

The Settlement and Integration Experiences of the Recent Middle Eastern Immigrants Residing in the Suburbs of Vancouver (Surrey, Burnaby, and Coquitlam)



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Research Questions

This research examines:

- Major barriers and challenges faced by recent Middle Eastern immigrants in the suburbs,
- Coping strategies used by recent Middle Eastern immigrants to overcome their barriers
- Facilities and settlement services in the suburbs: Are they culturally- oriented to immigrants' needs?
- Policy recommendations to improve the settlement and integration experiences of the recent Middle Eastern immigrants

Background

New trends in immigrants' origins and settlement patterns in the Canadian immigration context

Immigrant origins

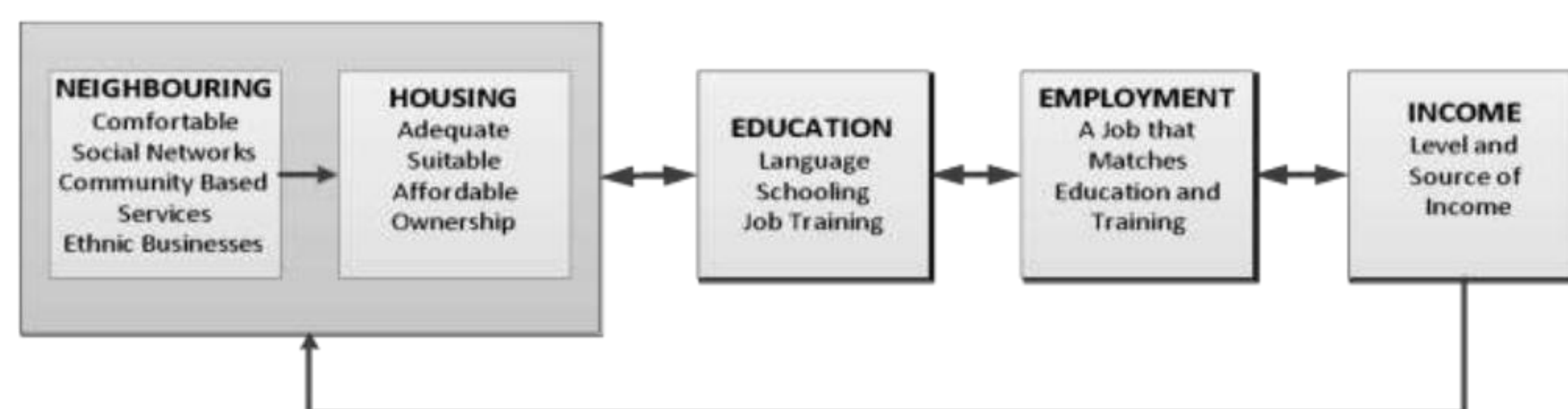
- Recent changes from Europeans, middle class immigrants to more visible minority groups in Canadian suburbs
- Middle Eastern immigrants are a growing and understudied visible minority group in the suburbs

Immigrant settlement patterns

- Recent changes in immigrants' destinations from inner cities to inner/outer suburbs

Emerging needs of the new immigrants settling in the suburbs

Immigrant integration model



Study population



Recent Middle Eastern immigrants

Study Area

- Three Vancouver suburbs:

- Surrey
- Burnaby
- Coquitlam



Where about 80% of the Middle Eastern immigrants in Greater Vancouver choose to settle.

Methodology*

- Semi-structured informal **interviews** with **key informants who are involved in the settlement service organizations**, located in three suburbs of Vancouver: Surrey, Burnaby, and Coquitlam.
- Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by themes.

* This study is a part of a larger study conducted at UBC Okanagan as the researcher's PhD thesis.

Findings

Themes drawn from the interviews' analysis:

- Settlement services offered by organizations
- Barriers and challenges the immigrants face in the suburbs
- Key informants' experiences with the Middle Eastern immigrants/clients
- Organizations' strategies in providing culturally oriented services to Middle Eastern immigrants
- Organizations' relations with other service providers
- Recommendations for improving Middle Eastern immigrants' settlement and integration experiences in the suburbs

Conclusion

- Housing, language, and access to settlement service information are the main barriers for recent Middle Eastern immigrants in the suburbs.
- According to the key informants, competitive funding and lack of staff are the main barriers experienced by organizations serving in the suburbs.
- Settlement service provider organizations, city planners, and decision makers could use the results of this research study to improve the settlement and integration experiences of Middle Eastern immigrants residing in the suburbs.

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