value systems, the processes of integration and differentiation, the

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generation of developmental sequences, and the operation of role determinants and personality factors (Social Science Research Council SSRC, 1954, p. 974).

Gordon (1964) identified that acculturation was the first step towards assimilation by saying that while acculturation does not necessarily lead to structural assimilation, structural assimilation inevitably produces acculturation (as cited in Lasry and Sayegh, 1993). Berry (1994, 1997) later posited acculturation from the psychological perspective and presented two basic dimensions of acculturation: maintenance of original cultural identity and maintenance of relations with other groups. He emphasizes four acculturation strategies: integration, separation, assimilation and marginalization. Acculturation results in a plural society, which according to Berry is the society where people of different cultural backgrounds come to live together thus, creating a diverse society. In a plural society, according to Berry (1994) there may be a dominant group and minority groups. He also points out that in a plural society these cultural groups exist due to three major factors: voluntariness (immigrants), mobility (immigrants and refugees) and permanence (native people).

Parks' theory on assimilation is regarded to be a classical theory or a unilinear theory where he explains the race relations cycle as irreversible (Alba & Nee, 1997). His theories have been criticized for lack of specificity in the time frame required for assimilation and, more importantly, to be Anglo-conformist because immigrant groups were depicted as conforming to unchanging, middle-class, white Protestant values of the white America (Brown & Bean, 2006). The critics of the classic unilinear and

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conventional assimilation and acculturation theories of Parks and Gordon argue that such theories on acculturation have been responsible for a significant body of theoretical work that denies historically, politically and socially situated realities facing immigrants and fails to explain diverse experiences in immigrants' lives (Bhatia & Ram, 2001).

From the anti-oppressive and social justice perspective, Parks' assimilation theory and Gordon's theory are oppressive because they tend to colonize the so called "Third-World" nations and cultures. They focus on Eurocentric ways of being, and assign inferiority and otherness to non-European people, and tend toward expansion, exploitation and subjugation of other cultures. Their expectation of minorities picking up the dominant culture and ultimately giving up their cultural identity is nothing but their "final act of appropriation in the act of chronology of imperialism" (Smith, 1994). The critics also argue that the theories are monolithic in a sense that they do not tend to consider factors such as age, gender, and sexual orientation. By presenting Eurocentric middle class cultural patterns as the goal, the monolithic view has reinforced "otherness", inferiority and subjugation of non-European immigrants by the dominant culture (Hieu 2008).

It is in this context, that pluralism came into the field of immigration study. The increasing diversity in American and Canadian societies tended to prove otherwise than what the classical theories of assimilation and acculturation had theorized. Thus, pluralism began to be used as a common term to describe diversity within societies. The term multiculturalism is used as more of a contemporary term to discuss diversity and

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pluralism together since Canada introduced multiculturalism as a concept, public policy and philosophy.

Canadian Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is a political and a philosophical concept which supports pluralism and equal existence of various cultures, ethnicities in societies. Unlike the classical models such as assimilation and acculturation, multiculturalism does not seek to homogenise any group to the dominant culture or a host society but rather the co-existence of wide range of cultures and groups in a society. Equity, inclusion, and diversity are the key words that define multiculturalism. Berry (2011) defines multiculturalism “as the stage when cultural diversity is a feature of the society as a whole, including all the various ethno cultural groups” (p.2.9).

However, multiculturalism or a multicultural society can be interpreted in different ways according to the library of Canadian parliament (2013). The research report suggests multiculturalism can be looked at it as a sociological process, political process, or can be an ideological concept (Dewing, 2009). This literature review will touch upon on all three ways that multiculturalism has been working in Canada.

Canada was the first country in the world to come up with the concept of multiculturalism in a race to accommodate increasing diversity aftermath of world wars, changing world politics, establishment of UN and so forth. Multiculturalism in Canada refers exclusively to a concern with cultural diversity, thus addressing issues of

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immigrant integration, cultural identity, racism, religious diversity and linguistic diversity (Joshi, Peck, Thompson, Chareka & Sears, 2010, p.1).

Canada's official multiculturalism began with former Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau after he made an official statement in the House of Commons in 1971. He announced, "A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework commends itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians". Following this announcement, the Human Rights Act (1977) and Employment Equity Act (1986) made it easier for minorities to access public jobs. Similarly, hate speech was considered an offence under the acts for the first time in Canada.

A lot of discussion has followed among academics and politicians as to why multiculturalism was adopted by Trudeau. Forbes (2007) argues that the rationale behind Trudeau's policy was to strike a workable balance between the British and French Canadians and also to subdue the "appeal of the separatist movement in Quebec by recognizing the minorities that had been contributing and living in Canada for decades" (p. 31). One theory Joshi et.al (2010) put forward is that plurality has always been a feature of a Canadian society; however, it was formally not established until the 1970s. So, what we saw Trudeau doing was long coming and nothing of a surprise or a paradigm shift in the Canadian politics at that time. Joshi et al (2010) elaborate,

From the outset, cultural diversity has been an important part of Canadian policy. Initially the concern was how to bring together the so-called 'two

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founding nations' (the British and French colonizers), assimilate other immigrants, and administer the relationship between the State and the original peoples of the land (p. 2).

Another argument as to why Canada adopted the policy of multiculturalism in the 70s was, as Eve Haque (2012) suggests, was to establish Canada as a separate country "independent" from its mother country Great Britain and to gain an international identity while using immigration.

The other reason as many argue was to establish a new identity for Canada from its neighbor to the South with the policy of "multiculturalism," which would be different than their melting pot concept to integrate immigrants. What Canadian multiculturalism did was to give voice to minorities as well as a sense of respect, legitimacy, and feeling of equality while letting them enjoy their cultural freedom without the expectation to homogenize as in the USA (Kymlicka, 2008).

However, Laselva (2009) asserts that Trudeau did nothing to satisfy Quebec's demand for its recognition and a chance to flourish within Canada or accommodating the demands of the Aborigines (p.12) in the name of multiculturalism and thus his vision of equality among all the minorities in Canada remains under question. Similarly, Michael Temelini (2007) states, "Trudeau adopted multiculturalism in order to appease western Canadians in their resentment against Official Languages Act and their perception of special treatment of Quebec" (p.55). Others argue that it was merely a ploy to get ethnic votes for the liberals (Kymlicka, 2008).

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Kymlicka (2004) describes a three way approach that Canada adopted to make multiculturalism work as a public policy in the country. The first strategy saw it as a way to accord equal status to immigrants who land in Canada and have lived here a long time but are often marginalized. The second approach used the bilingual framework to address the demands of the Anglophone and Francophone communities. The third approach granted self-government rights to the First Nations and indigenous people. If one looks at these approaches, these are very smart approaches which gave Canada an edge on making multiculturalism work over other countries. Other countries like Australia, Great Britain and European countries followed the lead of Canada and established multiculturalism policies in their respective countries keeping individual cultural freedom in mind. The Canadian model of multiculturalism has been exported and marketed in many countries over the last 40 years in various ways (Kymlicka, 2004).

Kymlicka (1995) has also pointed out two reasons as to why Canada's touted liberal Multiculturalism has worked better than that of most of the other countries in the world such as U.S.A and European countries such as France, Germany, U.K, and Netherlands. He has attributed it to Canadian timing and Canada's geographic location. Kymlicka (1995) argues that when Multiculturalism was first announced in the early 70s, it was mainly driven by the "white ethnic" groups in Canada. Had it been pushed by non-white ethnic groups, it would have been rejected right away by the policy makers and politicians. It was only during the 80's that the other non-white groups joined the momentum and demanded for equal rights and tolerance for themselves especially from the South Asian minority. Kymlicka(1995) says that,

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If multiculturalism in Canada had initially been demanded by non-European groups who were perceived as having strong religious or cultural commitments to illiberal practices say, by Somalis or Pakistanis rather than Ukrainians or Italians and if their demand for multiculturalism was perceived as a demand that such illiberal practices be tolerated and accommodated then I'm quite sure the multiculturalism would not have been adopted or taken root (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 72).

Kymlicka (1995) further explains that by the 90s the non-white ethnic minorities in Canada had been so integrated in Canadian democratic practises that they had proved themselves to work within human rights based multiculturalism and demanded for more open multicultural policies to protect the ethnic groups.

A second factor that Kymlicka (1995) thinks was responsible for the success of multiculturalism is the geographic location. He claims that Canada does not face problems such as illegal refugees or war-stricken neighbouring countries like that of U.S.A or Europe and that in reality reduces the possibility of one ethnic group dominating other ethnic groups such as Hispanics in the United States or Arabs in Spain. Canada has an easier challenge of managing and accommodating the not so large ethnic minorities in the country under multiculturalism.

After more than 40 years of having multiculturalism in Canada, several changes have been introduced to it. A study done by the Canadian Parliament in 2007 divided multicultural policy development in Canada into three phases: the incipient stage (before

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1971), the formative stage (1971-1981), and the institutionalization phase (1981 to present). The incipient stage was about the birth of multiculturalism in Canada as a result of large influx of immigrants after the World War, growing resentment of First Nation people, Quebec Nationalism and the position of long residing immigrants discussed above. In the formative stage, most of the time was spent on identifying settlers other than Anglophone, Francophone and First Nations and giving them full citizenship rights with other Canadians. In this stage, Canada adopted multiculturalism as a federal policy and allocated budget and a multiculturalism ministry in order to look after the policies across the country while opening its door to immigrants from all over the world. The last stage, as the library report suggests, is the institutional phase which Canada currently is in. The immigrant population has grown in Canada like never before dynamically changing the demography of Canadian societies. The most noteworthy, The Canadian Multiculturalism Act was passed in the year 1988 making Canada the first country in the world to pass laws related to multiculturalism. The act sought to end all kinds of discrimination and enable an individual to pursue their culture and speak their language while preserving their right to participate in the Canadian society.

Kymlicka (2008) also discusses similar three lives of multiculturalism. The first life of multiculturalism in the 1970's was about giving an identity to the long-standing settlers of Canada other than the British and French. The second stage was in the 1980s when Canadian multiculturalism switched its multicultural aim to recognizing the newly arrived immigrant minorities and their ethnicities under liberal democratic human rights jurisprudence. The third phase, according to Kymlicka (2008), is the policy evolving

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from ethnicity to religion as he argues that newcomers in Canada like to associate themselves to their religious identity more than their ethnic one.

Winter (2015) agrees with Kymlicka by saying multiculturalism in Canada, in its inception decade was nothing than a policy that focused on “museum culture,” such as symbolic cultural identities rather than the inequalities in Canadian politics and economics. She concurs with Kymlicka and says that in the 80’s multiculturalism in Canada identified the ethnic minorities who had been demanding equal rights and opportunities under the Multiculturalism Act.

Based upon her research on dominant discourses about multiculturalism in various English media articles between 1992 and 2001 and speeches made by Minister of Immigration, Citizenship and Multiculturalism from 2008 to 2013, she asserts that after 1990s, multiculturalism has undergone two essential changes. In the 1990s, she argues it shifted from being a liberal policy based on human rights jurisprudence to neo liberal policy and currently in this decade it has turned out to be an intra-minority affair rather than a Canadian one. She presents evidence that multiculturalism has begun to be defined as a business to ensure Canada’s global competitiveness in the world economic market.

There have been critics of multiculturalism who argue that multiculturalism does nothing but help create ethnic silos, and threatens nationalism especially after what happened in the USA on September 11, 2001 and the London Bombing in 2005. Critics such as Bisoonhnath (1994) and Gwyn (1995) staunchly opposed multiculturalism in the 90s arguing that Pierre Trudeau’s policy was put in place only to defeat the Quebec

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referendum movement. They argued that the policy creates hostility among the ethnic minorities because of perceived favourable treatment for one group versus others by the state itself by only allowing bilingualism in the country.

However, today we do know that Canadians have familiarized and attached themselves deeply with the concept of Multiculturalism and take pride in it despite the backlashes that the policies and concept have received over the years. In 2006 polls conducted, most Canadians responded that the Multiculturalism policy in Canada made them “proud to be Canadian” in the second place to Canada’s Charter of Rights and Freedoms (al-jazeera, 2013).

While the majority of Canadians attachment stays with multiculturalism, Kymlicka (2008) concedes that multiculturalism has lost the great optimism it created for minorities when since it started. In the global context like that of Europe, USA, and Australia, several states have declared that multiculturalism as a discourse has failed and these states have adopted new forms of diversity approaches such as “civic integration” (Joppke, 2003) or “interculturalism” (Maddood, 2012).

In his analysis as to why, multiculturalism fails in one place and works in another, Kymlicka (1995) theorised that different immigration policies attract different social classes of immigrants, as is the case in Canada. Canada has designed its immigration policy in such a way that it attracts highly qualified citizens or economic immigrants from other countries of the world through its points based selection system. He further argues that the use of the term “Multiculturalism” is ambiguous and an umbrella term in a

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sense that the P. Trudeau government was simply trying to state that Canada has polyethnicity i.e. people from various ethnic backgrounds such as immigrants and aboriginals and multinationals in addition to French Canadians and British Canadians without analyzing the cultural differences of the various enclaves of the groups mentioned above (Kymlicka, 1995). Again going back to his reasons for multiculturalism working better in Canada than other countries in the world, it is safe to say that it is the way that the Canadian immigration system has been designed to pick the most qualified citizens from all over the world in addition to and perhaps its geography separating it from the population crisis and conflict that often mars other regions.

Multiculturalism has been working fine in Canada so far despite the backlashes while other countries, which formerly adopted Canadian multiculturalism, are now withdrawing from it.

Integration

The meaning of integration in the sociological context has differed among sociologists, policy makers and governments worldwide. The meaning of integration could apply to any individual, group community or society on the whole. It has been widely agreed that immigration and the incorporation of national minorities are the two most efficient and common ways to ensure that the society is diverse, how the incorporation of the small groups done can be assessed, is through a tool called integration (Kymlicka, 1995). Integration has no prescription or set of rules to ensure that it has happened. However, by ensuring that minorities become the active component of a

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larger society, we can think that integration has taken place. Kymlicka (1995) further suggests that integration works better when the minorities are not forced to be like majority and assimilation is not expected out of their contact.

Forsberg (2012) stated that what differentiates integration from other forms of newcomer adaptation is, that the newcomers become the active members in the receiving society and are able to contribute economically, socially and culturally (p.10). She writes,

Integration involves connecting immigrants with their new communities by striving to include them in institutions and activities. Sometimes, however, a fit is not achieved and the opposite happens in the form of segregation and marginalization (Forsberg, 2012, p. 9).

Looking at the above definitions of integration, we can suggest that integration is to be a two way understanding where there is respect, acceptance and opportunity to grow for newcomer people. For the purpose of this thesis, integration will be used to strictly indicate the sociological process of putting together i.e. the acceptance of newcomers in a new society thus allowing mobility to newcomers in economic, social and political life of the new society.

An organizational approach to understanding integration is very similar. The Office of the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHCR) defined the process as:

Integration of refugees is a mutual, dynamic and multifaceted two-way process which requires efforts by all parties concerned, including a preparedness on the part of refugees to adapt to the receiving society without having to forego their own cultural identity and a corresponding readiness on the part of the receiving

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communities and public institutions to welcome refugees and meet the needs of a diverse community (UNHCR Executive Committee, 2005).

It is always a two way process that places demands on both the refugee and the receiving community. Integration of refugees goes beyond ensuring that they are provided with basic needs and access to services. Integration requires that receiving states and civil society mutually act together. UNHCR clearly states the role of government and civil society's partnership in the form of volunteer networks, churches, ethnic communities, self- help groups, school, universities, and media's role in order to succeed the process of integration (UNHCR Report, 2002 p.26). The 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol mandate the social and civil rights for refugees which gear towards the integration of refugees. The social and civil rights themselves include basic human rights such as right to life, education, shelter, food, expression so forth. UNHCR (2002) laid out a framework to identify the primary areas of integration for the host countries to assess their integration endeavours. According to UNHCR, there are ten different areas or themes that can be looked by the host country as goals to assess the integration of refugees in the host country. The areas include in the following order:

1. independence for basic need
2. promote capacity building
3. family reunification
4. promoting social connections

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5. restoring their trust in political institutions and the concept of rule of law
6. promoting their cultural heritage
7. strengthening communities against racism and xenophobia
8. promoting refugee community and leadership and
9. fostering tools to support further integration

The European Union co-funded a project called "Integration Policies: Who Benefits", for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals and developed a Migrant Integration Policy Index (MPIX). This tool helps measure integration outcomes, integration policies, challenges and other factors through indicators and policy areas in EU Member States, Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey and the USA. As of year 2016, the index constitutes 167 indicators in 8 policy areas that measure integration. The policy areas include labour market mobility, family reunion, health, education, permanent residence, political participation, access to nationality and discrimination. Currently, Canada ranks at number 6 in the country ranking according to this index. The index mentions "Overall Canadian policies are slightly favourable for integration in most areas of life. These policies score 68/100 and rank 6th out of the 38 countries, alongside AU, slightly below NZ, PT and Nordic countries and above the US and UK" (2015).

Ager and Strang (2008) identified the elements central to perceptions of what constitutes a 'successful' integration. They propose key elements of integration in a number of themes: achievement and access across the sectors of employment, housing,

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education and health; assumptions and practice regarding citizenship and rights; processes of social connection within and between groups within the community; and structural barriers to such connection related to language, culture and the local environment. They have laid out following framework to explain the core domains of integration:

Figure 1: *The following figure and note is reproduced from Ager and Strang, 2008,*

P.170

Figure 1

A Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration

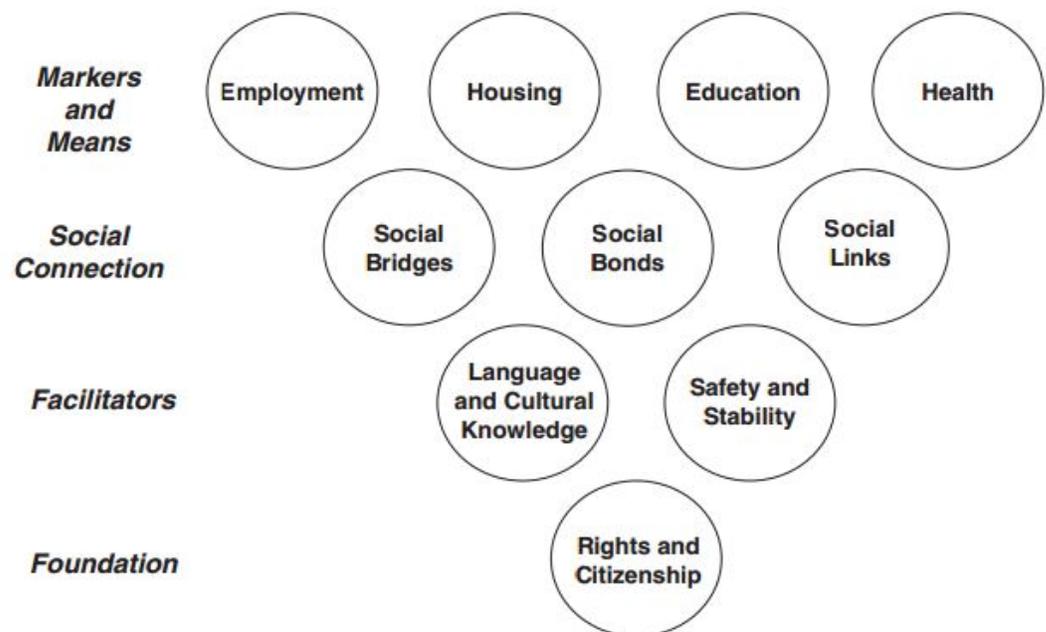


Figure 1. Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework

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Ives (2007) used the terms micro, meso and macro factors to describe what influences integration of resettled refugees in a host country. According to him, micro factors include factors such as language, religion, employment, social support and political perspectives. He categorises meso factors as institutional settings such as resettlement agencies, welfare agencies, ethnic community organizations and religious congregations. The macro factors according to him are the inherent refugee experiences.

Gsir (2014) studied the role of social interaction in public and private settings in the integration of the immigrants in a new society in Europe. She posited that the socio-cultural integration depends on the social interaction between the immigrants and the host society rather than just the efforts of the immigrants to rise up from their social class. Gsir (2014), Penninx (2004) and Jopke (2007) used the term co-integration to define two way interactions. These authors used various factors to explain the socio-cultural integration of the immigrants. The factors included intermarriage, interethnic friendship, interethnic relations at workplace and encounters in the neighbourhood.

We can summarize from the above that integration is a two way process and there are different layers to the process of integration. Outward and more basic layers such as language, accommodation, family relationships employment and more deeper layers such as social interaction with the host society, community leadership and participation in the socio-political process of the host society. The process can be both subjective and objective and various factors affect the process mainly the background and diversity itself among the refugee population. However, we should be mindful that many of the integration outcomes or indicators were designed to assess the integration of the

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immigrants. The same tools are used to assess the integration of refugees which may give different results as the needs of refugees are often more profound than other immigrants who do not necessarily come from a hardship background as refugees.

The most common theme emerging from the above framework to integration is education. Holdoway and Alba (2003) argued that the success of integration of the newcomers depends a lot on their performance in the education system. They further state that countries that accept immigrants in various forms are often faced with challenges for school children such as language inadequacy, poorly educated parents unable to help the children with their school work and thus children performing poorly overall. A study done by Hyman, Vu and Veiser (2000) on South East Asian refugee youths aged 10-20 in Toronto, found that adjusting to school was one of most difficult experiences for children and youth. They often faced marginalization in school because of lack of the English language skills and they often felt different from other students. They also felt the cultural conflicts through different school systems like a different school system where they went to school in their home country. In her research, Factors influencing the Academic Success of Refugee Youth in Canada, Wilkinson (2010), found that Ethnicity had the highest impact on the success of the youth in the academics. She used educational status as the dependent variable. She also found that other factors such as time in Canada, grade placement, parental health influenced the academic performance of refugees in schools. She found that among all the refugee population that she studied, Yugoslavians did much better than any other refugee groups. This, she suspects, was because they were able to integrate more easily than other groups because of their skin colour, i.e. treatment

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for their white skin as compared to their non-white counterparts (p.189). However, she positively concludes that refugee youth were relatively better integrated than portrayed in popular research and media.

Something similar to Wilkinson's research was also found in 2007 by some American researchers. In their research about refugee youths in New York City, they found out that many immigrant children in school have been facing challenges in the classroom as they are placed in the grades above their capability despite missing several years of formal schooling in their home country. They are placed in higher grades because of the age despite their inability to grasp the grade appropriate teaching in the classroom. As a result of the pressure to keep up and lack of support from the school or parents, who are often illiterate or lack ESL skill cannot help them out. As a result, many children drop out of school and enter into the low skilled labour force (DeCapua, Smathers, et al, 2007).

Kirova (2001) found that immigrant children feel isolated and lonely in the school setting because they are looked upon as being "different". The children identify their inability to speak English as the biggest barrier between themselves and other children and as a result they are not able to fit in the school with their peer groups. She emphasizes that "language is the key to becoming a community" (p. 265).

In her book Wilson-Forsberg (2012) did a comparative research study in Fredericton and Florenceville-Bristol, New Brunswick to look at the pattern of how a small rural town and city welcome and integrate young immigrants. Her research came up with five themes: making contact, public awareness, social capital and social

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networks, citizen engagement and sense of belonging and explained that smaller communities and towns are more successful at integrating adult immigrants (p.152). She pointed out that in Fredericton (where she studied the refugee population), there were instances where the Canadian-born and the refugees did not have equal access to various facilities despite the availability made by the government. Due to their poor income, refugees could hardly participate in the social activities organized by MCAF or schools because they would have to spend personal resource in order to access them or participate in them. For example, participating in MCAF activities such as picnics, soccer games and other recreational activities on Sundays would mean the newcomers would have to pay money out of their pocket to get to the venue as they did not have private transportation (p.39). However, in Florenceville-Bristol she saw a better integration pattern of the newcomers because locals were more involved in the welcoming and engaging of the new immigrants.

Krasteva (2013) has discussed the various approaches to integration used by different European nations and concludes that there is no one size fits model or a model at all when it comes to integrating the refugee children in the school system of the host nation but the model should be based on the experience and the need of the children.

All the research works mentioned above will be important for me because my attempt will be to understand if the Bhutanese refugees (students) can relate to the idea of integration in their schools in Fredericton. What tools and support systems are they provided with to make sure that they are integrating well in the school system? Do they

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really feel integrated? As discussed in the above paragraphs, do any of the factors such as language, gender, communities, and ethnicity play any role in the integration process?

CHAPTER THREE-METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I discuss the methodology that I used for this research. My research question focuses on the experiences of Bhutanese-Nepalese adults who have had refugee experience and have arrived in Fredericton as Government Assisted Refugees (GAR). My thesis describes the voices of former young refugees who have gone to schools in Fredericton and therefore, language and description will play a more effective role than charts or figures.

I used a qualitative research method to explore and understand people's experiences. My guiding question for the research is "How do the Bhutanese-Nepalese youth subjectively assess their overall integration experience in the school"?

Qualitative research methods deal with language and words unlike quantitative methods which focus on numbers and figures. Qualitative methodology includes "thick description" (Geertz, 1973) and critical analysis. It is not carried out with the assumption of proving a theory or testing a hypothesis. It centers on understanding of a process, an experience or phenomena through language, observation, dialogue and description. It provides flexibility to the researcher in terms of the approach and analysis as well as for participants of the research.

Qualitative research is more focused on individual people and specific groups for intensive case study, than a generalized result obtained through other research methods (Christensen & Johnson, 2014). It is driven to generate a theory by exploring mental

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processes and behaviours that are situational, subjective, dynamic, social, contextual and personal (Christensen & Johnson, 2014).

There are four major models of qualitative research methods that are used by social scientists and researchers to carry out their research. They are namely, Phenomenology, Ethnography, Case Study and Grounded Theory (Christensen & Johnson, 2014). Moustaka (1994) also describes the heuristic model as the other model of qualitative research (p. xii).

Choosing one of the methods amongst the five was an overwhelming task but since my research question seeks out to understand the experience of young refugees, I selected phenomenology as the best fit for this study.

Phenomenology

Merriam and Simpson (2000) refer to phenomenology as one of the philosophical inquiry methods where a researcher uses “faith, reason, material objects, observation, intuition, and language as the data in their search” (p.87). In other words, phenomenological research method derives its roots from philosophy (Christensen & Johnson, 2014). Phenomenology is one of the most important movements of the 20th century which made way for other philosophical movements such as existentialism, poststructuralism, postmodernism, feminism, culture critique, and various forms of analytical and new theory (van Manen, 2015; Moran 2001).

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Edmund Husserl is regarded as the founder of phenomenology as a philosophical inquiry. The word phenomenology was earlier used by philosophers such as Kant and Hegel before Edmund Husserl popularized it. However, Husserl also borrowed the term from Brentano who inspired him to consider that phenomenology was nothing more than description of one's awareness of things or consciousness (Moran, 2000, p.29).

Husserl's ideas are mostly the product of his everyday reflection on life when Nazi power grew over Germany. He was dismissed from his job at university and banned from accessing the library (Zahavi, 2003). Husserl was interested in knowing the personal description from the "first person perspective" (van Manen, 1990). Husserl became a reductionist phenomenologist as his phenomenology was argued and debated by his followers as well as other philosophers such as Heidegger in the mid -1920s. According to Heidegger, a person ought to get rid of previous notions, assumptions, bias and living world influence in order to describe a phenomena which he terms as reduction, bracketing or transcendental phenomenology (Moran, 2000). Moran explains this further simply by putting Husserl's reductionism in this way,

In genuine phenomenological viewing, we are not permitted any scientific or philosophical hypotheses. We should attend only to the phenomena in the manner of their being given to us, in their modes of givenness (p.11).

This is essentially to say that in phenomenology, one should have as few assumptions as possible and must accept the given reality in its present form and present it accordingly.

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Phenomenology was further elaborated and developed by Heidegger who disagreed with Husserl and argued that a researcher ought to get a meaning out of the experience of a phenomena rather than merely a description (Moran, 2000, p. 32). According to van Manen, there are various branches inspired by Husserl's phenomenology to date, but one cannot be certain as to the number as the philosophies keep changing over time and will continue to do so.

Phenomenology as my research method

Worthington (n.d) explains that there is often confusion between phenomenology as a philosophy and phenomenology as a research method. According to van Manen (1990), to do research is to question the way we experience the world, to want to know the world in which we live as human beings” (p.5).

Manen terms phenomenological research as phenomenology of practise and elaborates,

In doing phenomenological research, through the reflective methods of writing, the aim is not to create technical intellectual tools or prescriptive models for telling us what to do or how to do something. Rather, a phenomenology of practice aims to open up possibilities for creating formative relations between being and acting, between who we are and how we act, between thoughtfulness and tact (Manen, 2007, p.N.A.). Similarly, Creswell (2007) has mentioned that research which is

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based on the experiences of people and are helpful to form policies are most suited for this method (p.60).

A researcher doing a phenomenological research aims to describe the phenomenon as accurately as possible by letting go of all the bias and assumptions and not sticking to any framework. According to Welman and Kruger (1999) “phenomenologists are concerned with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the perspectives of people involved” (as cited in Groenewald, 2004, p. 189). According to Denscombe (2014), what separates phenomenology from other research methods is its close tie to originality and authenticity, to the experience gathered during the collection phase. According to him, interview is the best tool for phenomenological research as interview helps to bring in depth description from the participants. He writes,

Interview is the best method to get the descriptive phenomenological approach not only encourages the researcher to provide a detailed description of experiences, it also advocates the need to do so with a minimum reliance on the researcher’s own beliefs, expectations and predispositions about the phenomenon under investigation.(p. 92)

I chose this particular qualitative model for my research because of my comfort level with the method. I am a listener and having volunteered as a crisis intervener in a local organization for almost two years now, I feel that I am becoming more empathetic as an active listener and learner as people share their experiences and struggles with me.

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In my research, I sought to bring out the silenced experiences of marginalized groups who are often lumped together with the assumption that their needs are similar. As a graduate student who was brought up in an urban setting and went to an urban, Catholic school in Nepal, I had a hard time adjusting to the academic life and environment in the Canadian university despite being exposed to the urban life and academia. I can only empathise and imagine the struggle of the young people who have had to live a difficult life and struggles and are expected to integrate in the society here in Canada soon after they arrive. Life can be difficult especially in schools where these young people are left out on their own at a stage of their lives where they are going through physical, mental, emotional and social transition without proper social support or educational support.

Phenomenological research methodology is useful in bringing out the first hand experiences of the people who have spent their formative years in complex environments such as refugee camps.

Worthington (2015) puts it this way, “A reader of a phenomenological should have a strong sense of ‘now I understand what it is like to have experienced that particular phenomenon.’” I would like my readers to understand what the student participants’ lives and challenges were like in the schools. Do the participants of the study really feel a sense of belonging in the community within the school or outside?

I also hope that after reading the research findings, policy makers understand the kind of policies that need to be designed to help and support the people. As Lester puts it,

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Phenomenological methods are particularly effective at bringing to the fore the experiences and perceptions of individuals from their own perspectives, and therefore at challenging structural or normative assumptions. Adding an interpretive dimension to phenomenological research, enabling it to be used as the basis for practical theory, allows it to inform, support or challenge policy and action (as cited in van Manen, 2007, p.13).

Research Area

According to the New Brunswick Education Act amended in 2001, public schools are managed by the District Education Council (Education Act, 2001). They work directly under the department of Education and Early Childhood Development under the Minister. The Act also divided the areas in NB as districts to better manage public schools of the province. Currently there are seven school districts in New Brunswick primarily divided as Anglophone district and Francophone districts. They are:

1. Anglophone North
2. Anglophone South
3. Anglophone East
4. Anglophone West
5. Francophone Nord-Est
6. Francophone Nord-Ouest

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7. Francophone Sud

(GNB, 2016)

All the above districts are looked after by their individual District Education Councils (DEC). The DEC has the authority to establish and close schools as per the need of district. Through the approval of Minister of the province, DEC provides for the development and delivery of instructional programs, services and courses unique to the character and economy of the community and select appropriate instructional programs, services and courses prescribed by the Minister those to be offered in each school in the school district for which the DEC is established (Education Act, 2001).

Fig 2: *The following Structure of New Brunswick Education System is adapted from <http://web1.nbed.nb.ca/sites/ASDW/PSSC/Documents/PSSC%20Handbook.pdf>*

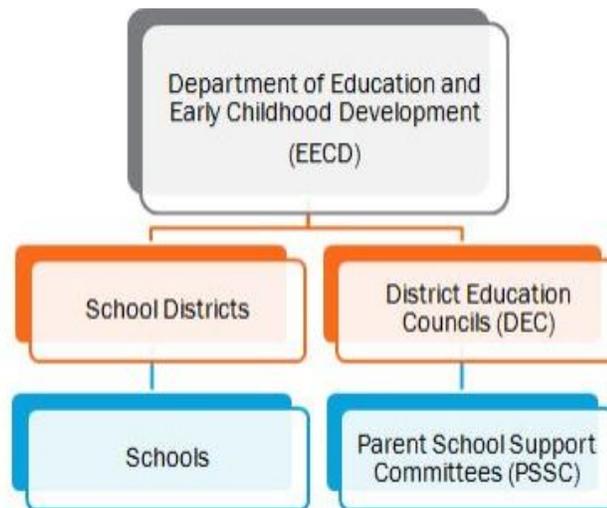


Fig 2: Structure of New Brunswick Education System

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My research is focused in Fredericton area which falls under Anglophone West District. Anglophone west District covers schools located in Fredericton, Oromocto and Woodstock area.

Research Participants

I chose a purposive sampling method to find the participants for the research because Welman and Kruger (1999) consider this as the most important kind of non-probability sampling to identify the primary participants (as cited in Groenewald, 2004). The participants were chosen purposefully through personal contacts and consultation with Multicultural Association of Fredericton (MCAF) and Asian Heritage Society in Fredericton. The Multicultural Association of Fredericton is the government organization that works with the motto “celebrating strength with diversity” with newcomers in Fredericton by helping them settle in the community. Established in 1974, MCAF encourages the promotion of diversity and inclusion in Fredericton, provides newcomers with essential settlement information, services such as language instruction, employment services and community networking (www.mcaf.nb.ca).

Similarly, Asian Heritage Society of New Brunswick is a non-profit organization that organizes activities and events to promote Asian arts and culture and provides a welcoming environment for the new comers Asians as well as established Asians in Canada (AHSNB,).

A total of eight participants were selected on the basis of snowball sampling technique after finding initial contacts for the research. Snowball technique is the process

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where the researcher collects data from the targeted participants and the participants further recruit other participants (Crossman, 2016). Creswell suggests long interviews with ten people are sufficient for a phenomenological research (Creswell, 1998).

During the time of this research, the participants were going to high school, some had just graduated from high school and others were pursuing higher education in college and university. One exception was a participant who was doing English as Second Language Course at the Multicultural Centre Fredericton (MCAF). The participant could not go to high school due to their age limitations and was taking ESL classes since arriving in Canada. Each of the participants had at least one year of schooling experience in New Brunswick/Canada and at least five years of schooling in Nepal. The participants were chosen while keeping the gender ratio of male and female in balance hence there were 4 female and 4 male participants selected for the interview. The table below gives a general introduction of the participants. The participants are identified in the Table 1 with the following codes. For instance, student participant 1 is coded as SP1.

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Table: 1. General Demography of the Research Participants

Participant	Age at the time of Interview	Gender	Country of Birth	Languages spoken	Number of years in school in Nepal	Number of years of School in Canada	Grade at the time of interview
SP1	18	Male	Nepal	English, Nepali	8	4	12
SP2	17	Female	Nepal	Nepali, English, Zhonkha, Hindi	10	3.5	12
SP3	17	Female	Nepal	Nepali, English, Zhonkha, Hindi	10	2	11
SP4	18	Male	Nepal	Nepali, English, Hindi	9	3+ 0.5	College, first sem
SP5	22	Male	Bhutan	Nepali, English	12	2 +2	2 nd year

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							university
SP6	20	Female	Nepal	Nepali, English and Hindi	11	2	2 nd year college
SP7	22	Female	Bhutan	Nepali, English	10	4	ESL level 6
SP8	20	Male	Nepal	Nepali, English, Hindi	10	5	College, 3 rd year

Data Collection and Analysis

Informed consent was acquired from the participants by telling them what the research is about and presenting them the approval letter from UNB Ethics Board. Through initial conversation about our lives in Canada, I found it easy to build a bond and form trust with the participants. Rubin and Rubin (2005) state that, “people are more willing to be interviewed if they know you, know where you live, where you work, who your boss is and what your project is about” (p. 5.14).

For the participants under 18, a parental consent was acquired from the participant’s parents. A convenient location was chosen for the interview after discussing with the participants as Creswell (2007) states that in a phenomenological study, the

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participants may be located at a single site, although it does not have to be the case all the time. Most importantly, they must be individuals that have all experienced the phenomenon being explored and can articulate their lived experiences (Creswell, 2007). During the meeting with the participants, a short introduction about the research was made as an icebreaker. The letter of approval from UNB Ethics board was provided to the participants to read and keep if they liked. After the ice breaker, the audio recorder was switched on at the participants' consent. Some closed ended and open ended questions were asked to the participants such as their age, duration of education in Canada and Nepal (see appendix VII). Some guiding questions were asked to the participants in order to evoke the account of the experiences of the participants in schools of Fredericton (Moustakas, 1998, p. 114). However, the questions were varied, altered or not used at all once the participant started sharing the story of their experience (Moustakas, 1998, p.114). Additional questions were asked whenever further clarity or explanation was needed. According to Bailey (1996, p.72, as cited in Gronewald, 2004), in phenomenological research, the "informal interview is a conscious attempt by the researcher's to find out more information about the setting of the person". It is reciprocal and more of a dialogue between the researcher and the participant. The informal conversation as Giorgi (1985) outlines "is the original data and comprises of the naïve descriptions obtained through open ended questions and dialogues" (as cited from Moustakas, 1998p.13). The interviews took from between thirty minutes to one hour. The interviews took place between the months of December 2015 and February 2016.

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The interviews were recorded with an audio tape recorder and safely stored in a hard drive and in my personal computer. The interviews were semi-structured in nature. The interviews were done with the help of some guiding questions and all the interviews were conducted in the participants' first language, Nepali. Field notes were also taken to note the participants' body language, change of expression and also to note my own experience as a researcher while listening to their description. According to Caeilli (2001), Miles & Huberman (1984) (as cited in Groenwald, 2004), the field notes help the research process by clarifying each interview setting. Bouton & Hammersley (1996) point out that "while listening or watching is a good way to familiarize yourself with the data for the purpose of analysis..." (p.286). Many a times, I noticed some of own biases and assumptions which were also noted in the field notes. While the interviews were taking place, I translated and transcribed the interviews. According to Merriam and Simpson (2000) in qualitative research, data is simultaneously being analyzed during the collection (p.100). This process was particularly an important one because it gave an opportunity to familiarize myself with the data I had and frame my questions better in other interviews. Bouton & Hammersley (1996) point out that "while listening or watching is a good way to familiarize yourself with the data for the purpose of analysis..." (p.286). Bouton and Hammersley(1996) also state the conventions to transcribe the interviews by saying that a researcher can choose to either transcribe the interviews in detail such as recording timing the pauses, talk overlaps, background noise etc. or skip all of these depending on the purpose of the research. I chose the former convention and recorded the small details during the transcription of the interviews.

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Transcripts were translated, typed, edited and stored on the personal computer as well as the hard drive making sure that only I had the access to the data. Each transcript and audio interview was then coded into a simultaneous number for the participants' confidentiality as well as the convenience. The participants who had consented to validate the transcript before the interview were sent a copy of their transcript and the tape. In a qualitative method this is regarded as an important step for the data truthfulness and creditability (Carspecken, 1986) as cited in Hamm (2009). The participants checked over the text of their individual transcript and asked for minor corrections. This process is described as member checking (Merriam and Simpson, 2000) and is an important method to assure reliability of data. This was entered as primary data after the correction was made as suggested by the participants. The transcripts were read and reread to note the emerging themes and categories.

Pope et al (2000) describe five steps for the analysis of data in qualitative research such as familiarization, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, and finally mapping and interpretation. The researcher must familiarize oneself with the data such as interviews, transcript, fieldnotes by going through them repeatedly. One of the challenges for the researcher is reduction of the massive amount of data and interpretation (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, p.114). Following the steps above, the transcripts were reread and the common words, lines, phrases were highlighted and remarked in the transcripts. These highlighted texts were put into different categories as Rossman & Rallis (2003) point categorization as one of the data analysis strategies for phenomenological research.

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Limitations and Bias

The idea for this research came through my own experience as an immigrant to this country. I arrived in Canada as an international student with hopes and dreams of completing a Master's degree. When I got here, I did not have any acquaintances, friends, families or relatives to help or support me. My only contacts were my supervisor and my landlords. I remember the feeling of loss and homesickness and confusion for the first few weeks. Everything was different challenging and new for me. Even though I had expected some of these challenges, I was unprepared of the struggles I would have especially in the classroom. From understanding the local accent to grasping the meaning of idioms, phrases and topics of discussion to writing an assignment, I had to teach myself to do many things without any support or guidance. Many of these days were filled with frustration and despair.

When I met some members of Bhutanese-Nepalese community, I had a deep urge to understand how they were coping in this new country. As I proceeded to do this research, I had a few biases of my own knowing their backgrounds well. Some of these biases were assuming that the participants would not be willing to talk to me about their experiences. However, contrary to my assumptions, most participants were more than willing to talk to me. I had also assumed that they may bring forward a lot of negative experiences out such as racism and discrimination based on the various literatures on the topic about newcomers. Again, I was proven wrong as many participants seemed very

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positive and optimistic. I tried to keep myself away from this bias as Denscombe (2014) points out,

For the purposes of being able to provide a ‘pure’ description, researchers need to approach things without predispositions based on events in the past, without suppositions drawn from existing theories about the phenomenon being studied and without using their everyday common-sense assumptions. Such things need to be put to one side for the moment, ‘bracketed off’ so that researchers are able to describe things not through their own eyes but through the eyes of those whose experiences are being described (p.96).

The biggest limitation of this research is its scope. The research is based on the participants of a single Bhutanese-Nepalese community in Fredericton. Due to lack of resources and my own personal limitations, the study had to be kept small and simple. The research would have been much richer and specific had it been conducted in more areas with more participants or more communities. The other limitation of this research is possible loss of meaning and nuances during the translation and transcript. The participants had been in Canada for over 5 years but they were more comfortable responding in Nepali. While translating and transcribing the interviews, nuances of the conversation might have been lost even though I have tried my best to note those nuances.

CHAPTER FOUR-FINDINGS

In this chapter, I discuss some of the findings drawn from in-depth interviews with the participants as described in the earlier chapter. Phenomenological research is the story of one's lived experience hence I attempt to summarize the story of each of the eight participants in this research. I will then discuss the themes that emerged through the summary of their individual stories as well as the analysis of the rich transcript data that was obtained during the interviews and focus group discussion.

SP1

SP1 is an 18 year old boy who came to Canada as GAR with his family consisting of his father, mother, brother and sister in 2009. SP1's family first arrived in Quebec and lived there for three years and then moved to New Brunswick as their relatives were living in Fredericton and it is a bilingual province (Field notes, December 1, 2015). SP1 was in grade 12 at the time of the interview and planned to attend university outside of the province and possibly get into a degree related to sports as he is passionate about soccer. However, it is also likely that he will stay in New Brunswick and go to a college (Field notes, December 1, 2016).

The interview took place at his home while his sister and mother were listening. I had an informal conversation with them and took some notes as field notes about the interaction. His family shared a 3 bedroom apartment for the family of 5. His brother was recently married to a girl from Nepal who is planning to move to Canada. His parents were also planning to buy a house in the near future as they felt that they were spending

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too much money on the rent. His mother also expressed her optimism about her children's future after moving to Canada as they did not have future in the refugee camps in Nepal. She was really grateful to be in Canada and felt that her family had done quite well for themselves (Field notes, Dec1, 2015).

When asked about his schooling experience in Canada, SP1 said that he had attended a French school in Quebec for three years. He felt that he struggled a lot with French as it was his third language and was learning it for the first time. But because he was young he was able to make quick improvement.

It was slightly difficult at first because everything was in French. It was my first experience with French, uh so it was difficult... but after 2,3 months I started understanding French a little bit too so it wasn't too bad (SP1, one to one interview, Dec 1, 2015)

When I asked him if he found any differences in the schools in Quebec and Fredericton, he told that teachers in Fredericton were more patient and friendlier than teachers in Quebec.

In Quebec... Quebec teachers were not as like as friendly and helpful.. when you did not understand.. they were not friendly ..I asked them to speak in English to make me understand but they wouldn't speak but here when I was new, the teachers were really helpful and friendly and took it real slow to make you understand...now it's not difficult at all.. I learned fast because I learned English since I was a kid..so yeah...(SP1, one to one interview, Dec 1, 2015)

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When asked about the differences in school in Nepal and Canada, he mainly talked about the physical aspects of the schools.

uhh... like in Nepal we are not allowed to use calculator before you finish grade 8 but here you can use it any time..uhh was already taught in grade 6 there...so activities are good here...you can participate in any sport youchoose...teachers are friendly, class mates are friendly. There is no racism or bullying, discrimination here...it's been 5 or 6 years..so yeah so far it's been fun (SP1, one to one interview, Dec 1, 2015)

He thought that teachers were friendlier in Fredericton as they had gone out of their way to help him. He gave an example of his English teacher who also happened to be his soccer coach. When asked about his advice on how teachers can make newcomers feel comfortable based on his experience he said that teachers should be friendly and should not stress the students by giving them a lot of work.

He is involved in extra-curricular activities in school and through MCAF. He helps international students in his school through Best Buddy programme, coaches hockey to other newcomers, and thinks that sports has made him confident and helped him find new friends.

He likes the idea of newcomers such as Syrian refugees coming to Canada because he can relate to their experiences and hardship and thinks that by coming to Canada their

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future will be safer. SP1 was positive and optimistic throughout the interview indicating that his experience had been fairly positive in the school system.

SP2

SP2 is an 18 year old girl who lives with her parents and younger sister. Their family lives in the government subsidized apartment because of their low income status. Her father has a mild disability after he got infected from a wound while he was working on making a bamboo basket in Nepal. Her mother works a few hours in a nearby samosa vendor.

The interview took place along with SP3 so it was a focus group discussion. SP2's younger sister was also present during the interview. SP2 started her school in grade 9 and had completed the earlier years of schooling in Nepal. She was studying in grade 12 at the time of the interview and was placed in a different school when she first arrived in New Brunswick.

When I asked her about her initial experience in the school in regards to the teachers, subjects and friends, she described that her initial days at the former school in Fredericton were really awkward as everything was new to her. Too many people, a big school really terrified her at the beginning. She felt uncomfortable in most of the classes except for ESL class where everyone was from different countries and spoke English at the same level or worse than her. She also mentioned the importance of having friends from within the community to help in the classroom.

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Yea I think so...When you have a friend ... you can work together... when you are alone you are confused and don't know what you are supposed to do" (SP2, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015)

She credits friends from her community who helped her out when she was new at the school. She was extremely happy when she met her friend from the refugee camp in Nepal. She found the teachers here in Fredericton schools to be friendly and made her feel comfortable by not asking her to present in the class when she was new.

School X is quite big really...When I was there, there were too many Nepali there... Jenny(name changed) and I were together in similar classes.. and she came before me like 6 or 7 months before me so I had it easy. There were a lot of people to help me ...and she came we had all moved to School Z and then she had to be in School X ((SP2, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015).

One of the interesting things she mentioned was that she liked her current school better than her former school in Fredericton as it was smaller and that way it was easy to talk to teachers and other students. She also found the school systems better here in Canada as it was not based on rote learning and teachers did not beat up the students like in Nepal. She described how her teachers let her sit together with her best friend even during the tests and teachers were understanding about it.

Yea the teacher was really nice. During tests too, if you scored good marks, they gave me good comments...uh... the ELA teacher was also good. The teacher had

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lived in Korea and probably was married to a Korean so they treated international students well. And the gym teacher was my homeroom teacher so I knew them well. They were nice too... and would encourage me to play... (SP2, Focus Group Discussion, Dec 16, 2015).

When I asked her if she had faced any kind of racism or discrimination in the class, she said she had not seen any but told me it was quite common for her African friends, Latino and Muslim friends.

Yea...everybody said that right. Sometimes we used to go to girls' group in Multicultural Association sometimes. And some of my African friends said that they had faced those things such as bullying but personally I never saw that (SP2, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015).

When I asked about how she felt being in the school now as compared to before, she told me that she was more confident and felt that she was indeed part of the school community. When I asked her about how she felt being in Canada, she described that she sees a future for herself here unlike in the refugee camps and wants to become a nurse and travel around the world.

I am really happy here. If we had been in Nepal we could never really have done anything right because we did not have citizenship but I wanted to finish my studies and do Masters but even after you finish studying you would have to lie and go to villages and teach people did not have much dreams. The only

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ambition people had was to finish high school and go to teach or stay home. After we came here, we have big dreams here and want to achieve lot of things. When we were there, we used to study about 8 wonders of the world, we studied about South America, North America and I used to think like it was too far away but since I came here I learnt everything. So I am really happy. In Nepal, we couldn't have done anything like if I wanted to become a doctor, I couldn't be that so here I can do what I want (SP2, Focus Group Discussion, Dec 16, 2015).

SP2 was outspoken and very smart and a good support for SP3. Her transition from Nepal to Canada was not easy but with the help of her friends in school and community she was able to cope well. She is an example of the fact that strong communities within the new comer groups inside and outside of school can go a long way for the smooth integration of the refugees.

SP3

SP3 is a 17 year old girl studying in grade 11 at the time of the interview. She came to Canada with her four sisters and older parents in 2012. She is also living in the government subsidized apartment with her family like SP2. SP3 seemed nervous at the beginning of the interview as she was fidgeting with her pen but got comfortable as the interview progressed (Field notes, December 16, 2016).She also looked up to SP2 for lot of her answers at the beginning but she began opening up as the interview progressed. Her interview was done together with SP2 at SP2's house as a focus group discussion.

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When asked about her experience of first days of school here in Canada, she described the loneliness she felt in the class and the school. Unlike SP2, she did not know many Nepali friends in the class and sat mostly by herself. However, she really enjoyed physical education classes and also made a Canadian friend and won some medals in the games. She said that in her former school, she felt confused but once she moved to the current school she was more comfortable as it was smaller and she knew more people. SP3 also expressed that she felt more comfortable in schools here as teachers treat students well and encouraged them. However, she felt that students misbehaved here and had to be pampered by the teachers.

Having said that in Maths class, I don't know if they were like really immature, people are really small here in grade 9. Here they treat us like kids as if you have no brain (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015)

When I asked her if she had faced any forms of racism in school or outside, she told me that she had not faced any overt racism. However, she felt like people looked at her because she looked different than her peers.

(playing with her pen) I never felt it but I was alone but others would give a look maybe because I was new, you know when you are new. But I used to feel very awkward. Maybe because they felt the same way or maybe they did not understand what I was saying...or maybe they were saying something negative about me. Yeah I sometimes I felt alone...but not all the time

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I: What do you mean sometimes?

SP3: As in.. I felt sometimes they were talking about me

I: They gave you strange looks

SP3: Not really, but you know when they are talking about you by looking at you
(SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015)

I also asked her about her participation in extracurricular activities as she had told me that she won some prizes during the physical education class. She told me she was really afraid to participate even when the teachers encouraged her to.

The teachers would encourage me to participate but I didn't have guts for some reason. After I came to School Z I didn't have many friends I would just watch other people play, at least there were some in School X and they were nice to me. Here everyone is with their friends, I look at myself. I don't know why because they are smaller and they are immature, I see them fighting with each other... so I never participated; I only passed the exam (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015).

I suspect one of the hurdles for her participation was her not having any friends to encourage or socialize with her. She is placed in L3 and felt that she was not being able to progress much because of other kids in the class. She was frustrated at the attitude of other students towards the teachers. She also described that she was uncertain of her near future as her parents wanted to move to London, Ontario as they did not have close

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relatives in Fredericton or especially people of her own ethnic community. However, she expressed that she was happy being in Canada and saw a good future for herself. When I asked her what she felt about Syrian refugees coming to Canada, she felt that it was a good move by the Canadian government.

Her interview provided a lot of thought provoking statements during this research. She touched upon the subtle racism she felt in the school even though most participants told me that they did not see it happening to them. I was impressed about the fact that she was quite honest about her vulnerabilities such as isolation, loneliness and her worry about the future which are common concerns for newcomers like her.

SP4

SP4 is a 19 year old boy who lives with his family of 4, his parents and his younger brother. He came to Canada in 2010 and started at grade 9.

When I asked him about the initial experience in the school in Fredericton, he said that it was confusing and English language was a problem. Because of the language barrier, he failed the subjects in the first semester of Grade 9 as he did not understand the importance of doing homework in order to pass. He felt that being in ESL class helped him a lot and he was able to get around. He felt that Science, English and Social Studies were the most difficult subjects for him. He did not have any friends in the first semester but after he joined the homework group run by the Multicultural Association of Fredericton, he met some friends. When I asked him what he felt about the teachers and

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schools here, he said the teachers and the schools were better as teachers were friendlier and they gave homework. He thought that homework and projects were good as they kept students busy and more interested rather than rote learning like in Nepal. He graduated from High school in 2015 and is currently studying Information Technology in a local college after working a full year to save money for the college (Field notes, January 28, 2016). He told me that he had always been interested in computers and even took courses on computer while he was in Nepal. He wants to become a software engineer after graduating from college. When I asked him about his advice for other newcomers he stressed on learning English. Currently, he volunteers at his own community organization and holds an executive position. He wants to graduate from the college and find a job in his field and go back to school after few years.

SP5

SP5 is a 22 year old man who lives with his wife, mother, brothers and grandmother in Fredericton. He came to Canada in 2010 and lived in Quebec for five months. He moved to Fredericton as many of his relatives were in Fredericton and his preference of speaking English as he had been learning English in Nepal.

SP5 started at grade 11 when he came to Canada with his family. When he first started the school here, he found that most of the subjects were similar to what he had studied in Nepal except for English. He found difficult to understand different accents and also to communicate at the beginning. However, things got easier as time progressed. When I asked him about the differences that he saw in the education system here and in

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Nepal, he pointed out that education was rote based learning with no input from the students whereas it was the opposite here. He also said that he preferred the test system here as students are assessed on their ability to complete assignments and be creative with their projects. He also added that semester system was better here than full year courses because the students are burdened with exams at the end of the year as it is the only method of testing the students' performance throughout the entire year. When I asked him if he had faced any kind of overt racism or discrimination, he said that he had not faced anything overtly but admitted that there are challenges for newcomers like him.

No..never...I never really faced anything in particular like racism or anything.. I was involved in multicultural and then in school...so I never faced anything directly on the face however, when it comes to integration in school or the living style here.. I did have difficulties at times...but then I told myself that these things happen and you have to take it easy and move on...once I get used to it, it will get easier by itself.. And now it has become much easier”.... in school I din have any of these, at least not that I know of on my face may be at my back but...(SP5, one to one interview, January 18, 2016).

He also told me that he found it challenging to find jobs in the initial days of his arrival in Canada and described his struggle as a new comer this way:

Outside of school, not racist per say but when it comes to hardships, not finding jobs...waiting for jobs, being jobless... we have summer breaks... had to spend

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two summer breaks without jobs...those things came up but nothing racist so far (SP5, one to one interview, January 18, 2016).

He is currently helping out the Syrian newcomers as they arrive in Fredericton through MCAF. I asked him about how his experience had been since he has been working as a resettlement worker himself, he told me that the Syrian newcomers were having a hard time as they did not speak any of the official languages and there were not enough translators available to help them all the time. He also felt that since Canada is a big country with fewer people, it should allow refugees to come in because he understands that they are living in desperate situation due to his own experience as a refugee.

His future plan is to graduate from his degree and get a Chartered Accounting degree. He is not sure if he wants to live in New Brunswick permanently as many of his relatives are in Ontario and the US. However, he insists that if he gets a job in New Brunswick he will stay here.

SP5 is an active member in his community as well as MCAF. He also works a part time job while going to the university. He has been able to graduate from high school, get into the university and find himself a government job and is proud of his achievements.

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SP6

SP6 is a 20 year old girl currently in the first year of college and also works part time. She came to Canada with her family of six which include her parents and her younger sisters in 2010. She works during the weekends and goes to college in the weekdays.

She was placed in grade 11 when she moved to Canada. She attended two schools, School X and School Z to complete her high school in Fredericton. When I asked her experience of the schools here, she talked about the difficulty trying to find her classroom as the school was big as well as trying to communicate with others and understand their accent. She found History to be the hardest subject. She also talked about an incident when people could not pronounce her name and called her a different name. She found it hard to make friends and said,

Teachers were all quite nice but students... In my class we had lot of Chinese people, so they would be in their group all the time, then there were white groups and then I was the only Nepali in class. Other Nepali were in the same grade but we were in different classes because our subjects were different. So when we got homeworks I could ask them but when were asked to do it in class, and were asked to do in a group, other people would already pick their partners but I had no one to pick. So I always would go to people and request to join the group and then they would let me join the group but they never came to ask me (SP6, one to one interview, January 29, 2016)

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She compared the two schools in Fredericton that she went to and found that School Z was not as “strict” as it should have been. She felt like the students were not well taken care of by School Z. When I asked her about the differences in schools in Nepal and here, she talked about the assessment system saying that she preferred it over rote learning. She also talked about the help that Multicultural Association provided a guidance counsellor at her school who guided her and provided important information. When I asked her how she felt about being in Canada, this is what she said:

Back in Nepal we did not have much, we just went to school, ate and slept (laughs) hung out with friends , we had too much fun. Here we have to study, studies are different from Nepal, you have to do assignments and homeworks all the time here and that takes most of the time. And then again there is football, and again I work in the weekends, and I am always busy. When I think about it I ask myself why is there so much work? ...so much work...and whenever there is snow day, I just sleep all day, I don't feel like getting up because I think always work so I just sleep all day (SP6, one to one interview, January 29, 2016)

When I asked her about the refugees coming to Canada and her advice for teachers and school, she said that refugees must be allowed to come in to Canada and schools and teachers should be more understanding and patient with them. Her future plan is to be a social worker and she is planning to move to Ontario with her family because most of her relatives live in Ontario.

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SP7

SP7 is a 22 year old female who came to Canada with her family of five in 2011. SP7 is currently at the 6th level of ESL classes offered by the Multicultural Association. She was put in ESL classes instead of high school as she had turned 18 when she arrived.

She had been going to the classes and working part time at the time of the interview. When she came here, ESL classes were offered at the high school but the programme was removed from the school due to funding issues forcing people like her and others to go to Multicultural Association in Fredericton where class hours are limited.

She found it easy to adjust in the ESL class as most of her classmates were from different countries including Nepal. She plans on completing the ESL classes up to the 9th level as she feels that it will be a way for her to get a good job in future. She volunteers at a local elderly nursing home where she takes elderly Bhutanese-Nepalese to mingle with other seniors. When I asked her how she felt about Syrian refugees coming to Canada, she said,

that...that is really good(smiles) like even we did not know anything before we got here right .. After we came here we learned that this place is like this and found that people treat you nicely here...they should come here and they should get an opportunity to learn like us. (SP7, on to one interview, February 3, 2016)

She also touched upon her cousin's mental illness during the conversation and told me that she tries her best to be active and social in order to not be lonely.

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SP7 touched upon a lot of topics during the interview. This is an example of how newcomers like her might be left out of schooling opportunity due to barriers in the education system. Even though she is determined to succeed, government must think of strategies to include people like her in the education system.

SP8

SP8 is a 19 year old male. He came to Canada with his family in 2011 and started school in grade 10. He was in his final year of college at the time of the interview.

He described that the initial days in school were difficult for him as he was lonely, scared and unconfident because of his poor language skills. However, he made some Canadian friends and other Nepali friends who helped him with school work. When I asked him about the teachers, he said that some teachers were helpful while other were biased towards new comers like him. Here is an excerpt of that conversation with him:

I: Uhhh... and... what about the teachers? How were they?

SP8: Teachers... few were good but the rest were you know... they were bad...they did not treat us well

I: What do you mean by bad?

SP8: By bad.. I mean they kind of discriminated us...

I: Oh really?

SP8: Yea (chuckles)

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I: Why? What did they do or say ?

SP8: Some teachers were kind of racist

I: Why? What did they say?

SP8: They did not like immigrants at all... like you know”

(SP8, one to one interview, February 18, 2016)

He also said that the biasness became less pronounced after he got more used to the school. He also talked about soccer which had helped him to be active in the school club and make new friends. However, he did not find out about it until he was in grade 12.

SP8 had a great suggestion for teachers as well as schools to help them integrate refugee newcomers like him based on his experience. He was able to see the nuances of differential treatment in school and pinpoint out at them. SP8 is also active in his community and sees a bright future for himself. As a researcher, I was happy to see his confidence and optimism about life.

From the above description, we can see that the participants had their own individual stories of struggle and highlighted various aspects of their struggle as newcomers within and outside of school. However, my research is based in the integration of the refugees in the school system and hence I will discuss the themes that emerged based around the topic.

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According to van Manen (1990), theme generation takes data analysis to a deeper level of understanding. Themes are simplification of data and give precise meaning and order to an experience. Van Manen (1990) also says that in phenomenological research, themes may be understood as structures of experience. Here in this section, five themes emerged during the analysis of the data.

Theme 1- Language Barriers Leading to Isolation and Frustration

When the participants were asked about their biggest barrier in the initial days of their school, almost all participants described inability to understand the accent and the language as the biggest hurdle. Some participants who were enrolled in lower grades struggled harder than the ones who were enrolled in grade 11 or 12. The participants have also described the frustration, awkwardness caused by the inability to understand the accent and the language itself. SP8 shared the feeling of loneliness and frustration because of his inability to fit in the as he was unable to speak proper English in his first year. He described,

The biggest thing was communication... it was really hard in communication. We did not know much English then... so it was hard to ask teacher in the class.. I felt shy right... I was scared of talking to anyone... because of that there was a communication lag... in my first year... (SP8, one to one interview, February 18, 2016).

SP8 also shared that he often skipped school in his first year because he was frustrated and scared due to his inability to speak English.

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SP3 also felt that she did not belong in the classroom because of her inability to understand and catch up what others were saying to her.

It didn't help at all was new here.. I didn't know any English at all.. if anyone asked me my name ...what is your name .. I would be like WHAT?? Be like sorry????” (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2016)

The other participants expressed similar frustration that despite learning English for many years in the camp schools in Nepal, they had a hard time communicating with people in their classrooms.SP5 shared his experience in difficulty understanding the teachers and what they were teaching,

And then in the first year i.e.in grade 11 I couldn't understand some teachers...it was really difficult to understand their teaching.... (SP5, one to one interview, January 18, 2016)

From the participants' description above, isolation and frustration can be drawn as sub areas under the language barrier theme. According to, Suarez-Orozco, Pimentel & Martin(2009), newcomer ESL learners are vulnerable to these patterns as they have little language proficiency and are going through cultural shock with very little peer support. This was seen as a common phenomenon in almost all the participants that I interviewed who told me that they had no friends at first and struggled with communication to teachers and other classmates. A participant described that he always feared that his classmates would make fun of him because of his accent (interview transcript, 2016). SP4 expressed how he had failed in his first year because he did not understand what was being told to him at all.

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And my English was really poor and because of that I did not know this and that... I did not know much about the rules ... And then I did not know the rules about the homework...I did not know that we would get our marks based on homework ... teacher would ask us to do homework and I did not understand the homework... because of that I missed most of the homeworks (SP4, one to one interview, January 28, 2016).

Theme 2- The Importance of ESL classes

Scott (2015) found out that kind teachers with a good sense of humour and understanding of cultural diversity can play an important role in the lives of ESL students. Roessingh (2006) also points out that ESL teachers can be very important figures in mediating the transition experiences of newcomer students in schools as well as community.

ESL classes seem to have proved to be very helpful for these newcomers as pointed out by them when asked if they had received any support from the school. According to the participants, seeing others who had been struggling to speak English just like them, made them feel better about being not being able to speak. Many participants also pointed out that the ESL teacher played an important role in making them feel comfortable in the classroom. SP8 presented this perfectly,

We used to have this English language class with an old lady teacher, Mrs. Harrison... she used to teach us.. we used to have a class with her... she used to make us present in the classroom, the class was full of immigrants .. everyone had

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the same level of English, everyone spoke a little English.. so I learned a lot from that.. and then there used to presentations in class so that really helped” (SP8).

The participants also expressed that they felt more comfortable in the ESL class as they felt like they actually fit in the class and understood what the teacher was saying more than in other classes. One of the girls expressed,

I did not understand what everyone said... whenever teachers asked me I did not understand at all.. so that's why ... other than ESL class ..because in that class everyone was from different countries. And they couldn't speak like me...so that was not as awkward and I did not care in that class (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 18, 2015).

When I asked her (SP3) how she was feeling after about two years of being in the ESL classes, she told me that she was more confident than before. However, I noticed that she was still struggling with writing her essays and needed help from her Nepali friends at home (Field notes, January 18, 2016).

ESL classes have drawn a lot of controversies surrounding the use of the English only in the classroom and the blanket approach taken to address the need of all levels of English learners (Gunderson, 2008). Callahan, Muller and Wilkinson (2010) posit that placing immigrant students into ESL classes may hinder their achievement in the future such as getting into a college. However, during this research all participants had been placed in the ESL classes and were actively pursuing and planning higher education except for one participant that I interviewed. That participant was placed in the ESL class

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at the beginning because of her poor English and she was unable to go to school because of her age limitation. The participant was taking ESL classes at the Multicultural Association Fredericton until the time of the interview.

This shows the importance of teachers who are well trained and sensitive to the cultural diversity in the classroom.

Theme 3-Changing Dynamics Between the Teachers and Students

Many of the participants discussed the changing relationship between themselves and the teachers. They felt that teachers posed themselves more as an authority figure than a mentor in the schools in Nepal. The method of learning is usually rote learning and teachers play a role of authority figure whereas the students found the opposite in the Canadian classrooms.

SP3 perfectly described such an experience with her teacher when she was in the school in Nepal,

There was a boy in our class right ... and then he was smart...and this teacher was really weird. He would ask questions to everyone and if this boy answered the question right, he would ask another question and beat him up (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2017)

Another participant also described similar kind of experience he had with his teacher saying that he was afraid of asking too many questions for the fear of getting beaten up. The participants described the feeling of ease and comfort with teachers here

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and how the relationship with the teachers had changed in the schools. They used the words such as understanding, kind and friendly to describe the teachers here. For example, here is how SP2 described her experience with her teachers here:

yea I enjoy it here.. ...Here you don't have to be shy of raising hands and asking questions if you don't understand. Back in Nepal, if you do it , friends would laugh at you as if they knew everything, Here I am not self-conscious at all”
(SP2, focus group discussion transcript, Dec 16, 2015).

Similarly, SP1 recounted an experience with his English teacher, who also happened to be his soccer coach as the most memorable experience in the school. The teacher had helped him during their match trip to different cities by helping him catch up with what he had missed in the class.

Apart from better relationship with the teacher, the participants also described how their confidence had grown in the classrooms here in Canada. SP3 described her experience when I asked her what she liked about the schools here,

I like it here better. They give you homework here and that homework will count as a percentage for your test. Back there, you do homeworks and if you don't you get beaten up, if you do you don't get beaten up (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015).

SP2, during the focus group discussion described how she was no longer afraid of asking questions to the teacher.

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There they say you are being obnoxious by raising your hand... if you are a good student, teachers will treat you well but really mistreat you if you are not as good in studies...and if they want to beat you, they will somehow find a reason to hit you... and then if you answer one question, they would ask you a different question and beat you (SP2, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015)

The above conversation is a very positive indication of the fact that the participants enjoyed being with teachers here unlike in Nepal. They loved the relationship the students shared with teachers in terms of interaction. However, it is interesting to note that some participants expressed frustration over their local counterparts who according to them were disrespectful to the teachers. The female participants were annoyed at the lack of discipline and control the teacher had over students. They were also not happy the way some students teachers for granted in schools here. Here is an example of their frustration:

SP3: But I don't like the students here. They don't respect the teachers at all

SP2: Yea they do that

I: Here?

SP3: yeah they have to be pampered like their own children

SP2: Yeah in my Child Study class, oh my God, I get so angry!

SP3: May be because we are obedient

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SP2: Anything the teacher says, they start giggling and don't do the work they are given.

I: Yeah they don't respect the teachers?

SP3: yeah ... I feel soo ..

SP2: Some are good and talented and they do whatever the teacher asks them to do...Others don't do homework. Today, in Child Study class, they had asked us do four presentations for a 3 year old baby about their physical, emotional and social conditions. And during presentation there are only 1 or 2 people. Nobody brings the presentation. They really don't care about this teacher. But with some they are not like that...but with this teacher they swear and all...

(SP2 and SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015)

This could be perhaps from the fact that the value system that they grew up with and the conflicting relationship that other students share with the teacher here in Canada. More importantly, the female participants' adherence to rules and discipline perhaps speak to their own gender roles and boundaries in the patriarchal society we live in.

Theme 4- Importance of Sports as a Means of Interaction for the Newcomers

Sports and recreation are widely accepted as an essential part of one's physical, mental and emotional development. There are few studies done on how sport itself plays a role in helping the newcomer students in schools although there is an agreement that

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sports can be a good means to break the barrier between the new comers and the natives. A study completed by Institute of Canadian Citizenship in July 2014 showed that immigrants find sports as place to meet new people and connect. The immigrants who participated in the study said sports helped them learn Canadian culture. The report emphasizes,

Sports are safe places to meet other Canadians who share similar interests. On the field and in the locker room, new citizens learn the social norms of their new home. Occasionally, those conversations delve more deeply into Canadian politics, history and culture” (ICC, 2014, p.4).

Similar kinds of sentiments were discovered during the course of my research. In fact, when I asked participants if they had engaged in any extra- curricular activities, the participants (mostly boys) explained how sports had helped them make new friends and feel more confident when I asked them if they had engaged in any extra- curricular activities. SP1 benefitted a lot from joining soccer club in his school and had fond memories while being a part of the club. This is how he describes playing soccer helped him make friends in school,

It felt strange.... I did not have too many friends... I wasn't sure who to speak to or not to speak to...I did not meet a lot of people...but later there were more...and then we started getting together and played soccer...after that it was easy(SP1, face to face interview, December 1, 2015)

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He further described how his experience with school soccer team had enriched his experience especially as he recalled his soccer coach helping him with his school work while they were travelling for matches (Field notes, December 1, 2015).

SP3 couldn't stop gushing about how much she enjoyed the physical education classes as she had never been to any physical education classes. She described that she was able to make some local friends in the class.

Yea in Gym class (excited tone) in gym class we were four of us , including one Canadian, we really got along together even though we didn't know.. a Filipino friend was there, a girl and a Chinese boy.. so in gym class I really enjoyed the gym class the most because I had friends so I played a lot ..and then I won some (laughs) in dance and all I won some trophies and chocolates so that was fun (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015).

The girl participants however lamented that they were living an active lifestyle when they were living in the camps in Nepal but were limited to catching up with schoolwork here in the schools. SP3 who described that she had enjoyed participating in the sports in the former school she went to in Fredericton.

This school doesn't have much but when I was in School X, I won lot of prizes in tennis and badminton. The teachers would encourage me to participate but I didn't have guts for some reason. After I came to School Y, I didn't have many friends

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I would just watch other people play, at least there were some in School X and they were nice to me (SP3, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015)

SP8 remarked that he was not able to play soccer because he was unaware that there was a soccer club in his school. He found out about it much later when he was in Grade 12 year. Once he joined the team, despite the short span of time, he was able to make great number of friends.

The above conversations show that sports could be a useful tool to overcome the barrier between the newcomers and other students in the schools. We can also see the differences in the two schools that the participants attended here in Fredericton. School X was more welcoming to the participants while School Z was not as welcoming according to the participants. This is a potential barrier to the newcomers especially girls when it comes to integration in schools. A Swedish study found that the immigrant boys participate in sports, especially football, often more passionately involved than boys who are ethnic Swedes (Fundberg, 2004 & 2010; RF, 2003, 2010). The study also found that the immigrant boys do not always feel welcome or visible when attending club sports (RF, 2010) and girls overall are less involved in sports (Nilsson, 1998; RF, 2003 & 2010 as cited in Herrting, 2013). In the study by Canadian Institute for Citizenship, it was found that newcomers find Canadian sports system to be very structured and difficult to access (CIC, 2014). The study also shows that the initial years for newcomers are spent on trying to learn the new environment and there is a lot of hesitation among the new

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comers when it comes to participating in sports. So sometimes, sports can be a barrier in itself if it is not welcoming to the newcomers.

This is reflected in these research participants from the above conversation. The pattern seems to be that the boys seem to be more engaged in the sports and were able to make friends easily. However, the girls were reluctant to join any sport and be consistent with the sport hence were limited to their very own small circle of Bhutanese-Nepalese friends or no friends at all. A few girls went to the multicultural association to play sports such as volleyball and basketball because they were hesitant to join the sports teams in their schools and felt more comfortable within their own circle of Bhutanese-Nepalese friends. Removing the barriers for the newcomers is a potential area that Fredericton schools should work as it is very clear from the participants that sports can be a great way of helping newcomers feel welcome in the schools and can facilitate integration.

Theme 5- Hope and Resilience Among the Youths

Most participants seemed very optimistic about the future and were determined to move forward in life despite their background and struggle in school. SP2 felt that the newcomer students were much more hard working and ambitious than the local students and saw a brighter future for newcomers like herself. She also mentioned that she was relieved and happy to be in Canada and expressed her optimism about her future in this way,

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When we were there we used to study about 8 wonders of the world, we studied about South America, North America. And I used to think like it was too far away.. but since I came here.. I learnt everything. So I am really happy. In Nepal, we couldn't have done anything like if I wanted to become a doctor, I couldn't be that.. so here I can do what I want (SP2, Focus Group Discussion, December 16, 2015)

The family of one of the participants expressed that they were really happy that they were in Canada. They told me about their plan of buying a house and moving there (field note, December, 2015). SP5 who is fairly active in the community expressed that he was happy to be in Canada and was able to plan his future such as making a career and starting a family which would have been a challenge in Nepal. He described the way his life changed as,

I find it good here. Like when we were there it was bad. Nepalese themselves are worried about their future and we lived in camps so our future was really uncertain. Here I can do whatever I want. I have choices for buying things, so life has really changed here. So I think, It's really good for us here. So I have made plans and thoughts about future and I feel like I can achieve them here if I work hard and continue. But when I was in Nepal, out of 100% the probability of getting what I wanted to do was only 10%. So life has really changed here (SP5, one to one interview, January 18, 2016).

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SP8 who is eager to finish his college degree told about his plan to find a job in the field and possibly move to another province. He also expressed that he would like to return to New Brunswick for another degree after making enough savings.

Summary

In the above sections, I attempted to highlight the major ideas that I drew out of the interviews as themes in relation to the research questions that I laid out at the beginning of this research. In the following chapter, I will discuss the meaning of the themes that emerged in this chapter and also the scope of further research.

CHAPTER FIVE- DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, I discuss the findings, limitations of this study, recommendations for the stakeholders in participant's voice, and areas for further research.

This study was based on the guiding question, "How do the newcomers (Bhutanese-Nepalese) subjectively assess their overall integration experience in the schools?" followed by sub questions, "What is the experience of the Bhutanese- Nepalese newcomers in the Canadian education system (schools)?", "How do they differentiate their schooling experience in the refugee camps in Nepal and schools in Fredericton?" And "What were the difficulties faced in the school in Canada? What did they like and dislike about the school?"

With respect to first question, the participants told me about their transitional experience in Canada and the differences they saw between the schools in the camps and the schools they were enrolled here. A sub question to delve deeper into the question, "What did you like about the schools in Fredericton?" was asked to all the participants. This was an attempt to get a general idea on how the newcomers perceive their transition and feel about the overall education system here.

The participants were quick to highlight the physical differences that they saw between the schools along with the teaching style and the teachers themselves. They pointed out that they were initially shocked and confused at being in the new school environment and seeing a big number of students. They also noticed the school uniform

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policy did not exist in the Canadian schools which they were happy about. They also talked about how things were more relaxed in Nepal such as they did not have to work hard on the assignments or test throughout the year except during the annual exams. Most participants described how they did not take their studies seriously back in Nepal but things had changed here as they had no choice but to study hard here as everything was based on individual performances and projects. The major difference however, is discussed in one of the themes in the previous chapter. Under the theme, “Changing Dynamics of the Student Teacher Relationship”, I have described in detail the experience of the participants about the deeper differences between the schools in the camps in Nepal and the schools here in Fredericton.

Pedagogy is still conservative and teacher centered in countries like Nepal where teachers are regarded as the epitome of knowledge and authority and even Godlike figures in a predominantly Hindu country. Teachers are expected to exercise power and control over the students. This expectation puts undue pressure on teachers who may feel that not knowing answers to questions diminishes their status as the “teacher”. Hence many practice authority and power over students who may pose as a threat to them.

Western Pedagogy is heavily influenced by John Dewey’s pedagogical theory where he views school education as a part of a child’s socialization process. He views that schools should present the social realities for a person to grow rather than putting a child into box and expect them to grow a certain predetermined way. He continues to say that,

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I believe that, as such simplified social life, the school life should grow gradually out of the home life; that it should take up and continue the activities with which the child is already familiar in the home. (Dewey, 1897, p.77).

Dewey further emphasizes the role of teachers as a guide instead of an authority figure. He says,

The teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child, but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences” (Dewey, 1897.p.78).

Cummins (1997) provided a framework to study the factors that affect the academic trajectories of an ESL Youth. He mentioned that educational structure plays an important role in shaping this trajectory for immigrant youths. By educational structure, he means the role of the educator, their attitude and vision in motivating these youths to be successful among other factors.

This was evident in the conversation I had with the participants where the participants described that they felt relaxed around teachers in Fredericton and were not afraid of asking questions unlike in Nepal where students are often beaten up as punishment.

In a study conducted by Chui et al (2012) found that newcomer students who shared a good relationship with teachers felt a sense of belonging to school and had better

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attitude towards schools. Teachers play an important role in fostering a sense belonging to school community for immigrant students. They further explain that a kind and compassionate teacher helps to negate the psychological stress of the new comer students (Chui, Pong, Mori, & Chow, 2012). Further, support from teachers has shown to greatly impact the way in which newcomers are able to adjust to a new environment (Gutierrez, 2011). Additionally, Suarez-Orozco, Pimentel and Martin (2009), have suggested that school-based relationships foster engagement and academic success among newcomer youth. Scott (2015) found that the EAL learners preferred EAL teachers with caring, patient attitude and someone with a sense of humour that has a sincere interest in who they are and in their cultural heritage.

The other important aspect that the participants pointed out was the opportunity for clubs, sports and other extra- curricular activities in the schools of Fredericton. The participants described that in Nepal they had limited time to engage in any other extra - curricular activities other than going to school. However, most of the male participants had been involved in school sports club as well as other clubs in their Canadian schools and were able to make new friends. The girls were often limited to their own circle of friends in the schools in Canada due to gender barrier. The theme, Sports as Means of Interaction for the Newcomers discussed in the Findings chapter, also speaks to this question. The participants described that they did not have lot of opportunities in the Nepal to be engaged in extra- curricular activities such as sports club unlike here. In a study done in Australia, it was found that young newcomers used sports as a means to

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build trust and negotiate their past, present and future (Olliff, 2008). Many young newcomers cited sports as a means to learn new skills and make new friends (Olliff, 2008). This was evident especially among the male participants of this study.

The second guiding question for this research was “What were the difficulties faced in the school in Canada? What did they like and dislike about the school?” Under this question, I asked some other sub questions such as “What did you find difficult in the school?”, “What is your most memorable positive/negative experience in the school?” This question is perhaps answered by the theme, “Language Barrier Leading to Isolation and Frustration” identified in the earlier chapter. The theme highlights the difficulty faced by the newcomers in the schools in Canada. This theme was drawn from the common statements made by the participants during the interview. Most of the participants pointed to the lack of their own English language skill that made them feel isolated and behind other peers in the classroom. As identified in the literature review, education and language proficiency is seen as a fundamental goal and means of integration.

Newcomers face the challenge of understanding and communicating in a different language in a foreign country while they are going through cultural shock. This pressure is even more persistent on children/youth in schools. Olsen (2010) states that a major part of newcomer youths is spent on trying to learn to be proficient in English. She found that speaking English language for newcomer students was fundamental to being seen as Americans. She mentions, “English language is not just a means of communication but a social and political marker of affiliation and belonging” (p.197). English language

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proficiency affects students' ability to detect social nuances in the school setting and is also highly predictive of academic performance (Muñoz-Sandoval, Cummins, Alvarado, & Ruef, 1998 as cited in Suarez-Orozco et al., 2009). The majority of recently arrived immigrants face the challenge of mastering English while adjusting to new schools and acquiring the necessary academic skills (Ruiz-de-Velazo et al., 2001). In their longitudinal study, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) found among 5,262 second generation immigrant students from 12 different countries, English language fluency was a key factor in predicting more positive academic adjustment. Even more so, refugees are likely to be in a state of poor physical and mental health and may be more stressed (Kenise Murphy Kilbride; CERIS. p.3).

Similar to the literature, the participants reflected that their initial days of school were filled with confusion and anxiety. Even though they had learnt English before they moved to Canada, their difficulty mainly was in understanding the accent and communicating. The participants also pointed out that understanding the teachers was a struggle except for the ESL teacher. The ESL teacher made them feel understood and valued and seeing other students in the same struggle with the language as them made them feel better about their journey. A participant noted lack of attention of some teachers to newcomers like him in the initial days and he felt that the teachers were "biased" at the beginning. As the participants grew more comfortable with the language, they were able to be more open with the teachers and other students.

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This highlights the need for teachers in school who are trained to deal with ESL students like the participants and are patient and empathetic to their struggle and bridging the existing distance between the teachers and new comer students especially refugees.

In thesis research carried out by Scott (2015), among EAL learners, the participants pointed out that EAL (English as Additional Language) teachers had a better understanding of the cultural diversity, cultural background and overall better qualities such as humour and empathy. The interviews from the participants also points out the fact that teachers who are well trained and understand cultural diversity seem to be liked by all the participants.

While some teachers are doing a great work to help the newcomers, some perhaps need extra help from the schools through trainings and diversity education. For example, SP1 recounted a fond experience of his soccer coach taking extra time to help him during the time they were travelling for soccer matches, SP3 was asked to write on Christmas even though she had never celebrated it before (Field notes, December, 2015). SP1's teacher seems well prepared to help newcomers while SP3's teacher might need a little more support to understand SP3's background and be more sensitive towards different cultures.

The third guiding question of this research was: How do the newcomers (Bhutanese-Nepalese) subjectively assess their overall integration experience in the school? I asked few sub-questions to get response from the participants on how they felt about being in the schools and in Canada. The sub question was: How strongly did you

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feel part of the school community? What made you feel that way? Did you ever feel like an outsider – why or why not?

Many newcomers face cultural, academic and other challenges when they arrive at a new place. However, once the challenges have been met newcomers have ambition and drive to lift themselves from where they started as newcomers. Studies in the US have demonstrated that immigrant origin youth have more positive attitudes toward their schools (Suárez-Orozco Suárez and Orozco 1995). Gibson (1988) found out that often newcomers/immigrants use their educational status as a tool to move upward within the society. They children of immigrants of all ethnic backgrounds tend to stay longer than the native school mates and tend to have higher aspirations. She mentions,

Immigrants, on the whole, have higher educational and occupational aspirations than indigenous groups, majority as well a minority and are more determined to use education as a strategy for upward social mobility than non-immigrants or comparable class background. Immigrant parents and children assume that education can enhance opportunities for jobs. High expectations and assumptions about the value of schooling appear to have far more impact on the child's decision to persist in school than either family background or actual school performance (Gibson, 1998, p.174).

Martinez (2015) mentioned in his article that newly arrived immigrant draw inspiration from other immigrant success stories in various fields and aspire to be one. According to Kao and Tienda (1995) first-generation immigrants demonstrate certain

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advantages; they enter U.S. schools with tremendous optimism (Kao & Tienda, 1995), high aspirations (Fuligni, 2001; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), dedication to hard work, positive attitudes toward school (C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995), and an ethic of family support for advanced learning (Li, 2004). First-generation immigrant students show a number of positive academic behaviors that often lead to stronger than expected academic outcomes (García Coll & Marks, 2011; C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995). This value has been reflected in my participants of this research who are the first generation in their families to attend formal education in Canada.

Similarly the theme, “Hope and Resilience Among the Youths” discussed in the Findings chapter also highlights what the participants feel about their overall experience and their future here in Canada. Almost all participants told me that they see hope for themselves after finishing high school as they want to pursue careers and further studies. Most of the participants that I interviewed were very much engaged in their own communities as well as other volunteer activities. Some are holding a part-time job and pursuing school to make sure that they complete their studies and have a better future for themselves and their family. Most of them had found their way in the community as well as school and were able to help other newcomers. This indicates that these newcomers have been willing to be a part of Canadian society and are on the right track to be more engaged in the society. In a study carried out by Sears, Joshi et al (2013) here in New Brunswick, newcomers identified good education, good jobs as a way to contribute to the Canadian society in a long term. The research participants in this study perhaps feel the

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same way about being civically engaged in the Canadian society as a way to integrate better. Their willingness to be active in their own communities and non-formal organizations tells us about their willingness to come out of the “refugee” and “newcomer” box and be a part of the Canadian society by breaking barriers.

Limitation and Scope for Future Research

There were various limitations to the scope of this research when I started this research such as time and resources. I discovered during the literature review that there was a very limited research done about the refugees in New Brunswick especially about the refugee youths. Second, my research was solely based on the participants who had arrived as refugees and were selected from a certain age group in the Bhutanese-Nepalese community who had spent significant time as refugees in Nepal.

As the research progressed and I started to analyse the data, I realized that there were other limitations in the research questions and many questions could have been framed differently. However, I am hopeful that continuing research within the province of New Brunswick can be carried out in future that covers a wider age range and other refugee groups and juxtaposes how the participants’ experiences compare with one another. I also feel that the parents’ experience of the integration will make a rich data in the area of refugee integration. The current influx of Syrian refugees and Syrian youths going to schools in Fredericton will probably add a whole new dimension to the integration challenges in the schools as well as the communities. This also opens up a big area for further research to understand the experience of the Syrian refugees most of

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whom came from war torn areas unlike the Bhutanese-Nepalese refugees. Similarly, teachers' experience with the newcomers in the classroom also can provide another side of the story when it comes to the newcomer integration and what can be done to better it.

Recommendations

The recommendations that I provide here are based on the participants' own experience in the schools. Their recommendations provide valuable insight and possible courses of action to stakeholders such as teachers, schools and government bodies who are responsible in the successful integration of the refugees and other newcomers in Canada.

The interviews with the participants pointed out that teachers are the most important people who can help new comers feel supported and heard in the schools. The participants also pointed out that they liked their ESL teacher the most as they were empathetic, kind and had a great way with her students and also seem to prefer teachers who had had international teaching experience.

This suggests that intercultural and diversity education is an important skill asset to the teachers in this changing context. The teachers need the knowledge and skill to engage newcomers who may have come from vulnerable backgrounds with very little English language skills. The teachers should be keen to understand the students and their cultural background. Some participants recounted their experience on how some teachers seemed to be biased towards them and other newcomers. Such attitudes clearly need to be

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changed and this can happen only when teachers are educated to be empathetic and patient with newcomers.

The participants also suggested that the teachers should come up with strategies to engage newcomers with their Canadian peers through various activities in the classroom. A female participant expressed that she felt left out during group projects in the classroom as everyone picked their circle of friends. Engaging the newcomers in group activities by assigning pre-arranged groups can be a great way to promote relationship-building among the newcomers and local students in the classroom as suggested by the participants. Professional development trainings can be very useful for teachers to be more pragmatic in the classroom and schools must encourage every teacher in their school to have them and create a way for the teachers to get them. Another way for the teachers as well as school administrators, would be having a regular meeting with various newcomer groups to understand if their needs are being met in the classroom and to discuss if they are being supported enough. Schools must create a positive and inclusive learning opportunities for the newcomers and emphasize on peer networks, mentorship among the students by learning from the experiences of newcomer graduates. Inviting the past graduates to school committee meetings may be a good idea to think of the ways to bridge the gap between the newcomer students and other students.

A few participants also pointed out the mental health aspect of the newcomers saying depression, frustration and loneliness are common among the newcomer students. This is even more common among the newcomers who have very little English language

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skill. As I discussed in the Findings and Discussion above, that lack of language skill isolates the newcomers in the classroom and directly affects their self-confidence causing them stress and anxiety. As per the participants, it is important to have a mental health counsellor other than the guidance counsellor specifically for the newcomers who can counsel them and help them overcome their stresses. This person also needs to be aware of cross-cultural issues and be able to understand where the newcomers come from. Some of the schools in New Brunswick are currently incorporating Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) for children and youth with emotional, behavioural and mental health issues. However, this programme is limited to few areas in the province and the question whether if newcomers can benefit from this programme still remains to be explored.

The other recommendation that the participants had for the school was that the schools should provide the newcomers with the translators especially when they are new. This is important for newcomers who have very little English language ability and are new to the school environment. This could perhaps be co-ordinated with Multicultural Association of Fredericton (MCAF) here in Fredericton and other community organizations such as YMCA in other parts of New Brunswick. I suggest MCAF here because MCAF is the main organization that receives government funding to work with the newcomers and is perhaps the most equipped with resources to cover the needs of the newcomers.

The participants often expressed that sports could be a great tool to break the barrier between themselves and the Canadian peers. Research on sports as an arena for

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integration has mainly focused on how immigrants' cultures and/or religions create barriers to participation in sports (Cortis, 2009; Fundberg, 2012; Handslagsrapport, 2007; Walseth & Fasting, 2003; Skille, 2006a; Strandbu, 2004). In a study done in Australia, it was found that young newcomers used sports as a means to build trust and negotiate their past, present and future (Olliff, 2008). Many young new comers cited sports as a means to learn new skills and make new friends in their study. While the girls struggled to venture out, the boys found it easier to get involved and make new friends. The school administrators should understand that sports can be a great avenue for newcomers to make friends and build confidence. Sports in schools can be designed to make it more welcoming to all newcomers especially female newcomers. This can be done by seeking leadership from the newcomer students themselves or using physical education classes for knowledge exchange. For example, a newcomer student could teach the class about a popular sport in their country and everybody in the class could try to learn it rather than forcing the newcomers to learn a new sport in the schools.

The participants expressed that the multicultural association had helped their families settle in Fredericton. Even though some participants felt that the resettlement officers helped them find their ways in school, many had no support system after the initial days. They barely participated in the homework club organized by the MCAF nor were they told about the courses and homework. One of the participants said he failed in the first year because he did not understand the importance of homework or the courses. The newcomers are left alone scrambling after the initial help and many are unaware that

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they can seek help from the MCAF officer at their school. Multicultural association should make sure that an integration officer is present at the school to help the newcomers whenever they need them. Integration is a continuous process and does not end after the new comers are enrolled in the school. The person should be available to them and help them navigate through the complicated school system throughout their life as students in the schools.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to understand the integration experience of the Bhutanese-Nepalese refugees in Fredericton schools. There is a clear urgency of research in this field as Canada accepts more refugees and immigrants every year and even more so in New Brunswick which is fairly new to accepting a diverse range of immigrants.

The literature review suggested that refugee youth may find it hard to integrate especially if they arrive at the latter years of schooling and often have a high drop- out rate (Suarez-Orozco, Rhodes and Milburn, 2009). This was brought into question by the participants that I interviewed. All the participants that I interviewed however, had either graduated from high school or were in the final year of high school and pursuing higher education. The participants also made me question my initial hypothesis about their negative experiences. Most of them had a positive experience in the schools and had very little negative things to say about the people in school.

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When it comes to understanding the integration experience of the research participants, this statement made by SP5 will probably stay with me for a long time,

When it comes to integration in school or the living style here... I did have difficulties at times...but then I told myself that these things happen and you have to take it easy and move on...once I get used to it, it will get easier by itself.. And now it has become much easier (SP5, one to one interview, January 18, 2016).

This statement will remind me of the resilience of the Bhutanese-Nepalese refugees and other newcomers like them who have overcome several difficulties but are optimistic about their future in Canada. The refugees I interviewed have shown positive growth and attitudes about Canada and their Canadian experience giving hopes for other newcomers who come to Canada for a good future. The youth have been doing their part to fit well into their society but is the society making them feel welcomed? This opens up a potential research area for the knowledge building. Wilson-Forsberg (2012) highlights that the informal relationships that are built outside of work and schools are the actual tools that really help the newcomers give a sense of belonging in the Canadian society.

Moreover, the participants' stories have inspired to reflect on my own experience as a newcomer in Canada. My hope is that this study will provide necessary backdrop and scope for further work that needs to be done to help the newcomers especially the refugee youths in Fredericton and across Canada.

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Appendix I

Letter to the Participants

Project Title: **The Integration of Bhutanese-Nepalese in the Schools of
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada: A Study**

Principal Investigator: Nigam Khanal

Candidate, MPhil in Public Policy

University of New Brunswick

506-238-7571, nkhanal@unb.ca

Dear Participant,

This purpose of this letter is to invite you to provide your consent for your participation in an important research study. The focus of the work is on how youths like you from Bhutanese-Nepalese community have integrated in the schools of Fredericton, New Brunswick. The research aims to document the experience of former Bhutanese-Nepalese refugees who are going or have gone to schools in Fredericton and to identify potential policy improvements to better meet the needs of new comers. The research will be done through individual interviews, which will simply involve you describing your experiences on various aspects of schooling in New Brunswick.

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

The work can be done at a time of your choosing and will involve **one** interview lasting between **45 minutes to one hour**. The interviews will be audio-recorded. The information I collect will be for research purposes only. You will not be identified by name when information is analyzed or in any findings that come from the study. Your participation is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the research, and to withdraw any information you have provided, up to one month after the interview has taken place.

I have attached an information sheet that answers some of the questions that you might have. If you have any further questions about this work, you may call me, Nigam Khanal, on 506-238-7571 or email me at nkhanal@unb.ca. The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and certified by the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee and the University Research Ethics Board at the University of New Brunswick. If you wish to contact someone not associated with this study to ask questions or raise concerns please contact Dr. Mary McKenna, Acting Dean, Interdisciplinary Studies, UNB, mmkenna@unb.ca I trust that I can look forward to your cooperation and hope you might find it an interesting experience.

Yours sincerely,

Nigam Khanal

Mhil in Public Policy

University of New Brunswick

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

Fredericton, NB E3B 5A3

Phone 5062387571

APPENDIX II

SOME QUESTIONS THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE ABOUT THE STUDY

Q. Why was I selected for the study?

A. This study is particularly done in focus to the Bhutanese-Nepalese community you represent. You also fall in the age group that this study is looking for.

Q. Do I have to participate?

A. No, and you may withdraw from the study at any time if you do decide to participate.

Q. What exactly is involved?

A. You will be interviewed by the researcher for about 45 to 60 minutes asking about your experience in school, teachers and other students.

Q. How long will it take?

A. There will be one interview which will take between 45 – 60 minutes or even shorter than that.

Q. What are the benefits of participating in the study?

A. The study is an opportunity for you to contribute to a research which will help people who share similar background as yours in Canada. This will be an opportunity for

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

people to hear your story and do something more substantial to help people like you in schools or outside schools.

Q. What are the risks?

A. There are no real risks.

Q. Will my information be kept confidential?

A. Yes. The information we collect will be for research purposes only. You will not be identified by

name when information is analyzed or in any findings that come from the study.

Q. Have the school authorities approved this?

A. Yes. The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and certified by the University Research Ethics Board at the University of New Brunswick. If you wish to contact someone not associated with this study to ask questions or raise concerns please contact Dr. Mary McKenna, Acting Dean, Interdisciplinary Studies, UNB, mmckenna@unb.ca, Phone: 506-451-6872 or 506-447-3044.

A FINAL NOTE: Thank you for helping me with this important work!

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

APPENDIX III

CONSENT FORM – Student/ Participant

Title of Project: **Integration of Bhutanese Nepalese in the Schools of
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada**

Researcher: Nigam Khanal, Candidate, MPhil in Policy Studies, Interdisciplinary
Studies, University of New Brunswick

PARTICIPANT CONSENT:

I agree to _____ participate in this study.

(please print your name)

Student signature:

Date:

Thank you very much. If you would like to validate this interview, kindly provide
your email address below:

APPENDIX IV

Letter to Parents/Guardians

Dear Parent:

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to provide approval for your child's participation in an important research study. The focus of the work is on how youths like your child from Bhutanese-Nepalese community have integrated in the schools of Fredericton, New Brunswick. The research aims to point out the policy gaps if there are any to better suit the needs of new comers.

The research will be done through individual interviews, which will simply involve your child describing their experiences on various aspects of schooling in New Brunswick. The work will not intrude too much into the regular academic program at school and will involve your child in **one** interview lasting between **45 minutes to one hour**. The interviews will be audio recorded. The information I collect will be for research purposes only. Your child will not be identified by name when information is analyzed or in any findings that come from the study. Your child's participation is voluntary, and he/she is free to withdraw from the research, and to withdraw any information they have provided, without penalty, up to one month after the

interview has taken place.

I have attached an information sheet that answers some of the questions that you might have. If you have any further questions about this work, you may call me, Nigam

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
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Khanal, on 506-238-7571 or email me at nkhanal@unb.ca. The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and certified by the Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee and the University Research Ethics Board at the University of New Brunswick. If you wish to contact someone not associated with this study to ask questions or raise concerns please contact Dr. Mary McKenna, Acting Dean, Interdisciplinary Studies, UNB, mmkenna@unb.ca.

I trust that I can look forward to your cooperation and hope you might find it an interesting experience.

Yours sincerely,

Nigam Khanal

Mhil in Public Policy

University of New Brunswick

Fredericton, NB E3B 5A3

Phone 5062387571

APPENDIX V

SOME QUESTIONS THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE ABOUT THE STUDY

Q. Why was my child selected for the study?

A. This study is particularly done in focus to the Bhutanese-Nepalese community you represent. Your child also fall in the age group that this study is looking for.

Q. Does my child have to participate?

A. No, and he or she may withdraw at any time.

Q. What exactly is involved?

A. Your child will be interviewed by the researcher for about 45 to 60 minutes asking them about their experience related to school, teachers and other students.

Q. How long will it take?

A. There will be one interview which will take between 45 minutes to an hour, so I will not intrude too

much into your child's normal school activities.

Q. What are the benefits of participating in the study?

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A. The study is an opportunity for your child to contribute to a major investigation which aims to map how youths from your community are integrating in the society particularly in the schools. By

discovering their experiences, the government and policy makers may come up with better plans to help newcomers like you and your children.

Q. What are the risks?

A. There are no real risks. Children involved in the work generally find it interesting.

Q. Will my child's information be kept confidential?

A. Yes. The information we collect will be for research purposes only. Your child will not be identified by name when information is analyzed or in any findings that come from the study.

If you have any further questions about this work, you may call me, Nigam Khanal, on 506-238-7571 or you can contact me by email: nkkhanal@unb.ca or my supervisor Dr. Alan Sears by email at asears@unb.ca. The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by Research and Ethics Board at University of New Brunswick, Fredericton.

A FINAL NOTE: Thank you for helping me with this important work!

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

APPENDIX VI

**CONSENT/ASSENT FORM – PARENT OR GUARDIAN AND
PARTICIPANT**

**Title of Project: Integration of Bhutanese- Nepalese in the Schools of
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada: A Study**

Researcher: Nigam Khanal, University of New Brunswick

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT:

I agree to my child _____ participating in this
study. (please print name of child)

Parent/guardian signature:

Date:

PARTICIPANT ASSENT:

I agree to _____ participate in this study.

(please print your name)

Participant signature:

Date

Thank you very much. If you would like to validate this interview, kindly provide
your email address below:

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

APPENDIX VII

Questionnaires

Demographic

1. How old are you? _____

2. Where were you born? _____

3. What gender do you prefer to be addressed as? _____

4. What languages do you speak?

5. What language do you speak most of the time?

At school? _____ At

home? _____ Outside of home and school?

6. How many years did you attend school outside of Canada, and where?

7. How many years did you attend school in Canada, and where?

Semi Structured Questionnaire

Now, I would now like to ask you about your experience as a student in the school:

INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

1. Can you tell me the overall experience for you in the first year of schooling here? For example what did you think of the subjects, teachers, classmates, participation in the extra curricular activities?

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1. What differences did you see between the schools here and in Nepal?

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2. What did you like about the schools here in Fredericton?

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INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

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3. What kind of difficulties did you experience in the Fredericton schools, if any?

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4. What kind of support system was provided by teachers, friends, families or other organizations, if any?

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5. How often did you participate in the extra- curricular activities or join clubs etc? Is there a memorable experience related to the extra- curricular activities, either positive or negative?

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INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

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6. How strongly did you feel part of the school community? What made you feel that way? Did you ever feel like an outsider – why or why not?

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7. Do you have any suggestion on how teachers and school staff can make the experience of newcomers in the school system better and more memorable?

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8. Do you have any suggestion on how schools in general can make the experience of newcomers in the school system better and more memorable?

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INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF
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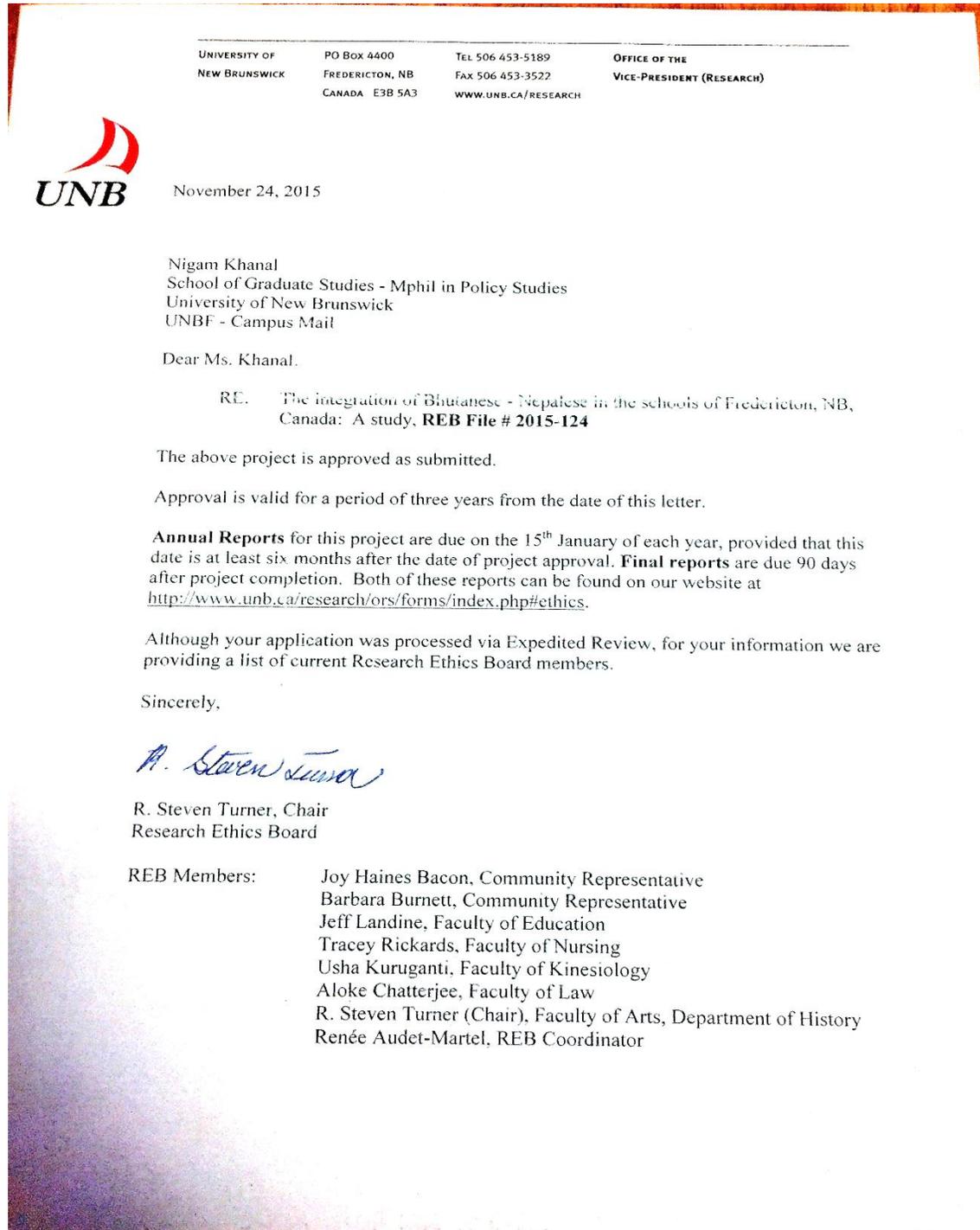
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9. Do you have any suggestion on how any others, such as fellow students or local, provincial, or federal governments can make the experience of newcomers in the school system better and more memorable?

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INTEGRATION OF BHUTANESE-NEPALESE REFUGEES IN THE SCHOOLS OF FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

Appendix VIII- Ethics Board Approval Letter



APPENDIX IX

CURRICULUM VITAE or CV

Candidate's full name: Nigam Khanal

Universities attended:

Post Graduate Diploma in Women Studies, Tribhuwan University, 2012

Bachelor of Arts in Development Studies, Kathmandu University, 2010

Publications:

(2013)Fostering Civic Engagement Among Newcomers, Citizenship Education Research and Development Group, Faculty of Education, Final Report Submitted to Department of Post- Secondary, Education, Training and Labour

(2012)Inventory of Existing Materials on Social Accountability in Nepal, Program for Accountability in Nepal (PRAN)