

SYRIAN REFUGEE PARENTS RESETTLING IN CANADA

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Abstract

The Syrian conflict that began in March 2011 is one of the most brutal conflicts in the post-World War II era. This recent conflict has prompted action from several high-income countries, with Canada becoming an important host country for Syrian refugees. In Canada, over 40,000 Syrian refugees arrived between November 2015 and January 2017. The challenges and stressors of immigration are exacerbated for refugees, but especially for refugee parents. My dissertation assesses the factors associated with different domains of integration of Syrian refugee parents resettling in Canada. This research investigated how the perception of being treated with respect is associated with these newcomers' sense of belonging to Canada, explored the changes in the acquisition of language proficiencies over time since their entry to Canada and evaluated the duration of enrollment and satisfaction associated with government-funded English or French language classes. *Method:* This study employed a cross-sectional design. A total of 540 Syrian refugee parents, with at least one child below 18 years of age, who resettled in Ontario, Canada at the time of the interview were recruited. Individual interviews were conducted separately for the mothers and the fathers using structured telephone interviews with a fluent Arabic-speaking Research Assistant in a Levantine dialect that the participants readily understood. Consent was obtained from all participants. Statistical analyses including descriptive, bivariate, and generalized linear mixed model regressions were performed to address the study objectives. *Results:* The results demonstrated that, when examined separately, both individuals and their spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect by Canadians were associated with a sense of belonging to Canada. Additionally, the findings revealed that participants' Canadian Language Benchmark levels significantly improved with each additional year spent in Canada. Furthermore, participants' attendance in language classes was significantly lower for those who

had a higher level of the Canadian Language Benchmark upon arrival. *Conclusions:* The findings provide valuable insights into the integration process in a new country, emphasizing the challenges and opportunities these families face, thus supporting their successful integration into Canadian society.

Keywords: Syrian refugee, spouse, being respected, sense of belonging, language benchmark level, language classes, and time in Canada.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the millions of refugees worldwide who have been forced to leave their homelands, embarking on a perilous journey in search of safety and a new life. In the face of overwhelming challenges and numerous obstacles, these resilient individuals demonstrate remarkable courage and strength as they navigate the complex process of integrating into unfamiliar cultures.

Their stories of perseverance and adaptation inspire us all, reminding us of the human spirit's capacity to endure and thrive against the odds.

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Foreword to the thesis

This thesis is composed of three distinct manuscripts, which are described below, along with introductory Chapters One and Two. Chapter One includes a general introduction, a literature review, the rationale for the study, and its objectives. Chapter Two outlines the methodology, detailing the study participants, data collection methods, confidentiality measures, ethical approval, primary outcomes, and the factors related to those primary outcomes.

Chapters Three, Four, and Five each consist of individual manuscripts. Chapter Six provides a general discussion that highlights the strengths and limitations of the studies, the process of knowledge translation, and the overall significance and conclusion. Following this chapter, a list of references and relevant appendices related to the studies is provided.

This thesis comprises the following three separate manuscripts:

1. Examining the association between feeling respected and sense of belonging among Syrian refugee families in Ontario, Canada.
2. Improvement of Syrian refugee parents' language proficiency over time in Canada.
3. Enrollment duration and satisfaction of Syrian refugee parents in government-funded language classes in Canada.

Chapter One: Introduction

Literature review

The Syrian conflict that began in March 2011 is one of the most brutal conflicts of the post-World War II era. This conflict has resulted in the large-scale forced displacement of civilians. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Filippo Grandi, "Syria (Figure 1) is the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time" [1].

Humanitarian organizations have been working in neighboring countries to provide shelter and services for refugees [2]. The UNHCR Refugee Convention Act of 1951, the consensus of 145 countries, including Canada, states that refugees should not be returned to a country where their lives and freedom are threatened [3]. The recent conflict in Syria has prompted several high-income countries [4] to welcome refugees, and Canada has become an important host country for Syrian refugees. Approximately 46,000 refugees came to Canada between 2015 and 2016, and 40,081 of them were Syrian. Refugees enter Canada through different programs: the Government Assisted Refugee (GAR), the Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR), and the Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) programs. Between 2015 and 2016, approximately 65 percent of the Syrian refugees came through the GAR program, 22 percent through the PSR program, and 13 percent through the BVOR program [5, 6]. Studies have shown that, in comparison to privately sponsored Syrian refugees, government-assisted Syrian refugees had a considerably lower level of language proficiency either in English or French because GARs were selected based on specific vulnerability criteria. More often PSRs were sponsored by their family members in Canada who were relatively highly educated. For example, researchers reported that 67% of PSRs had knowledge of English or French, compared to 20% of GARs, and less than 3% of GARs had a university degree compared to 25% of PSRs [6–8].



Figure 1: Syria in global map

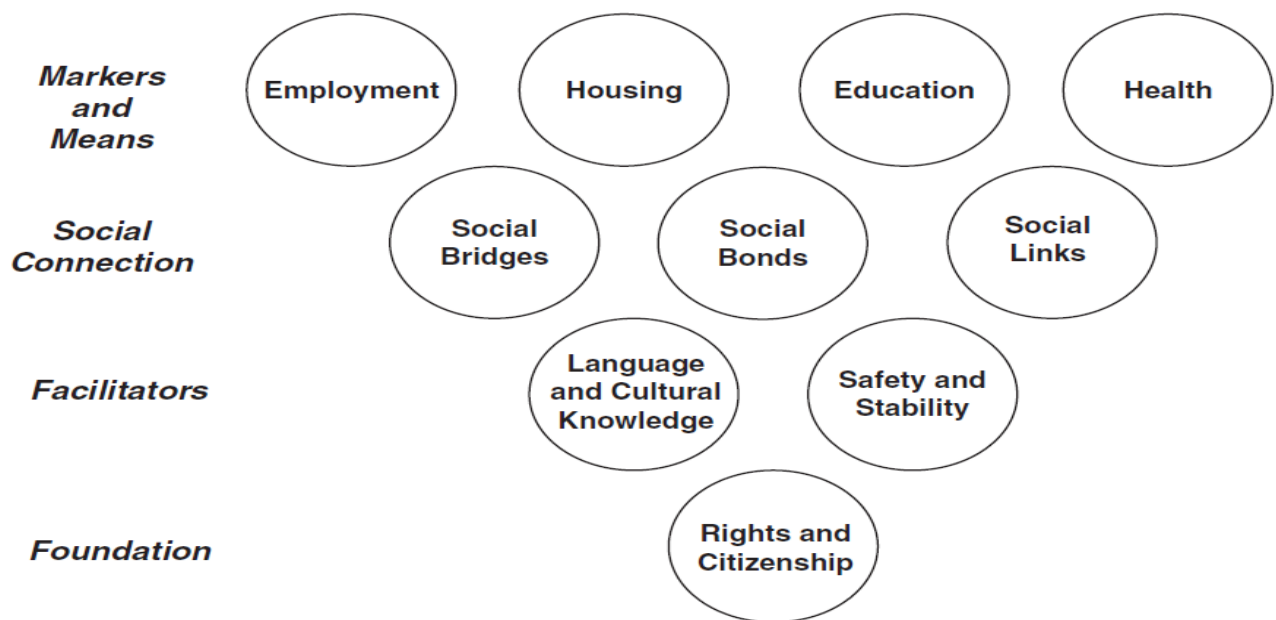
According to the 2015 UNHCR report, many Syrian refugees experience psychological and social distress after spending a challenging period in a war zone and being displaced from their home country to a new one [9]. Post-resettlement stress is common among Syrian refugees resettling in the host country. Financial issues, difficulties accessing employment and the challenge of language acquisition are all obstacles to integration. Unfamiliarity with local customs and a lack of friends and family to rely on for support are also barriers to integration. Together, these challenges directly affect Syrian refugees' mental health, leading to a range of psychosocial difficulties [9–13].

These challenges and stressors are exacerbated for refugee parents because they face additional stressors to resettlement, such as coping with parenthood responsibilities, insufficient family support, and financial constraints for child care [10, 14, 15]. Parenthood is a pivotal time in family functioning. Knowledge that promotes the integration of Syrian refugee families, specifically in the context of the challenges of parenthood, offers an opportunity to help mitigate

isolation and assist with integration into the Canadian lifestyle, as traditional Syrian social support networks are absent.

Integration into the host country

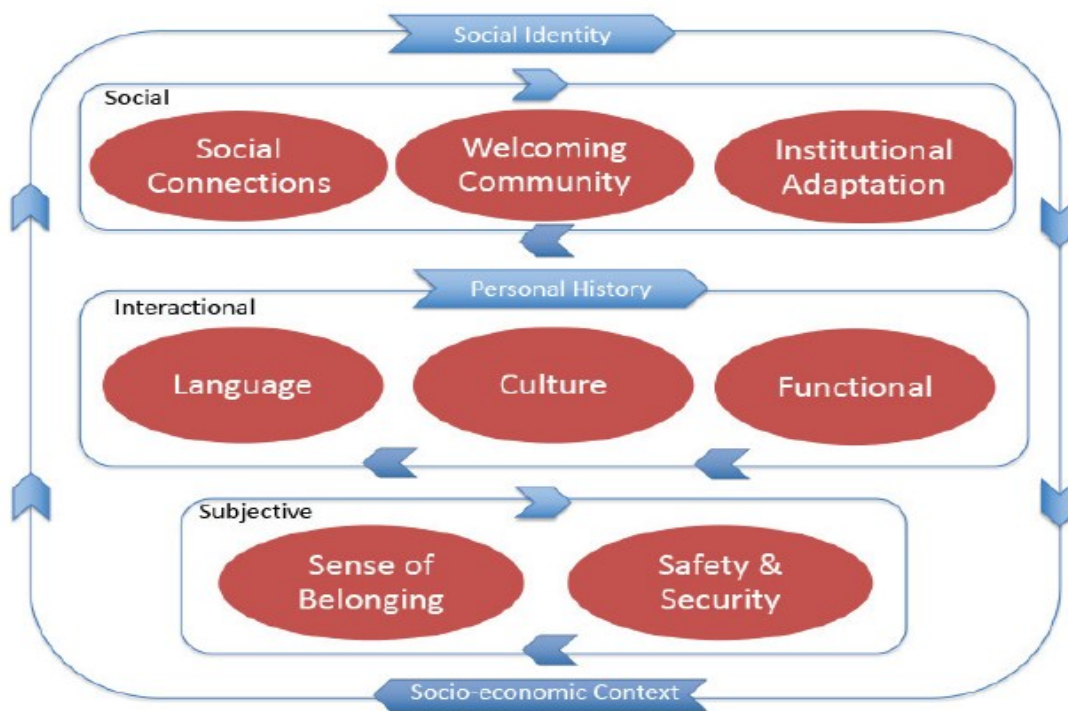
Refugees as individuals and groups integrate and acculturate in the host country in different ways, at different velocities, along various trajectories, and with variable outcomes [16, 17]. Integration is important for the overall development of refugees and the host society. Although a single definition for the successful integration of refugees in host countries does not exist, Ager and Strang developed a model (Figure-2) for immigrants, including refugees, that explores various domains, particularly the connections between refugees and members of the host country [18]. In 2016, Hynie and colleagues [19] expanded on Ager and Strang's model by introducing the Holistic Integration Model (Figure-3). This model emphasizes three interconnected spheres that influence integration: subjective, interactional, and social.



Source: Agar & Strang 2008

Figure 2: Ager and Strang's Social Integration Model

The subjective aspects of integration focus on refugees' sense of belonging, safety, and security. Interactional integration includes components such as language adaptation, understanding social and cultural norms and expectations, and functional integration, which involves access to employment, housing, and healthcare services. Social factors pertain to the social connections refugees make, the welcoming attitude of the community, and the adaptation of institutions within the host country. Overall, the model illustrates how these various elements of integration are closely linked within and across the three spheres.



Source: Hynie et al. 2016

Figure 3: Holistic Integration Model

Multiple studies have demonstrated that the integration process varies based on several factors, including socio-demographic, health, and migration factors [20–22]. Socio-demographic factors encompass aspects such as age, race, education level, socio-economic status, and religion. Health-related factors consider an individual's state of physical and mental health, while

migration-related factors include the types of sponsorship and the duration of time residing in Canada. Each of these factors plays a role in how an individual adapts to migration [23, 24]. Studies have shown that among Syrian refugees in Canada, progress in various domains of integration occurs over time [19, 25]. A longer stay in the host country is associated with greater adaptation to the various domains of integration required to settle in the new country, which in turn increases an individual's sense of belonging to the host country [25].

Sense of belonging to the host country

Over the past two decades, the concept of belonging to a host country has become increasingly important in understanding how migrant populations, including refugees, integrate. To "belong" entails not only feeling like a part of the social fabric but also having a certain level of power, access to opportunities for participation, and the ability to contribute to social change [19, 26–28]. Promoting a sense of belonging among refugees is a top priority for Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) as part of their Strategic Objective 3 (SO3), and belonging is seen as a crucial societal outcome that enables both newcomers and Canadians to build a shared and successful life together [27]. Refugees integrate and acculturate in their host countries in various ways and through different paths, leading to diverse outcomes that significantly impact their feelings of "being at home" and their sense of belonging [16–19].

The feelings of respect, beliefs and action tendencies of the individual toward a particular group may be favorable or unfavorable [29]. The author Gordon Allport, in his landmark book, *The Nature of Prejudice* (1954), noted that in a community with a majority and a minority group, prejudice is the central problem of the intergroup relationships [29, 30]. In his article [30], Allport introduced contact theory, which demonstrates the importance of having a respectful intergroup relationship for reducing prejudice between immigrants, including refugees, and

members of the host community, thus making it more likely to have successful integration [30–33]. This emphasizes that integration is a two-way process, requiring efforts from both newcomers and the host society [34–36]. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has stated that mutual understanding and respect between refugees and the broader community are essential for building a balanced and harmonious society [37]. Hence, feeling respected by other community members is important for the success and well-being of newcomers, as it fosters positive relationships and a sense of belonging to the host community [35]. However, there has been limited research on the relationship between feelings of respect and the sense of belonging to Canada among the refugee population living in the host country. Additionally, no studies have investigated how a refugee's spouse perceives their treatment by members of the host community and how that perception is associated with the individual's sense of belonging.

Language proficiency acquisition

Language is another important domain of integration, that plays a significant role in social and cultural unity in the host country [14, 18, 19]. Canada is officially bilingual, recognizing English and French as its two official languages [38]. Among the Syrian population, various languages are spoken, including Arabic, Kurdish, Armenian, and Circassian, with Arabic being the most prevalent; it is spoken by 90% of Syrians [39]. Between 2011 and 2016, 65% of Syrian refugees arriving in Canada reported having no knowledge of English or French, and 40% had less than a high school education. Among Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs), half reported being familiar with at least one of Canada's official languages, whereas only 8% of Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) indicated that they knew English or French [10]. Language acquisition is essential for social and cultural integration, and learning the language of

the host country is one of the most significant challenges faced by newcomer refugees [14, 38, 40]. Proficiency in one of Canada's official languages is crucial for entering the workforce [14, 40, 41]. Reports [10, 11, 42, 43] indicate that a lack of language skills has limited Syrian refugees' access to healthcare services, contributing to mental health issues. Furthermore, insufficient language skills hinder social interactions with the local population [10, 14, 41–43]. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that are associated with language proficiency acquisition for the successful resettlement of refugees in a host country [44].

The 2019 report from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) on Syrian refugees indicated that many refugees, particularly those in their first year in Canada, felt pressured to develop their language skills to achieve financial independence [10]. To assist with this, the Canadian government provides free English and French language classes aimed at improving speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills [40, 45, 46]. These classes are offered on both part-time and full-time bases, with flexible schedules and locations, including schools, colleges, and community organizations. The IRCC reported that approximately 89% of adult Syrian refugees participated in government-funded language assessment programs, and 77% attended an IRCC-funded language training program after arriving in Canada [10]. While the majority of adult newcomer refugees expressed satisfaction with the language classes provided by federal and provincial governments, some reported experiencing various challenges in attending these classes, including work commitments, educational pursuits, health issues, and limited availability of class space [7, 10, 14, 41]. There is a lack of information on the factors associated with changes in language proficiency over time and on how different attributes are related to the duration of attendance and satisfaction with language learning programs among Syrian refugee parents resettling in Canada. This study focuses on the factors associated with the

integration of Syrian refugee parents resettling in Canada across different domains. The research investigated how perceptions of being treated with respect by Canadians relate to these newcomers' sense of belonging to Canada. Additionally, it explored factors associated with the changes in the language proficiency over time since their arrival in Canada and assessed the duration of their enrollment in, as well as their satisfaction with, government-funded English and French language classes.

Objectives

The objectives of the dissertation are to:

Objective 1: Investigate how the perception of the Syrian refugees of being treated with respect by Canadians was associated with their sense of belonging to Canada, and also examine how an individual's sense of belonging was associated with whether their spouse felt treated with respect by Canadians.

Objective 2: Evaluate whether language proficiency changes over time, and identify the factors associated with this change among Syrian refugee parents since their arrival in Canada.

Objective 3: Assess the factors associated with duration of enrollment and satisfaction with government-funded English or French language classes among Syrian refugee parents resettled in Canada.

Chapter Two: Methodology

This study was designed as cross-sectional and involved the collection of retrospective data. A total of 540 Syrian refugee parents were recruited. The inclusion criteria included being a Syrian refugee parent resettled in Canada after 2015, with at least one child under the age of 18 at the time of the interview, and residing in Ontario, Canada. Each participant received a \$20 honorarium for their participation in the study. To comply with social distancing recommendations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, participants were recruited and interviewed through telephone interviews. The participants were enrolled by convenience sampling with the help of organizations including Access Alliance Multicultural Health and The Arab Community Centre of Toronto. Research assistants (RAs) who could read, write, and speak in Arabic, specifically in the Syrian dialect, administered the survey (Appendix I).

Data collection timelines

Data was collected from 540 Syrian refugee participants between March 3, 2021, and March 31, 2022 by the research assistant (RA). This data collection aimed to enhance the understanding of the diverse challenges and opportunities these individuals encountered during their integration and resettlement in Canada.

Confidentiality and ethics approval

The data set provided to the researchers was de-identified, meaning that names and contact information of the individual participants were removed and replaced with unique study identifiers. As a result, the researchers cannot link or identify any information with specific study participants. Ethics approval was granted by the Human Participants Review Committee at York University, and consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study.

Primary outcomes of the study

1. Sense of belonging to Canada, based on the question "How would you describe your sense of belonging to: Canada" (on a 4-point Likert Scale, ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4).

2. The outcome variable "change in the participant's language proficiency" was determined by subtracting arrival language proficiency level from the language proficiency level at the time of the interview. Canadian language proficiency (English/French) was measured by asking participants to state their Canadian Language Benchmark level upon arrival in Canada and at the time of the interview, with answers ranging from Level 0=no proficiency to Level 10=highest proficiency. The most recent language assessment, completed before the interview, was taken into account when determining the current assessment level at the time of the interview.

3. Duration of attendance in language classes among the study participants in government-funded English/French language classes was determined based on the question, "Approximately how many months of English/French language classes have you taken in total?"

Satisfaction with language classes among the study participants were measured by asking "Please rate your overall satisfaction with these language classes". The answers were based on a 5-point Likert Scale question ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5.

Chapter Three

Examining the association between feeling respected and sense of belonging among Syrian refugee families in Ontario, Canada

Abstract

Background: The concept of belonging to a host country has gained importance in understanding the process of integration of migrant populations. In the country of settlement, belonging can be associated with individual and social factors, including interpersonal relationships, such as those within the same family. Healthy family functioning, an indicator of positive intimate relationships between couples, is associated with individuals' stronger sense of belonging, whereas poor family functioning is associated with individuals' weaker sense of belonging. This study, with Syrian refugee parents and their spouses residing in Ontario investigated how the perceptions of being treated with respect were associated with these newcomers' sense of belonging to Canada. *Method:* This study was cross-sectional in design. Participants were Syrian refugee parents who resettled in Ontario after 2015 and who had at least one child under 18 years. A total of 209 couples participated, resulting in 418 individuals. The outcome variable was self-reported ratings of the sense of belonging to Canada. The two main independent variables were whether one felt that Canadians treated one with respect and whether one's spouse felt the same way. Generalized linear mixed model regression analyses were conducted to assess the associations between an individual's sense of belonging and their report of being treated with respect and their partner's report of being treated with respect, after adjusting for socio-demographic and migration factors. *Results:* Individuals with healthy family functioning had a significantly stronger sense of belonging to Canada compared to individuals with unhealthy family functioning. It also found that individuals' sense of belonging to Canada was associated with the spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect by Canadians. Findings showed that although feelings of respect for one's self ($B = 0.993, p = <0.001$) or of one's spouse ($B = 0.620, p = <0.001$) both predicted a higher sense of belonging when considered alone, spouses' feelings

of being respected did not contribute any additional explanatory power ($B = 0.238, p = 0.237$) to a stronger sense of belonging when it was considered together with one's feeling of self respect.

Conclusions: This study's findings can help to understand significant markers responsible for boosting the sense of belonging of Syrian refugee parents resettling in Canada.

Keywords: Syrian refugee, spouse, being respected, integration, sense of belonging, family functioning and host country.

Introduction

Successful integration is used to describe the successful resettlement of refugees and is associated with higher levels of well-being among refugee populations [18, 34]. Boosting individuals' self-confidence, sense of worth, and developing a positive relationship with the host country's people is important for refugees' greater happiness and success in their new life [35, 47–49]. Over the past two decades, the concept of belonging to a host country has gained importance in understanding the process of integration of migrant populations, including refugees. To "belong" involves not only experiencing being part of the social fabric but also having a degree of power, opportunities for participation, and a sense of being part of social change [19, 26–28]. Fostering a sense of belonging among refugees is noted as a top priority of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), under their Strategic Objective 3 (SO3), and belonging is considered an overall societal outcome that fosters the capacity among both newcomers and Canadians to build a shared and successful life [27].

Refugees, as individuals and as groups, integrate and acculturate in the host country in different ways, at different rates, and along various trajectories with variable outcomes that are important for their feelings of being "at home" and thus their sense of belonging to the host country [16–19]. However, a sense of belonging seems to be high among immigrants in Canada. A study with 7,003 immigrants based on data from Statistics Canada's 2013 General Social Survey reported that approximately 93% of migrants to Canada had a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Canada, while only 4% reported a weak or very weak sense of belonging to Canada [34]. Studies have found that immigrants of an older age, who are unemployed, have lower income, are women, and those not speaking English/French at home had a weaker sense of belonging to Canada, while people with less education, social bonding networks, strong

interpersonal relationships, and a longer stay in Canada reported a greater sense of belonging to Canada [25, 34, 50]. Refugee families with four or more children often face significant challenges, and studies on Syrian refugees indicate that these families exhibit a higher level of dissatisfaction with their host country compared to families with fewer children [5, 51, 52]. Time in the host country has a fundamental role in the integration process [20, 21], and studies have shown that progress in the integration process, including the sense of belonging to the host country, increased over time among refugees in Canada [19, 34].

A sense of belonging to the new country is also associated with feeling respected by the people of the host country. Feeling respected by members of the host community indicates their regard for and valuation of an individual's qualities and dignity. Allport introduced contact theory [30], which describes the importance of respectful intergroup contact for reducing negative attitudes between immigrants and members of the host community, thereby increasing the likelihood of successful integration [30–33]. The central role of respect in the development of feelings of belonging emphasizes that integration is a two-way street, requiring accommodation by both newcomers and the host society [34–36]. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) illustrated that mutual understanding and respect between refugees and individuals in the broader community of the host country are essential for building a balanced and harmonious society [37].

Canada was an important host country for Syrian refugees following the Syrian conflict, which began in March 2011. Canada accepted 40,081 Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2016 alone [5, 6]. Syrian refugees entered Canada through different programs: the Government Assisted Refugees (GAR) received financial, and settlement supports for the first year by the government resettlement agencies; the Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSR) received financial

and settlement support from volunteer groups and non-profit organizations; a third group of refugees came through Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) program, receiving financial support by both government and private sponsors while private sponsors provided all the settlement support. A sense of belonging was found to be higher among Syrian refugees in Canada who arrived through the GAR program than among those who arrived through the PSR program [25]. However, it should be noted that Syrian refugees coming through these two pathways had very different sociodemographic profiles, and these characteristics were associated with their sense of belonging [25]. Furthermore, in the context of settlement in a country, a person's sense of belonging can be influenced by both individual and social factors, including interpersonal relationships, particularly those within the family. Healthy family functioning, characterized by positive and supportive relationships between partners, can strengthen one's sense of belonging. Conversely, poor family functioning may weaken an individual's sense of belonging [50, 53].

However, little attention has been given to assessing the relationship between feelings of respect and a sense of belonging to Canada among the refugee population settled in Canada. Moreover, no study shows how a refugee's spouse's perceptions of how they are being treated by the members of the host community are associated with their sense of belonging. As noted, strong social bonds (in-group relationships) are associated with a stronger sense of belonging, but perhaps these relationships can also create challenges to feeling belonging when one's partner is experiencing negative relationships with the host society. Conversely, a feeling that one's spouse is being treated with respect and that one's partner's values and dignity are being acknowledged can be important for individuals' feelings of belonging as it reflects the extent to

which they themselves, their family and their community are welcomed and included [34–36, 54, 55].

Therefore, this study looked at strength of spousal relationships in predicting a sense of belonging among Syrian refugee parents residing in Ontario and investigated how the perceptions of these Syrian refugees of being treated with respect by Canadians were associated with their sense of belonging to Canada. In addition, this research examined how an individual's sense of belonging was associated with whether their spouse felt treated with respect by Canadians.

Theoretical framework

Several integration models emphasize the importance of social relationships with the broader community. Ager and Strang delineated an integration model for immigrants, including refugees, that examines social domains, including the social connections between the refugees and members of the host country [18]. In 2016, Hynie and colleagues built on Ager and Strang's model by introducing the Holistic Integration Model, highlighting a dynamic range of three spheres that influence integration: subjective, interactional, and social. Subjective aspects of integration include refugees' sense of belonging, safety, and security factors. Interactional integration elements include language adaptation, social and cultural norms/expectations, and functional integration, such as access to employment, housing, and health care services. The social factors include refugee social connections, community welcome, and institutional adaptation factors in the host country. The model highlighted how these different elements of integration are strongly interconnected within and across the three spheres, including bidirectional relationships between feelings of belonging and community-welcoming environments [19]. Building on contact theory and the Holistic Integration Model [19, 30], this

study aims to evaluate whether the individual refugee's feeling of being respected by members of the host country and their spouse's feeling of being treated with respect have a positive impact on individual refugees' sense of belonging to Canada.

Not only does respect towards one's partner reflect positive regard for oneself, but couples also care about their partner's experiences because they care about their partner's well-being. Positive relationships between couples include caring about one's partners feelings. Adam and Jone illustrated that harmoniousness in relationships depends on having a positive attitude toward one's partner's feelings of well-being [56]. Other studies demonstrated that holding caring perceptions of the partner's feelings and positive self-views are vital in a pragmatic relationship, and also lead to greater satisfaction in relationships [57–59]. Thus, one might expect that spouses, particularly those in caring relationships, care deeply about their partner's feelings about their environment and are associated with these feelings. Indeed, the role of an individual's spouse in migrant families was identified as a key priority for an individual's sense of belonging to and settlement decisions in their new community [60]. One's spouse's feeling that they are being treated with respect by the other members of the community of the host country and their acknowledgment of the partner's values and dignity may, therefore, be essential for refugees' cohesive and successful integration into the new society [37, 54, 55]. Not only may the partner's feeling disrespected indicate that the other members of the family are not respected, but if these feelings lead the partner to feel excluded and like they do not belong, this is likely to be associated with whether either spouse can truly feel at home. Moreover, given the gendered nature of anti-immigrant and religious intolerance, women and men may experience the new culture in distinct ways. Collective identity plays a significant role, as an insult aimed at an important in-group can feel like a personal affront. Even in the absence of direct experiences

with discrimination, individuals may still perceive feelings of disrespect and discrimination due to the experiences of their family members [61–63]. Therefore, it is essential to approach this issue by viewing family as a unit rather than focusing solely on individuals.

Methodology

This study was cross-sectional in design. The inclusion criteria were: being a Syrian refugee parent who resettled in Canada after 2015, having at least one child under 18 years of age at the time of the interview, and residing in Ontario, Canada. Participants were recruited between March 3, 2021, and March 31, 2022, by convenience sampling with the help of local not-for-profit organizations. Research Assistants (RAs) who could read, write, and speak Arabic, specifically the Syrian dialect, recruited participants and administered the survey (Appendix I-Survey questionnaire). Participants responded to the survey by telephone to comply with social distancing recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic, and each participant received a \$20 honorarium for their participation in the study. This study is part of a bigger study based on this survey's results, and for the present study, the analysis was restricted to parents who were both enrolled; they were given the same family ID. Ethics approval was obtained from the university's institutional review board. Consent was received from all study participants.

Measures

The outcome variable was the sense of belonging to Canada, which was self reported based on the question "How would you describe your sense of belonging to: Canada" (on a 4-point Likert Scale, ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4 [27, 34]. The main independent variables were self reported feeling that a) Canadians treated one "with respect", assessed on a 4-point Likert Scale, ranging from never=1 to almost always=4, and b) one's spouse's report that they felt respected, based on a 4-point Likert Scale, ranging from never=1 to almost always=4. In

addition, family functioning was measured based on the valid and reliable 12-item questionnaire taken from the McMaster Family Assessment Device called “General Functioning,” in which a mean score of over two denotes unhealthy family functioning, while a score two or below denotes healthy family functioning [64, 65]. The 12-item family functioning Scale showed excellent internal consistency in our sample, with a Cronbach's alpha (α) of .94. Other independent variables included several socio-demographic and migration factors. Socio-demographic factors were age, gender, employment (yes/no), education level (none=1 to professional degree=10), religion (Muslim/non-Muslim), housing satisfaction (measured on a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5), perceived socioeconomic status in Canada, based on the question "In your current condition, here in Canada, would you say most people would categorize a household like yours as" (ranging from lower income=1 to upper income=5), number of children, and language proficiency level based on the question "Please rate your current overall ability in English or French, whichever you are more comfortable with" (6-point Likert Scale ranging from not at all=0 to excellent=5). Migration-related factors included sponsorship type (GAR/PSR/Others), and time in Canada in years.

Statistical analyses

Descriptive analyses of socio-demographic factors, including family functioning, migration factors, perceptions of being treated with respect by Canadians, and a sense of belonging to Canada, were conducted among all participants. Generalized linear mixed regression models (GLMM) were carried out for bivariate analyses to assess the relationship between the two main independent variables, whether one was feeling that they are being treated with respect by Canadians and one's spouse's feeling that they are being treated with respect, the socio-demographic and migration factors and the dependent variable of sense of belonging. Multilevel

models were introduced to take account of each participant (Level One) being nested within a family (Level Two). The type of GLMM employed was a multilevel ordered (ordinal) logistic regression. A cumulative logit link function was used to account for the three categories of the outcome variable, self-reported sense of belonging to Canada. The same type of GLMM was also conducted for multivariate analyses to assess the independent relationships between the independent variables and individuals' sense of belonging to Canada. These analyses included four generalized linear mixed regression models: Model 1 included only socio-demographic and migration factors. Model 2 included all variables from Model 1, along with individuals' spouses' perception of being treated with respect. Model 3 included all variables in Model 1, along with individuals' perceptions of being treated with respect. Model 4 included all variables from Model 1, along with individuals' perceptions of being treated with respect and their spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect. The interaction between individuals' spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect and family functioning was assessed for significance in models 2 and 4. Random intercepts at the family level (Level 2) were employed to account for possible dependence of the measurements of couples within each family. The beta coefficients (*B*) for each model are reported.

Results

Five hundred forty Syrian refugee parents were recruited, including 209 couples, resulting in a total of 418 individuals included in this study; 50% of participants were women, and 50% were men. Descriptive statistics for these couples' socio-demographic and other characteristics are presented in Table 1. The participants' mean age was 40.3 (± 7.4) years, and more than 50% were between 35 and 45 years of age. In addition, more than 50% had less than a high school education. Approximately 56% came through the Privately Sponsored Refugee

program, 39% through the Government Assisted Refugee program, and 5% through other programs. The average stay of participants in Canada was 3.9 (± 1.6) years. At the time of the interview, about 38% of participants were employed. Sixty-two percent of participants felt that Canadians always treated them with respect, and 85.8% reported a strong or very strong sense of belonging to Canada; none reported a very weak sense of belonging. The correlations between individuals' perceptions of being treated with respect and their spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect were moderately positively linearly associated ($r = 0.503, p = <0.001$).

Table 2 presents the bivariate and multivariate analyses for the associations between the main independent variables, the socio-demographic and migration factors, and sense of belonging to Canada. In bivariate analyses of this study, a sense of belonging to Canada was found to be significantly higher among individuals who felt Canadians treated them with respect ($B = 1.004, p = 0.004$). Additionally, the analysis found that male partners had a significantly weaker sense of belonging to Canada than female partners ($B = -0.320, p = 0.01$). Model fit was found reasonable for the multivariate analysis. Models 1 through 4 had overall classification rates of 56.3, 61.2, 61.7, and 62.7, respectively for the three-valued ordinal outcome. The Spearman's rank correlation coefficients for the predicted outcome and observed outcome for Models 1 through 4 were 0.224, 0.334, 0.370, and 0.403, respectively ($n=394$). Additionally, multicollinearity was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for all independent variables. A VIF below 10 indicated no significant multicollinearity, which was confirmed in all four models. Model 1 shows that participants with healthy family functioning reported a significantly stronger sense of belonging to Canada ($B = 1.434, p = <0.001$) than those with unhealthy family functioning. In Model 2, after adding the variable measuring how one's spouse felt Canadians treated them to Model 1, individuals showed a stronger sense of belonging to

Canada when their spouse had greater feelings of being treated with respect by Canadians ($B = 0.620, p = <0.001$). In Model 3, in addition to all variables included in Model 1, a stronger sense of belonging was found among individuals who felt they were being treated with respect by Canadians ($B = 0.993, p = <0.001$). In Model 4, which includes all variables in Model 1 along with individuals' perceptions of being treated with respect and individuals' spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect, a greater sense of belonging was significantly associated with individuals' perception of being treated with respect by Canadians ($B = 0.888, p = <0.001$). All models including Models 1, 2, and 3, showed a stronger sense of belonging among individuals with healthy family functioning compared to individuals with unhealthy family functioning, and Model 4 also showed a stronger sense of belonging among individuals with healthy family functioning ($B = 1.359, p = <0.001$) compared to individuals with unhealthy family functioning (Table 2). However, when the interaction term between individuals' spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect and family functioning status was added in Model 2 and Model 4, the interactions between individuals' spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect and family functioning status were not significant, where a common statistical significance level was considered a level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

Discussion

This study assessed how Syrian refugee parents' sense of belonging to Canada was associated with their own perception of the level of respect that they received from Canadians and the sense of respect felt by their spouses. In our sample, 85.8% of Syrian refugee parents reported a strong sense of belonging to Canada. A report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), based on the 2013 Statistics Canada General Social Survey, noted that 95% of refugees to Canada reported a strong sense of belonging to Canada.

[66]. Another study in Germany in 2023 [67] found that 65.8% of refugees to Germany reported a strong sense of belonging to the host country. No quantitative studies were found that assessed the sense of belonging of Syrian refugees in the Middle East; however, a qualitative study in Jordan, based on a focus group session among Syrian refugees, found that participants expressed a strong sense of belonging to the host country [67].

In this study, when examined separately, both individuals' and their spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect by Canadians were associated with a sense of belonging to Canada. Straehle (2020) demonstrated that individual refugees being treated with respect by local inhabitants is vital to developing a positive relationship between refugees and inhabitants of the host country, which is essential for enhancing refugees' sense of belonging to the host country [68]. In previous studies on refugees, researchers have noted that showing respect to refugees is of substantial importance and helps them feel at home with a strong sense of belonging to the country of resettlement [34, 48, 68]. Other studies have also demonstrated that respect for refugees and their families by the host inhabitants plays a key role in building relationships with others and fosters personal identity, self-confidence, and a sense of security for refugees. This leads to the fulfillment of basic human rights, increased happiness, and greater life satisfaction. It also strengthens refugees' connection to the community and boosts their sense of belonging [35, 68, 69]. In addition, as we noted earlier, Model 2 shows a significant association between perceptions of spouses of being treated with respect by the people of the host country and a sense of belonging. This model also shows a significant association between family functioning and a sense of belonging. This is consistent with other studies showing that healthy family functioning, an indicator of positive intimate relationships [53] between couples, is associated with individuals' stronger sense of belonging [50], which is also consistent with the findings of this

study. However, the interaction term between individuals' spouses' perceptions of being treated with respect and family functioning status did not show a significant association with individuals' sense of belonging. This suggests that spouses being treated with respect by others is important for the couples' sense of belonging when they share similar environments and/or experiences, regardless of their family functioning status. Furthermore, when both variables were included in the same model (model 4), significance persisted only for the individual's perception, possibly due to the moderate correlation between the individual's perception of being treated with respect and the spouse's perception [70, 71]. However, it is not surprising that an individual's own perceptions of respect had more influence than their spouse's, since they may not know exactly how their spouse feels and may assume that their spouse shares their experience. In the bivariate analysis of this study, male partners showed a significantly weaker sense of belonging than female partners. A study by Painter et al. (2013) also found a higher sense of belonging to Canada among female migrants, including refugees, across different provinces in Canada [27]. However, in our study, a significant difference in the sense of belonging was no longer observed between male and female partners when controlling for other variables in the multivariate analysis.

This study has certain limitations that should be considered. First, the results should be interpreted cautiously, given the study's limited generalizability. Syrian refugees reside in various provinces across Canada; however, our study participants were exclusively recruited from Ontario. As a result, the findings may not be generalizable to refugees across all provinces in Canada, as adaptation within integration domains may vary from one province to another. Additionally, the generalizability of the results may be limited by potential selection bias, since participants were enrolled through convenience sampling. Second, this study is cross-sectional in

design. Thus, it is difficult to demonstrate the direction of causal relationships among variables and the outcomes of interest. Third, there is a risk of measurement bias because we assessed the sense of belonging and perceived respect using a single self-reported item sourced from existing literature, instead of utilizing a validated and reliable scale. Furthermore, the survey did not collect quantitative data on perceived respect. Fourth, the survey was conducted via telephone to adhere to social distancing guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic, but it did not collect any information on how COVID-19 may have impacted intergroup contact. Fifth, social desirability bias may be present, as participants might hesitate to report negative feelings about their new country due to fear of possible retribution, or they may feel the need to demonstrate gratitude for the resettlement opportunity. Sixth, the results could be influenced by confounding variables, given that the small sample size limited our ability to account for all potential confounders related to both the predictors and outcome variables, potentially leading to false associations. Finally, the lack of information regarding the quality of couples' relationships has restricted our ability to assess the differences in the relationship between perceptions of being treated with respect by individuals and spouses, as well as their sense of belonging.

Conclusions

This study provides further useful information concerning the effects of the degree to which participants and their spouses felt that Canadians treated them with respect on these refugees' sense of belonging to the new host country. These findings may be utilized as an effective learning tool in public education for meeting the challenges of potential discrimination, racism, and negative appraisal of incoming refugees. Elucidating current experiences and future expectations, as well as tracking family dynamics as refugee couples' endeavor to create a new future for their families, offer a unique opportunity to learn how their interactions with other

Canadians may be associated with their sense of belonging to Canada. The findings of this study, combined with future research, could provide insight into creating a whole series of enhanced social services to meet the specific needs of newcomer families and fortify their sense of belonging to Canada, including interventions that support family relationships. These social services would have a range of broader social benefits, thus setting the stage for future and extended engagement as these families integrate well into Canadian society. Moreover, this study results may help the stakeholders, including the government, sponsors, and policymakers, to minimize the challenges among the Syrian refugee parents resettling in Canada.

Table 1: Characteristics of the study participants

Characteristics	Mean($\pm$ SD), Minimum-Maximum /Number (%)
<i>Socio-demographic characteristics</i>	All
Age	40.3 ($\pm$7.4), 23-76
18-<35	111 (26.6)
35-<45	213 (51.0)
>45	93 (22.2)
Missing	1 (0.2)
Religion	
Muslim	266 (63.6)
Non-Muslim	145 (34.7)
Missing	7 (1.7)
Education ^e	4.8 ($\pm$2.4), 1-10
0-6 years	81 (19.4)
7-12 years	155 (37.1)
College-trade	55 (13.2)
University-professional	127 (30.4)
Missing	0 (0)
Employment status	
Yes	158 (37.8)
No	260 (62.2)
Missing	0 (0)
Housing satisfaction ^f	2.8 ($\pm$1.2), 1-5
Very unsatisfied	45 (10.8)
Unsatisfied	163 (39.0)
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	82 (19.6)
Satisfied	82 (19.6)
Very satisfied	45 (10.8)
Missing	1 (0.2)
Income group in Canada ^g	2.1 ($\pm$1.0), 1-5
Lower income	162 (38.8)
Lower middle income	101 (24.2)
Middle income	126 (30.1)
Upper middle income	20 (4.8)
Upper income	6 (1.4)
Missing	3 (0.7)
Number of children	3.4 ($\pm$1.4), 1-8
≤ 2	124 (29.7)
3-4	207 (49.5)
>4	87 (20.8)
Missing	0 (0)
Language proficiency ^h	2.9 ($\pm$1.3), 0-5
Not at all	31 (7.4)

Very poor	35 (8.4)
Poor	48 (11.5)
Fair	158 (37.8)
Good	128 (30.6)
Excellent	18 (4.3)
Missing	0 (0)
Family Functioning⁷⁷	
Unhealthy	138 (33.0)
Healthy	280 (67.0)
Missing	0 (0)
<i>Migration-related factors</i>	
Time in Canada (in years)	3.9 (± 1.6), 0-7
Sponsorship type	
GAR	163 (39.0)
PSR	233 (55.7)
Others	20 (4.8)
Missing	2 (0.5)
Feeling that Canadians treat them with respect^{os}	2.6 (± 0.6), 1-3
Never or only sometimes	29 (6.9)
Usually	129 (30.9)
Almost always	259 (62.0)
Missing	1 (0.2)
Sense of belonging to Canada^e	2.3 (± 0.7), 1-3
Weak	49 (11.7)
Strong	210 (50.2)
Very strong	149 (35.6)
Missing	10 (2.4)

^{os} Based on a 10-point Likert Scale questions ranging from none=1 to professional degree=10.

[¶] Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5.

[¶] Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from lower income=1 to upper income=5.

^f Based on a 6-point Likert Scale question ranging from not at all=0 to excellent=5.

⁷⁷ Based on McMaster Family Assessment Device called “General Functioning where an increase in the mean score over two denotes unhealthy family functioning while two or below denotes healthy family functioning

^{os} Based on a 4-point Likert Scale questions ranging from never=1 to almost always=4.

^e Based on a 3-point Likert Scale questions ranging from weak=1 to very strong=3.

Table 2: Bivariate and multivariate associations between Individual's or Spouse's feeling that Canadians treat them with respect and sense of belonging to Canada. Generalized Linear Mixed Model (GLMM), multilevel ordered (ordinal) logistic regression results

Characteristics	Bivariate association with sense of belonging to Canada		<u>Model 1</u> (n=394) Adjusted for socio-demographic and migration factors without individual's feeling that Canadians treat them with respect		<u>Model 2</u> (n=394) Adjusted for individual's spouse's perception of being treated with respect		<u>Model 3</u> (n=394) Adjusted for individual's feeling that Canadians treat them with respect		<u>Model 4</u> (n=394) Adjusted for individual's feeling that Canadians treat them with respect and individual's spouse's perception of being treated with respect	
	<i>B</i> (SE)	<i>P Value</i>	<i>B</i> (SE)	<i>P Value</i>	<i>B</i> (SE)	<i>P Value</i>	<i>B</i> (SE)	<i>P Value</i>	<i>B</i> (SE)	<i>P Value</i>
Individual's feeling that Canadians treat them with respect ^{ac}	1.004 (0.121)	0.004	-	-	-	-	0.993 (0.185)	<0.001	0.888 (0.206)	<0.001
Spouse's feeling that Canadians treat them with respect ^{ac}	0.658 (0.383)	0.184	-	-	0.620 (0.186)	<0.001	-	-	0.238 (0.201)	0.237
<i>Socio-demographic factors</i>										
Age	0.002 (0.137)	0.896	-0.001 (0.174)	0.940	-0.001 (0.018)	0.961	0.000 (0.018)	0.977	0.000 (0.178)	0.986
Gender										
Female	Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference	
Male	-0.320 (0.005)	0.010	0.491 (0.256)	0.055	0.494 (0.263)	0.061	0.433 (0.259)	0.095	0.441 (0.261)	0.091
Religion										
Muslim	0.339 (0.248)	0.403	0.020 (0.305)	0.947	0.035 (0.314)	0.112	-0.009 (0.306)	0.977	0.002 (0.309)	0.994
Non-Muslim	Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference	
Employment status										
Yes	-0.189 (0.927)	0.290	-0.377 (0.269)	0.161	-0.320 (0.278)	0.250	-0.358 (0.271)	0.188	-0.339 (0.274)	0.216
No	Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference	
Education level ^{ab}	-0.083 (0.059)	0.174	-0.103 (0.066)	0.116	-0.105 (0.068)	0.122	-0.088 (0.067)	0.189	-0.089 (0.067)	0.185
Housing satisfaction ^{cd}	0.076 (0.178)	0.682	0.035 (0.0933)	0.705	0.093 (0.098)	0.344	0.121 (0.095)	0.206	0.135 (0.097)	0.165
Income in Canada ^{ab}	-0.013 (0.143)	0.930	-0.057 (0.115)	0.620	-0.078 (0.119)	0.510	-0.066 (0.115)	0.570	-0.072 (0.116)	0.535
Number of children	-0.024 (0.110)	0.833	-0.094 (0.105)	0.369	-0.119 (0.108)	0.269	-0.122 (0.105)	0.245	-0.129 (0.106)	0.223
Language proficiency ^f	-0.029 (0.098)	0.775	0.025 (0.122)	0.836	0.061 (0.126)	0.630	0.086 (0.123)	0.483	0.094 (0.124)	0.451

Family Functioning^ψ										
Healthy	1.376 (0.420)	0.189	1.434 (0.244)	<0.001	1.369 (0.252)	<0.001	1.375 (0.244)	<0.001	1.359 (0.247)	<0.001
Unhealthy	Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference	
Migration-related factors										
Sponsorship types										
GAR	Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference		Reference	
PSR	-0.362 (0.301)	0.353	-0.100 (0.294)	0.733	-0.110 (0.304)	0.717	-0.154 (0.294)	0.602	-0.153 (0.298)	0.608
Others	-0.096 (0.624)	0.892	-0.035 (0.483)	0.943	-0.225 (0.501)	0.653	-0.235 (0.489)	0.630	-0.288 (0.495)	0.561
Time in Canada	0.036 (0.090)	0.699	0.022 (0.075)	0.771	0.011 (0.078)	0.892	-0.002 (0.075)	0.977	0.000 (0.076)	1.000

[Ⓢ]Based on a 3-point Likert Scale questions ranging from never/only sometimes=1 to almost always=3

[Ⓣ]Based on a 10-point Likert Scale questions ranging from none=1 to professional degree=10

[Ⓤ]Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5

[Ⓛ]Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from lower income=1 to upper income=5

[Ⓟ]Based on a 6-point Likert Scale question ranging from excellent=5 to not at all=0

[Ⓜ]Based on McMaster Family Assessment Device called “General Functioning where an increase in the mean score over two denotes unhealthy family functioning while two or below denotes healthy family functioning.

Chapter Four

Improvement of Syrian refugee parents' language proficiency over time in Canada

Abstract

Background: Adequate knowledge of one of Canada's official languages English/French is essential for the socio-cultural integration process. Understanding the factors that influence language proficiency is important for the successful resettlement of refugees in their new country. Canada welcomed 40,081 Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2016, following the Syrian conflict, which began in March 2011. This study examines whether language proficiency changes over time and the factors associated with the change in language proficiency among Syrian refugee parents since their arrival in Canada. *Method:* This study was cross-sectional in design, and it also involved the collection of retrospective data. Participants were Syrian refugee parents who resettled in Ontario after 2015 and who had at least one child under 18 years of age. A total of 540 Syrian refugee parents were recruited, and 485 reported their language benchmark levels at arrival and the most recent one available at the time of interview, on average, 4 years after arrival; only those participants were included in the analysis. The change in the participants' language proficiency at arrival and at the time of the interview was self-reported, which was determined based on their language proficiency level utilized by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). Linear Mixed Models (LMM) regression analyses were performed to assess the associations between change in language proficiency over time and the socio-demographic, health and migration-related factors since arrival in Canada. *Results:* This study showed a significantly positive change in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level among individuals who had resided for a longer time in Canada ($B = 0.244, p = <0.001$). Additionally, this study found a greater degree of positive change in language proficiency among refugees who had better mental health ($B = 0.165, p = 0.030$). Furthermore, refugees' Canadian language benchmark levels improved over

time with a higher level of education and more attendance in language classes. *Conclusions:* This study's findings, along with future research, could help pave the way for deeper engagement, enhancing the opportunities for these refugee families to successfully integrate into Canadian society.

Keywords: Syrian refugee, language benchmark level, integration, and time in Canada.

Introduction

Canada became an important host country for Syrian refugees following the start of the Syrian conflict, which began in March 2011. Canada accepted 40,081 Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2016 alone [5, 6]. Syrian resettled refugees entered Canada through three different programs: the Government Assisted Refugee (GAR), the Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR), and the Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) programs. The Syrian population speaks different languages, including Arabic, Kurdish, Armenian, and Circassian; Arabic is Syria's official language and is spoken by 90 percent of Syrians [39]. Canada, in turn, is bilingual in English and French [38]. The Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) 2019 report on Syrian refugees indicated that on arrival in Canada between 2011 and 2016, 65% of Syrian refugees reported no knowledge of English or French, and 40% of them had less than a high school education. Half of the Privately Sponsored Refugees self-reported having knowledge of at least one of the official Canadian languages (English/French), while only 8% of the Government Assisted Refugees self-identified as having knowledge of either English or French [10].

Adequate knowledge of one of Canada's official languages is essential for the integration process of the refugee population [14, 40, 41]. This is also crucial for joining the workforce and ensuring survival [18, 19, 72]. In addition, reports on Syrian refugees indicated that a lack of knowledge of one of the official languages restricted them from accessing healthcare facilities. This language barrier has been identified as a significant factor contributing to the worsening of mental health issues among Syrian refugees [10, 11, 42, 43]. Multiple studies [10, 14, 41–43] have illustrated that a lack of proficiency in the host country's official language restricted newcomer Syrians from social interactions with the local population. Such inadequate language skills also hampered the individual privacy of the newcomers as they needed an interpreter to

access certain services including healthcare, transportation and settlement services [10, 42]. Furthermore, the parents of school-age children reported that difficulties in language skills prevented them from finding ways to support their children's education [10, 73]. Parents also faced challenges using public transportation due to a lack of adequate interactions with transport staff and passengers, as well as for navigating the transportation system via resources like Google maps [10]. The Canadian government offers free language classes to refugees and immigrants to improve skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing [40, 45, 46]. These classes may be part-time or full-time and are offered free with flexible schedules and locations [45]. However, not all newcomers make use of these courses. A study by Ives et al. (2022) demonstrated that among Syrian refugees in Canada, attendance at language classes was lower among younger people, women, the employed, and those who reported poorer physical health [43].

Language acquisition is vital for socio-cultural integration and yet, learning the language of one's country of resettlement is still one of the most difficult challenges for newcomer refugees [14, 38, 40]. A 2019 outcome report on Syrian refugees compiled data from several sources, including the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) data system (iCARE), the 2018 Departmental Settlement Outcomes Survey, Statistics Canada, and research conducted by academics and settlement service providers. The report noted an improvement in official language proficiency skills over two years among the Syrian refugees who arrived in Canada in 2015 and 2016. In the corresponding survey, when it was asked of the Syrian refugees in British Columbia whether the level of their official language proficiency skills had improved two years after their arrival, 55% of them reported "somewhat better improvement" while 32% reported "much better improvement" of their official language proficiency skills since arrival

[10, 74]. In addition, a 2017 survey assessed the resettlement progress of Syrian refugees in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, 1 to 24 months after their 2015–2016 arrival in Canada. In Alberta, 73% of Syrian refugees reported some level of language improvement over 1–18 months, while in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, 78% and 59% respectively reported improvement over 1–24 months [75].

Understanding the factors associated with language proficiency acquisition is most important for the successful resettlement of the refugee population in the host country [44]. Results from the 2016 census among Syrian refugees who came to Canada in 2015 and 2016 reported a positive relationship between employment and improvement of language proficiency skills over time [6]. Based on a qualitative study [19] on Government Assisted Refugees from numerous countries, Hynie et al. (2016) noted that there appeared to be a bidirectional relationship between language proficiency skills and employment or education. This means that improvements or declines in language proficiency can significantly influence an individual's success in their occupational career or educational path [76]. This qualitative study also suggested that language proficiency skills are associated with the strength of social connections, especially relationships with those from different ethnic communities [19, 76]. Kearns & Whitley (2015) also showed that the ability to speak in the official language was associated with more social connections within the home neighborhood [76, 77]. Furthermore, a qualitative study by Ahmed et al. (2017) reported that Syrian refugee women deal with many difficulties in the host country due to their language barrier. Since they are more likely to be in the home rather than in the workforce, women are less likely to speak or focus on the language of the new country as compared to men. Therefore, for women, improving their language skills is more challenging. As

a result, it is more difficult for them to adapt to new environments or programs in Canada than it is for their male counterparts, particularly in cultural and healthcare access [42, 78].

Previous studies [14, 40, 41] showed that language ability is one of the most significant domains of integration for Syrian refugees. Several studies [6, 10, 52] have demonstrated the improvement of language competence among Syrian refugees over time, who resettled in Canada. However, these studies were mainly based on surveys or qualitative data and did not provide information regarding factors associated with changes in language proficiency skills. The objective of this study was to assess whether language proficiency changes over time, and to identify the factors associated with this change among Syrian refugee parents since their arrival in Canada.

Methodology

This study was designed as a cross-sectional study, and it also involved the collection of retrospective data. The inclusion criteria included being a Syrian refugee parent who resettled in Canada after 2015, with at least one child under 18 years at the time of the interview, as well as residing in Ontario. In this study, 540 Syrian refugee parents residing in Ontario were recruited. Participants were enrolled between March 3, 2021, and March 31, 2022, by convenience sampling with the help of two community organizations. Research Assistants who could read, write, and speak Arabic, specifically in the Levantine dialect, recruited the participants and administered the survey. Participants responded to the survey questionnaire by telephone to comply with social distancing recommendations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and each participant received a \$20 honorarium. Ethics approval was obtained from the Human Participants Review Committee at York University. Consent was received from all study participants.

Measures

Canadian language proficiency (English/French) was measured by asking participants to state their Canadian Language Benchmark level upon arrival in Canada and at the time of the interview, with answers ranging from Level 0=no proficiency to Level 10=highest proficiency. These benchmark levels were categorized based on the three stages utilized by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): Stage I- Basic (Benchmark level 1-4), Stage II- Intermediate (Benchmark level 5-8), and Stage III- Advanced (Benchmark level 9 and above) [79]. The Department of Settlement Services carried out language assessments upon arrival within the first year, typically a few weeks or months after the individual's arrival, and also conducts subsequent assessments to track language learning over time [80, 81]. The most recent language assessment, completed before the interview, was taken into account when determining the current assessment level at the time of the interview. The outcome variable, the change in the participant's language proficiency, was determined by subtracting the arrival language proficiency level from the language proficiency level at the time of the interview.

The main independent variable was the duration of time in years since Syrian refugee parents' arrival in Canada. The other independent variables included language, socio-demographic, health and migration factors. The language factors included the number of months attending language classes, determined by asking, "How many months of English or French classes have you taken in total?" Socio-demographic factors were age, gender, current employment status (employed/unemployed), education status (none=1 to professional degree=10), number of children, and age of the youngest child (≤ 4 years/ >4 years). In addition, income group status in Canada was determined by asking the question: "In your current

condition, here in Canada, would you say most people would categorize a household like yours as lower income =1/ lower middle=2/middle=3/upper middle =4/upper=5." Satisfaction with friendship was measured on a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5. The strength of their sense of belonging to their ethnic community or cultural group in Canada was evaluated by asking the question, "How would you describe your sense of belonging to your ethnic community or cultural group here in Canada", measured on a 4-point Likert Scale ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4. The health-related factors were self-perceived physical health status (a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from poor=1 to excellent=5), and self-perceived mental health status (a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from poor=1 to excellent=5). The migration-related factor was the types of sponsorship (GAR/PSR/Others).

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics assessed the language, socio-demographic, health and migration-related factors. Linear Mixed Models (LMM) regression analyses were performed to assess the simple and adjusted relationships between each of the factors listed above and the change in the participant's language proficiency at the time of interview compared to their arrival in Canada. Multilevel models were introduced to take account of each participant (Level One) being nested within a family (Level Two). The unstandardized beta coefficients and 95% confidence interval are reported.

Results

In this study, 540 Syrian refugee parents in Ontario were recruited. Among the 540 recruits, 485 (89.8%) reported both their baseline Canadian language benchmark level at arrival and their current language benchmark level at the time of interview; only those participants were included in the analysis. Information about language proficiency level was missing for 10.2% of

the sample; 1.1% had missing data only at arrival, 6.5% only at the interview, and 2.6% at both arrival and interview. Descriptive statistics for the language, socio-demographic, health and migration-related characteristics of these refugee parents are presented in Table 3. At the time of the interview, the participants' mean age was 39.8 years; more than 50% were between 35 and 45 years of age, and 60% were female. In addition, more than 50% had less than a high school education, and about 65% were unemployed. Approximately 58% came through the PSR program; 37% came through the GAR program, and 5% came through other programs. The average stay period in Canada was 3.9 years. The mean Canadian language benchmark level of these participants upon arrival was 2.31 (± 2.4), while at the time of the interview it was 4.78 (± 2.8). At the time of arrival, 32.5% of the participants had no knowledge of a Canadian official language, and only 20.6% had an intermediate or an advanced benchmark level of a Canadian language. In contrast, at the time of the interview, 8.2% of the participants had no knowledge of a Canadian official language, while 50.9% reported an intermediate or an advanced benchmark level of a Canadian language (Figure 4). A separate analysis comparing mothers and fathers showed that the percentage of mothers with intermediate or advanced proficiency in a Canadian language increased from 19.1% upon arrival to 56.3% by the time of the interview. In comparison, fathers' intermediate or advanced proficiency levels rose from 19.4% to 40.8% during the same period (Figure 5).

In both bivariate and multivariate analyses, several significant relationships were found among the language, socio-demographic, health and migration factors, and the change in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level (Table 4). In the bivariate analysis, our study demonstrated a significant improvement in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level for a longer residency period in Canada ($B = 0.383, p = <0.001$). In the multivariate analysis,

after adjusting for language, socio-demographic, health and migration-related factors, the results showed a significantly higher change in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level among individuals who resided for a longer time in Canada ($B = 0.244, p = <0.001$). Our study also demonstrated that individuals who attended language classes for at least 1-6 months ($B = 0.797, p = 0.001$) reported a significantly higher degree of change in their Canadian language benchmark level compared to those who did not attend the language classes. Further, findings showed a higher change in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level among individuals with a higher level of education ($B = 0.100, p = 0.022$). Moreover, this study also found a greater degree of positive change in language proficiency among the refugees with a better level of mental health ($B = 0.165, p = 0.030$). On the other hand, on average, for each additional year of age, Syrian refugee participants experienced a 0.033 unit less change in the Canadian language benchmark level ($B = -0.033, p = 0.020$). The change in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level was also found to be lower among the parents who had a higher level of satisfaction with their friendships ($B = -0.158, p = 0.048$) in their city of residence.

Discussion

This study assessed how language proficiency changed over time, and the factors associated with that change, among Syrian refugee mothers and fathers since their arrival in Canada. Results showed that at the time of arrival, 32.5% of the participants had no knowledge of either Canadian official language, while by the time of the interview, only 8.2% of the participants reported no knowledge of a Canadian official language. The change in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level was significantly increased by a 0.244 unit for every additional year of stay in Canada. The longer refugees stay in the host country, the more

opportunities they have to adapt to the different domains required for their successful integration; in turn, this gradual adaptation process plays a fundamental role in improving their language proficiency over time [14, 19]. For example, Hynie et al. (2016) conducted a mixed-method study involving refugee participants, highlighting that their workplace experiences in Canada allowed them to enhance their language proficiency over time [19]. Additionally, in a qualitative study by Oudshoorn et al. (2019) on the resettlement experiences of Syrian refugees, participants reported that socialization with Canadians helped them improve their Canadian language proficiency over time [14].

Our study results also indicated that participants who attended language classes for at least 1-6 months experienced a significantly greater improvement in their Canadian Language Benchmark levels compared to those who did not attend any classes. A qualitative study by Linder et al. (2020) was conducted to assess the acculturation experiences among Syrian families in two contexts Toronto, Canada and Munich, Germany, following two years of their resettlement. Ten Syrian refugee parents in Canada participated in the study, and the study demonstrated that the improvement in language proficiency increased to a greater extent among individuals who participated in language classes, as these classes helped refugees improve their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in the host country's official language [46]. A report by IRCC on newcomers in Canada, mostly refugees, indicated a significant improvement in language proficiency among those who attended language classes compared to those who did not [82].

Our study demonstrated that participants with a higher level of education showed significant improvement in their language proficiency over time. Previous studies on refugees in Canada also indicated that having a higher level of education prior to migration was significantly

associated with improved language proficiency over time in Canada [6, 44, 76]. Specifically, refugees with higher levels of education tended to have an advantage when learning a second language, as their advanced understanding of their first language enhanced their meta-linguistic skills [6].

The results of our study found significantly less change in the participants' Canadian language benchmark level over time among individuals of a higher age. A study over a ten years by Hou et al. (2006) among 1348 adult South-East Asian refugees who came to Vancouver between 1979 and 1981 also noted that being of a higher age was negatively associated with the improvement of language proficiency according to participants' response to the three-point Likert scale question ranging from “none=1” to “good=3”[44]. Similarly, another study in Germany, which surveyed 4,362 refugees primarily from Syria, revealed a negative correlation between older age and language proficiency [83]. Furthermore, research in the Netherlands involving 3,500 refugees, mainly from Middle Eastern countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Iran, demonstrated a positive correlation between younger age and improvement in language proficiency [84]. This correlation can likely be attributed to the younger age group being more receptive to learning a new language, as they often need to continue their education or secure employment, which provides them with greater motivation and incentives to invest in learning a second language. In contrast, older individuals tend to be less inclined to learn a new language, are less motivated, and may have fewer opportunities to engage with the language and culture of their new country [83, 84].

Our study results also showed that higher satisfaction with friendship is negatively associated with improvement in language proficiency among the study participants over time. No studies were found investigating an association between satisfaction with friendship and

improvement in language proficiency among Syrian refugees in Canada. The refugees with higher satisfaction with friendship might be socially more aggregated with people of the same ethnic community, where they communicate with each other in the language of their country of origin. A study on 180 refugees from one Middle Eastern country, Iraq, and three African countries, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia, who had resettled in various locations of the United Kingdom for about 4 to 8 years showed that inter-group contact, that is more connections with English-speaking local people of the host country, was positively associated with higher competence in the English language [85].

This study found a greater degree of positive change in the language proficiency level among the refugees with better mental health. Similarly, a study based on a survey conducted in 2017 among 3209 Syrian refugees who received a temporary residence permit in the Netherlands between January 1, 2014 and July 1, 2016 noted that refugees' mental health is positively associated with host country language proficiency over time since mental health is considered a prerequisite for acquiring other resources of the host country, which are also important for the development of language skills [86].

There are certain limitations to this study that need to be considered. First, there is potential for selection bias due to the use of convenience sampling and the exclusion of 10% of participants with missing language proficiency data. The absence of language proficiency data was more common among fathers, those employed, those with higher education, and those reporting stronger language skills at arrival. Second, this study is cross-sectional in design. Thus, it is difficult to demonstrate causal relationships between specific variables and the outcomes of interest. Third, the results may be impacted by confounding variables, such as participants caring for a sick person at home, as well as each individual's personality and coping abilities, which can

influence both predictors and outcome variables, potentially leading to a false association. Finally, there may be information bias since the participants' language proficiency might not have been precisely assessed at the time of interview, which could lead to inaccuracies in their self-reports. Additionally, they may have felt reluctant to express negative responses about the host country due to fear of possible retribution, or they may have felt compelled to demonstrate gratitude for the resettlement opportunity.

Conclusion

This study provides several useful insights into how higher education, participation in language classes, and better mental health status are associated with improvements in refugees' Canadian language benchmark levels over time in their new host country. These findings may be applied to develop effective learning tools, such as tailored language programs for older refugees, and enhanced educational resources that highlight the association between mental health and language learning, to address the potential challenges, negative perceptions, and limitations of incoming refugees. Additionally, further research into the nature of friendships, specifically, those within the Syrian community compared to friendships with English-speaking neighbours or colleagues, could deepen the understanding of their impact on language acquisition. Thus, the outcomes of this study, combined with future research, may contribute to the creation of enhanced social services, including healthcare and settlement services, that cater to the specific language needs of newcomer families, thereby facilitating their successful integration into Canadian society.

Table 3: Characteristics of the study participants (N=485)

Characteristics	Mean($\pm$SD), Minimum-Maximum /Number (%)
Time in Canada in years	3.9 ($\pm$ 1.5) 0-7
Missing	5 (0.9)
<i>Language-related factors</i>	
Canadian language arrival benchmark level ^u	2.31 ($\pm$ 2.4), 0-10
Missing	0 (0)
Canadian language current benchmark level ^u	4.78 ($\pm$ 2.8), 0-10
Missing	0 (0)
Language classes attended in months	
1-6 months	122 (25.2)
7-18 months	103 (21.2)
9 months or more	89 (18.4)
Did not attend language classes	169 (34.8)
Missing	2 (0.4)
<i>Socio-demographic factors</i>	
Age	39.8($\pm$ 7.4), 20-76
18-<35	139 (28.7)
35-<45	248 (51.1)
>45	98 (20.2)
Missing	0 (0)
Gender	
Mothers	304 (62.7)
Fathers	181 (37.3)
Missing	0 (0)
Education	
0-6 years	91 (18.8)
7-12 years	183 (37.7)
College-trade	73 (15.1)
University-professional	138 (28.5)
Missing	0 (0)
Employment status	
Employed	159 (32.8)
Unemployed	326 (67.2)
Missing	0 (0)
Income group in Canada ^q	2.1 ($\pm$ 1.0), 1-5
Lower income	184 (37.9)
Lower middle income	113 (23.3)
Middle income	154 (31.8)
Upper middle income	26 (5.4)
Upper income	6 (1.2)
Missing	2 (0.4)
Number of children	3.4 ($\pm$ 1.5), 1-9

≤2	148 (30.5)
3-4	240 (49.5)
>4	97 (20.0)
Missing	0 (0)
Age of the youngest child	6.1 (±4.4), 1-18
≤4 years	183 (37.7)
>4 years	300 (61.9)
Missing	2 (0.4)
Satisfaction with friendship[†]	3.5 (±1.1), 1-5
Very unsatisfied	26 (5.4)
Unsatisfied	63 (13.0)
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	105 (21.6)
Satisfied	218 (44.9)
Very satisfied	70 (14.4)
Missing	3 (0.6)
Ethnic community / cultural group in Canada^ε	2.7 (±0.8), 1-4
Very weak	24 (4.9)
Weak	157 (32.4)
Strong	226 (46.6)
Very strong	74 (15.3)
Missing	4 (0.8)
Health-related factors	
Physical health status^θ	3.1 (±1.1), 1-5
Poor	41 (8.5)
Fair	89 (18.4)
Good	182 (37.5)
Very good	121 (24.9)
Excellent	52 (10.7)
Missing	0 (0)
Mental health status^θ	2.9 (±1.2), 1-5
Poor	64 (13.2)
Fair	113 (23.3)
Good	159 (32.8)
Very good	90 (18.6)
Excellent	59 (12.2)
Missing	0 (0)
Migration-related factor	
Sponsorship type	
GAR	183 (37.7)
PSR	279 (57.5)
Others	19 (3.9)
Missing	0 (0)

[†] Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from lower income=1 to upper income=5.

^u Based on the question asking about their English/French benchmark level of language skill from none=0 to Level 10=10.

^θ Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from poor=1 to excellent=5.

[¶] Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5.

^ε Based on a 4-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4.

Table 4: Bivariate and multivariate associations between language, socio-demographic, health, and migration related factors and the change in current Canadian Language Benchmark level from baseline (N=469)

Characteristics	Change in current Canadian Language Benchmark level from baseline ^u			
	Beta (SE), <i>P</i>	95% CI	Adj. Beta (SE), <i>P</i>	95% CI
Time in Canada	0.383 (0.060), <0.001	0.265, 0.501	0.244 (0.061), <0.001	0.123, 0.365
<i>Language-related factor</i>				
Language classes attended in months				
1-6 months	0.599 (0.251) 0.017	0.106, 1.093	0.797 (0.246) 0.001	0.313, 1.281
7-18 months	1.658 (0.240) <0.001	1.184, 2.132	1.559 (0.243) <0.001	1.082, 2.035
19 months or more	1.680 (0.232) <0.001	1.223, 2.137	1.698 (0.250) <0.001	1.207, 2.189
Did not attend the language classes	Reference			
<i>Socio-demographic factors</i>				
Age	-0.025 (0.012), 0.035	-0.048, -0.002	-0.033 (0.014), 0.020	-0.061, -0.005
Gender				
Female	0.293 (0.148) 0.049	0.001, 0.586	-0.059 (0.181) 0.747	-0.415, 0.298
Male	Reference			
Education level[®]	0.087 (0.039), 0.026	0.010, 0.163	0.100 (0.044), 0.022	0.014, 0.186
Employment status				
Unemployed	-0.211 (0.175), 0.229	-0.555, 0.133	0.008 (0.189) 0.965	-0.362, 0.379
Employed	Reference			
Income group in Canada[†]	0.309 (0.087) <0.001	0.138, 0.480	0.157 (0.086), 0.066	0.011, 0.326
Number of children	-0.222 (0.064), <0.001	-0.348, -0.095	-0.125 (0.071), 0.081	-0.265, -0.015
Age of the youngest child				
Non school age (0-4 years)	0.283 (0.192), 0.142	0.662, 0.095	-0.367 (0.194), 0.060	-0.749, 0.015
School age (>4 years)	Reference			
Satisfaction with friendship[Ⓢ]	-0.054 (0.082), 0.510	-0.215, 0.107	-0.158 (0.079), 0.048	-0.314, -0.001
Ethnic community/ cultural group in Canada^ε	0.075 (0.111)	-0.143, 0.294	0.036 (0.110)	-0.251, 0.180

	<i>0.498</i>		<i>0.744</i>	
Health-related factors				
Physical health status ^o	0.178 (0.078), <i>0.023</i>	0.024, 0.332	0.046 (0.083), <i>0.579</i>	-0.117, 0.209
Mental health status ^o	0.167 (0.072) <i>0.020</i>	0.026, 0.308	0.165 (0.076), <i>0.030</i>	0.165, 0.076
Migration-related factor				
Sponsorship types				
GAR	Reference			
PSR	0.384 (0.199) <i>0.055</i>	-0.008, 0.776	-0.006 (0.219), <i>0.978</i>	-0.425, 0.438
Others	0.230 (0.456), <i>0.615</i>	-0.668, 1.127	-0.126 (0.407), <i>0.757</i>	-0.926, 0.675

^u Based on the question asking about their English/French benchmark level of language skill from none=0 to Level 10=10

[®] Based on a 10-point Likert Scale questions ranging from none=1 to professional degree=10

^q Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from lower income=1 to upper income=5

^o Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from poor=1 to excellent=5

[°] Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5

^ε Based on a 4-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4.

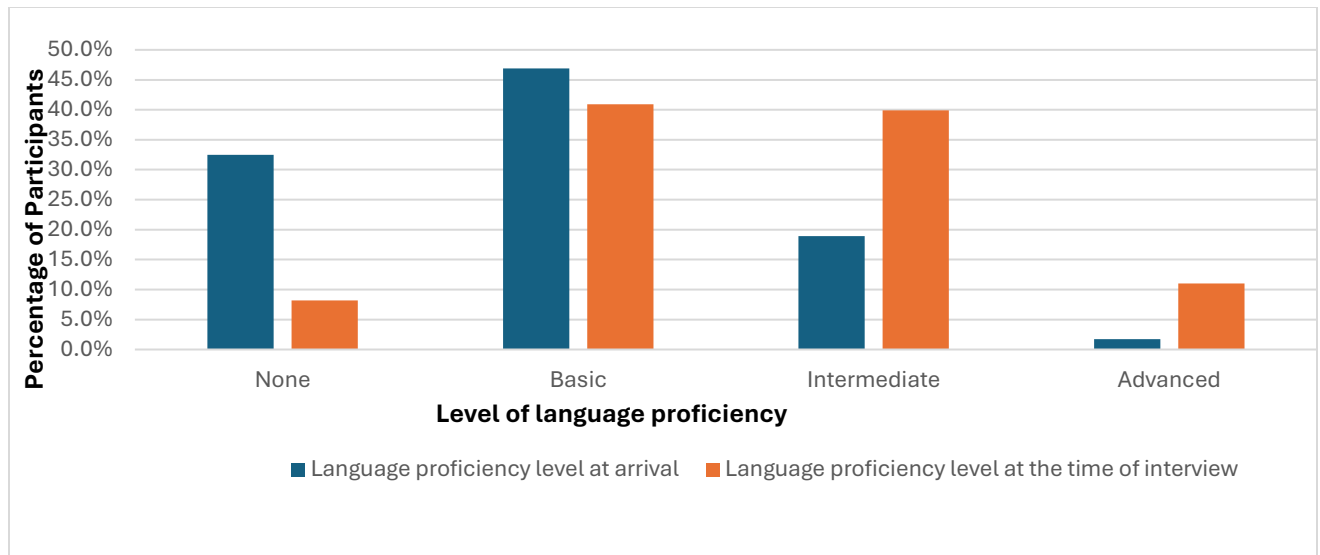


Figure 4: Language proficiency level at arrival and at the time of interview

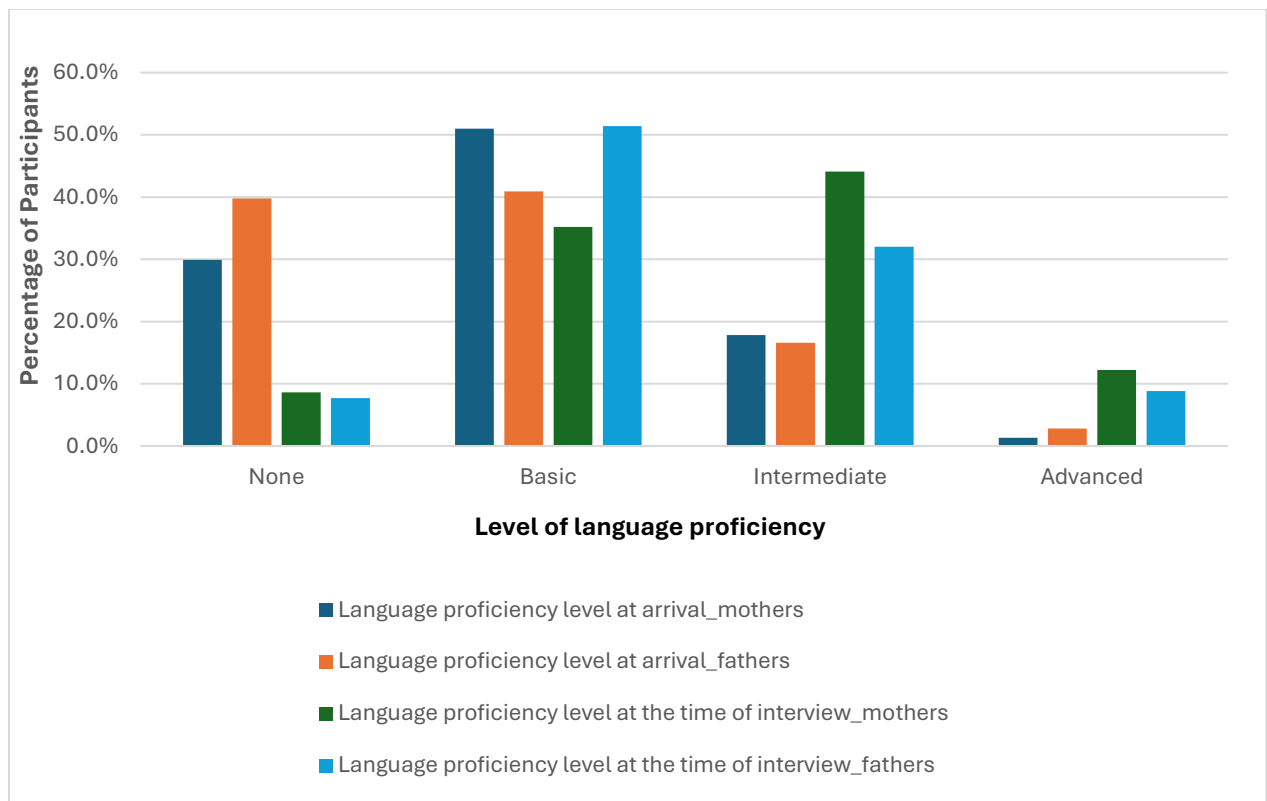


Figure 5: Language proficiency level at arrival and at the time of interview mother vs. fathers

Chapter Five

Enrollment duration and satisfaction of Syrian refugee parents in government-funded language classes in Canada

Abstract

Canada was an important host country for resettling Syrian refugees following the start of the Syrian conflict, which began in March 2011. Canada accepted 40,081 Syrian refugees between 2015 and 2016 alone. On arrival in Canada between 2011 and 2016, more than 60 percent of Syrian refugees reported no knowledge of either official language. The Canadian government offers free English and French language classes to newcomers to improve their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. This study aimed to investigate the duration of enrollment and satisfaction associated with government-funded English or French language classes among Syrian refugee parents resettled in Canada. *Method:* This study employed a cross-sectional design and included the collection of retrospective data. Participants were Syrian refugee parents who resettled in Ontario after 2015 and who had at least one child under 18 years of age. The duration of attendance in language classes was determined by the number of months participants attended, and satisfaction with the classes was assessed through overall satisfaction ratings from the study participants. Generalized Linear Mixed Models (GLMMs) were conducted to assess the crude and adjusted relationships between socio-demographic, health and migration-related factors and the duration of attendance or satisfaction with language classes among the study participants. *Results:* A total of 540 Syrian refugee parents in Ontario were recruited. This study found that participants with a higher Canadian language benchmark level at arrival had a lower duration of attendance in language classes ($B = -1.394, p < 0.001$). This study's results also demonstrated a higher level of satisfaction with the language classes among the individuals who had a stronger sense of belonging to their ethnic community or cultural group in Canada ($B = 0.380, p = 0.004$). *Conclusions:* This study's findings can help to understand key factors that

impact the duration of attendance and satisfaction in language classes for Syrian refugee parents resettling in Canada.

Keywords: Syrian refugee, language classes attendance, satisfaction with language classes, integration, and time in Canada.

Introduction

Following the start of the Syrian conflict in March 2011, Canada was an important host country for resettled Syrian refugees, accepting 40,081 Syrian refugees in 2015 and 2016 alone [5, 6]. The Syrian population speaks numerous languages, including Arabic, Kurdish, Armenian, and Circassian; ninety percent of Syrians speak Arabic, which is Syria's official language [39]. Canada is officially bilingual in English and French [38]. The 2019 report from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) indicated that between 2011 and 2016, 65% of Syrian refugees arriving in Canada reported having no knowledge of either official language [10]. The report also indicated that these refugees, specifically those in their first year after arriving in Canada, felt pressure to develop their language skills in order to become financially independent [10]. Language acquisition is vital for socio-cultural integration, yet learning the language of one's country of resettlement remains one of the most difficult challenges for refugee newcomers [14, 38, 40].

The Canadian government offers English and French language classes to refugees and immigrants to improve their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills [40, 45, 46]. These classes are offered free and may be part-time or full-time with flexible schedules and locations, including schools, colleges, and community organizations. IRCC noted that approximately 89% of adult Syrian refugees participated in government-funded language assessment programs, and 77% of them attended an IRCC-funded language training program within three years of their arrival in Canada [10]. A study conducted by Ives et al. (2022) on adult Syrian refugees, who arrived in Canada between January 2015 and June 2017, found that younger individuals, women, employed individuals, those needing an interpreter, those without children under 18, and those reporting poor physical health had lower attendance in language classes. Interestingly, the study

also found that individuals who perceived their mental health as poor had higher attendance in the language classes [43].

Understanding the factors associated with participation in language classes is critical for promoting participation to support newcomers' language learning. Previous studies [14, 40, 41] have shown that language ability is one of the most significant domains of integration for Syrian refugees. Language acquisition among refugee newcomers is related to a range of factors. For example, studies [76, 77] on refugee populations have indicated that relationships within the same ethnic community enhance social connections, facilitating participation in various interventions, including the improving language proficiency skills necessary for integration into the host country. It might be assumed that this includes participation in language-learning classes, which are a key strategy for strengthening newcomers' language skills. Satisfaction levels with government-provided English and French language classes for refugees may be an important factor in retaining of newcomer participants and in improving language-learning programs that cater to the specific needs of newcomer families. While most adult newcomer refugees expressed satisfaction with the language classes offered by federal and provincial governments, some newcomers have reported multiple challenges to attending these classes, including work, education, health, and the availability of space in the classes [7, 10, 14, 41]. Studies [10, 14, 43] also noted that attending language classes is particularly challenging for refugee parents due to several limitations. These include the lack of suitable childcare facilities, the need to care for sick children at home, and the responsibilities of managing household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and providing regular care for their children.

While there have been a few studies [14, 41, 43] demonstrating the factors associated with enrollment in language classes among the refugee population, including Syrian refugees,

none have specifically reported the specific factors related to duration of enrollment or satisfaction with language classes, particularly among Syrian refugee parents who have settled in Canada. There is a strong need to explore how various factors are associated with the duration of attendance and satisfaction with government-funded language classes among Syrian refugees in Canada. This exploration can provide valuable insights to improve the language-learning program, ensuring it better meets the specific needs of Syrian refugees during their resettlement. The specific objectives of this study were to investigate the factors associated with duration of enrollment and satisfaction with government-funded English or French language classes among Syrian refugee parents resettled in Canada.

Methodology

This study was cross-sectional in design. The inclusion criteria included being a Syrian refugee parent who resettled in Canada after 2015, having at least one child under 18 years at the time of the interview, and residing in Ontario. Participants were recruited between March 3, 2021, and March 31, 2022, by convenience sampling with the help of two community organizations. Research Assistants (RAs) who could read, write, and speak Arabic, specifically in the Syrian dialect, recruited the participants and administered the survey. Participants responded to the survey questionnaire by telephone to comply with social distancing recommendations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and each participant received a \$20 honorarium. Ethics approval was obtained from the Human Participants Review Committee at York University. Consent was received from all study participants.

Measures

The duration of attendance in language classes among the study participants who attended government-funded English/French language classes was determined based on the

question “Approximately how many months of English/French language classes have you taken in total?” If participants had not attended any language classes, their attendance duration was recorded as “0” months.

Satisfaction with language classes among the study participants was measured by asking, "Please rate your overall satisfaction with these language classes". The answers were based on a 5-point Likert scale question ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5.

The independent variables included several language, socio-demographic, health and migration related factors. Canadian language proficiency (English/French) level at arrival and at the time of the interview was measured by asking participants to state their Canadian Language Benchmark level, with responses ranging from Level 0=no proficiency to Level 10=highest proficiency. These benchmark levels were categorized based on the three stages utilized by the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC): Stage I- Basic (Benchmark level 1-4), Stage II- Intermediate (Benchmark level 5-8), and Stage III- Advanced (Benchmark level 9 and above) [79]. The socio-demographic factors were age, gender, educational status (none=1 to PhD=10), current employment status (employed/unemployed), number of children, and age of the youngest child (≤ 4 years/ >4 years). Furthermore, the strength of their sense of belonging to their ethnic community or cultural group in Canada was evaluated by asking the question, “How would you describe your sense of belonging to your ethnic community or cultural group here in Canada”, measured on a 4-point Likert Scale ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4. The health-related factors were self-perceived physical and mental health status, measured on a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from poor=1 to excellent=5. The migration-related factors were sponsorship type (GAR/PSR/Others) and time in Canada in years.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics were conducted to assess language, socio-demographic, health and migration related factors. Generalized Linear Mixed Models (GLMM) were conducted to assess the crude and adjusted relationships between each of the factors listed above and duration of attendance in government-funded English/French language classes. GLMM regression analyses were also performed to assess the crude and adjusted relationships between each of the factors listed above and participants' level of satisfaction with language classes; for this analysis, data were restricted to those who took language classes. Multilevel models were introduced to take account of each participant (Level One) being nested within a family (Level Two). The unstandardized beta coefficients and 95% confidence intervals (95% CI) are reported.

Results

In this study, 540 Syrian refugee parents in Ontario were recruited. Descriptive statistics for the socio-demographic, health and migration related characteristics of these refugee parents are presented in Table 5. The results indicated that 75.7% of participants attended government-offered language classes, and among them, the mean attendance duration was 14.5 months ($SD = \pm 15.1$). The participants' mean age was 39.8 years, more than 50% were between 35 and 45 years of age, and 60.9% were mothers. In addition, more than 50% had less than a high school education. Approximately 58% came to Canada through the Privately Assisted Refugee program, 37% through the Government Sponsored Refugee program, and 5% through other programs. The average stay period in Canada for these Syrian refugee parents was 3.9 years. At the time of the interview, about 65% were unemployed.

Bivariate and multivariate analyses were conducted to assess the associations between socio-demographic, health, and migration related factors, and the duration of attendance in

language classes (measured in months) among the study participants (Table 6). For the outcome, duration of attendance in language classes, the model fit for the multivariate analysis was found to be reasonable. The Pearson residuals closely followed a normal distribution as needed. The Pearson correlation coefficient (R) for the predicted outcomes and observed outcomes was 0.876 (n=507). In the multivariate analyses, this study found that participants with a higher Canadian language benchmark level at the time of arrival attended language classes for a shorter duration in months ($B\ adj. = -1.394, p < 0.001$). The duration of attendance in language classes was also found to be lower among male participants than among female participants ($B\ adj. = -3.077, p = 0.013$). Furthermore, this study also demonstrated that individuals who had more children reported significantly lower duration of attendance in language classes ($B\ adj. = -1.297, p = 0.015$), as did individuals who came through the PSR program compared to those who came through the GAR program ($B\ adj. = -3.378, p = 0.046$). On the other hand, the duration of attending language classes was found to be higher among older participants ($B\ adj. = 0.266, p = 0.012$) and among individuals who had resided in Canada for a longer time ($B\ adj. = 3.545, p < 0.001$). Moreover, this study found that individuals who had a stronger sense of belonging to their ethnic community or cultural group in Canada reported significantly longer duration of attendance in language classes ($B\ adj. = 2.730, p < 0.001$).

Out of the 540 participants, 411 attended the government-funded language classes, and 68.9% of them reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the language classes (Table 7). Bivariate and multivariate analyses were also conducted to evaluate the relationships between the different variables, including socio-demographic, health, and migration related factors, and the level of satisfaction with the language classes among the study participants who attended the language classes (Table 8). The multivariate analysis showed reasonable model fit, with an

overall correct classification percentage of 47.0%. The Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (ρ) for the predicted and observed outcomes was 0.205 ($n=402$). In the multivariate analyses, this study found a higher level of satisfaction with the language classes among individuals who had a stronger sense of belonging to their ethnic community or cultural group in Canada ($B_{adj.} = 0.380, p = 0.004$).

Discussion

This study examined the factors associated with the duration of attendance and satisfaction with government-funded English/French language classes among Syrian refugee mothers and fathers in Canada. The results indicated that 75.7% of the participants attended the language classes for an average duration of 19.1 (± 14.5) months, and 68.9% of them expressed satisfaction with the classes. The findings revealed that participants with a higher baseline Canadian Language Benchmark level, males, individuals with more children, and those who entered through the PSR program tended to attend language classes for a shorter duration. In contrast, participants who were relatively older, had lived in Canada for a longer period, or had a strong sense of belonging to an ethnic community or cultural group in Canada tended to attend language classes for a longer duration. Additionally, the results found a higher level of satisfaction with language classes among individuals who had a stronger sense of belonging to their ethnic community or cultural group in Canada. These findings highlight the importance of understanding the factors associated with the duration of attendance and satisfaction with language classes, underscoring the need to develop effective strategies to address these issues.

Overall, 75.7% of participants attended the government-funded English/French language classes for an average duration of 19.1 (± 14.5) months. According to a 2019 report by IRCC, approximately 77% of Syrian refugees participated in government-funded language classes

within three years of their arrival in Canada [10]. No previous studies have specified the total average duration of language class attendance, in months, among Syrian refugees throughout their time in Canada. However, the IRCC's 2017 report noted that Syrian refugees attended language classes for an average of 215 hours during the 2015/2016 period [87]. Additionally, our study found that 68.9% of participants attending government-funded language classes were satisfied with the classes. The qualitative study by Feng et al. (2018), which focused on refugees, primarily Syrian refugees, in Newfoundland and Labrador, and reported that approximately 54% of adult newcomers were satisfied with the language programs offered by both federal and provincial governments [41, 88].

This study found that participants with higher Canadian language benchmark levels upon arrival attended language classes for a shorter duration. Previous studies have shown that language proficiency is positively correlated with a higher level of education prior to migration. Individuals with a higher level of language proficiency upon arrival may be less inclined to enroll in language training programs in their new country because they do not need them (they could be fluent) or because they are fluent enough to be able to attain their goals, such as employment [6, 7, 44, 76]. Older participants attended language classes for a longer duration. This is consistent with findings from a study conducted by Ives et al. (2022) that analyzed data from three provinces: British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec, and the findings showed that in both British Columbia and Quebec, older individuals were more likely to enroll in language classes compared to younger individuals [43]. One possible reason for the longer attendance duration among older people is that younger individuals are often more engaged in employment and have responsibilities, such as caring for young children, particularly in this study, where participants are parents [10, 25], which likely restricts their availability to attend language

classes. Our study also found that individuals with more children reported a significantly shorter duration of attendance in language classes. Research [10, 89] on Syrian refugees has pointed out that mothers with children, especially those with younger children, often face challenges in attending language classes due to a lack of suitable childcare facilities. The results of this study also indicated that male participants had a shorter duration of attendance in language classes than female participants, may be due to their greater likelihood of finding employment. Previous studies [90, 91] have shown that male members of the Syrian refugee population are often more engaged in employment or occupational training, which limits their ability to participate in government-funded language training programs. Studies [92, 93], including a qualitative one involving Syrian refugees living in Regina and Saskatchewan, found that male participants, especially those who had received informal education in their home country, were guided by experts through apprenticeships in mastering occupations rather than attending traditional classroom studies. These men believed that they could learn English while working and perceived formal language classes as a waste of time. This study also revealed that individuals with a stronger sense of belonging to the ethnic community or cultural group in Canada reported significantly higher attendance in language classes. Research on refugee populations noted that relationships and connections within the ethnic community strengthen social ties, which, in turn, facilitate participation in various programs, including those aimed at improving language skills necessary for integration into the host country [77]. Furthermore, other studies [94, 95] have also indicated that a strong connection to one's ethnic community or cultural group can significantly enhance a sense of belonging to the host country, which is important for social and mental well-being. These feelings toward one's own community, along with supportive peer environments,

can positively influence motivation to attend classes regularly, thereby increasing attendance and participation in language programs.

The results also indicated that individuals entering through the PSR program had lower attendance in language classes than those who entering through the GAR program. The report on Syrian refugees also showed that attendance in language classes was higher among those who came through the GAR program than among those who arrived through the PSR program [10]. This difference may be attributed to the fact that Syrian refugees entering through the GAR program are primarily selected based on vulnerability criteria, whereas those entering through the PSR program are often sponsored by family members in Canada, who generally have higher levels of education. PSR program participants may be less inclined to participate in government-funded language classes because they are more motivated to seek work (and more likely to find it), but they may also be learning language from their sponsors [6, 10, 25]. Furthermore, the duration of attendance in language classes was found to be longer among individuals who had resided in Canada for longer periods. Previous studies also reported that the longer refugees stay in the host country, the more they need to (or perhaps are able to) participate in various intervention programs, such as language improvement programs, to better adapt to their new environment and achieve successful integration [14, 19, 40, 45, 46].

Satisfaction with government-provided English and French language classes for refugees is important for improving language-learning programs that cater to the unique needs of newcomer families. Our study found that individuals with a stronger sense of belonging to their ethnic community or cultural group in Canada reported a higher level of satisfaction with their language classes. While previous research has not specifically addressed the factors related to satisfaction with language classes among Syrian refugee parents in Canada, studies [76, 77] on

refugee populations suggest that building relationships within the ethnic community fosters social connections. These connections encourage engagement among individuals and increase their satisfaction with participating in various intervention programs, including those designed to improve the skills necessary for successful integration into a new country.

This study has limitations that need to be considered. First, results should be interpreted carefully due to the limited generalizability of the study's findings. Participants were recruited by convenience sampling to recruit easily available individuals. As a result, generalizability may be compromised to some extent due to the potential for selection bias. Second, this study is cross-sectional in design, and it is therefore difficult to demonstrate causal relationships between specific variables and the outcomes of interest. Third, there is a risk of measurement bias because we assessed the satisfaction with language classes using a single self-reported item, instead of utilizing a validated and reliable scale. Fourth, the results may be influenced by confounding biases, such as participants caring for a sick person at home, as well as an individual's personality and coping abilities. Finally, there may be information bias, as participants may have difficulty with self-report measures or accurately recall their language proficiency levels. Additionally, participants might have been reluctant to report negative views of the host country due to fear of possible retribution, or they may have felt the need to express gratitude for the resettlement opportunity.

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into how various factors, including baseline Canadian language benchmark levels, gender, age, number of children, duration of time spent in Canada, and a strong sense of belonging to an ethnic community or cultural group, are related to participation in language classes in the host country. Additionally, it highlights the significant

connection between a stronger sense of belonging to one's ethnic community or cultural group and satisfaction with language classes. These findings can be used to develop effective learning tools to address the challenges, negative perceptions, and limitations faced by incoming refugees. Consequently, the results of this study, along with future research, may help create enhanced language learning services that meet the specific needs of newcomer families, which, in turn, can facilitate their successful integration into Canadian society.

Table 5: Characteristics of the study participants(N=540)

Characteristics	Mean($\pm$SD), Minimum-Maximum /Number (%)
Canadian language arrival benchmark level ^u	2.42 ($\pm$ 2.5), 0-10
Missing	20 (3.7)
Language classes attended in months	14.5 ($\pm$ 15.1), 0-60
Did not attend language classes	129 (23.9)
1-6 months	109 (20.2)
7-18 months	125 (23.1)
9 months or more	175 (32.4)
Missing	2 (0.4)
<i>Socio-demographic characteristics</i>	
Age	39.8 ($\pm$ 7.3), 20-76
18-<35	153 (28.3)
35-<45	275 (50.9)
>45	111 (20.6)
Missing	1 (0.2)
Gender	
Mothers	329 (60.9)
Fathers	211 (39.1)
Missing	0 (0)
Education	4.70 ($\pm$ 2.2), 1-10
0-6 years	101 (18.7)
7-12 years	199 (36.9)
College-trade	79 (14.6)
University-professional	161 (29.8)
Missing	0 (0)
Employment status	
Employed	186 (34.4)
Unemployed	354 (65.6)
Missing	0 (0)
Number of children	3.4 ($\pm$ 1.5), 1-10
≤ 2	170 (31.5)
3-4	264 (48.9)
>4	106 (19.6)
Missing	0 (0)
Age of the youngest child	6.1 ($\pm$ 4.4), 1-18
≤ 4 years	202 (37.4)
>4 years	336 (62.2)
Missing	2 (0.4)
Sense of belonging to ethnic community / cultural group in Canada ^e	2.7 ($\pm$ 0.8), 1-4
Very weak	25 (4.6)
Weak	177 (32.8)

Strong	254 (47.0)
Very strong	79 (14.6)
Missing	5 (0.9)
<i>Health-related factors</i>	
Physical health status ^θ	3.1 (±1.1), 1-5
Poor	39 (9.3)
Fair	78 (18.7)
Good	159 (38.0)
Very good	104 (24.9)
Excellent	38 (9.1)
Missing	0 (0)
Mental health status ^θ	2.9 (±1.2), 1-5
Poor	52 (12.4)
Fair	97 (23.2)
Good	143 (34.2)
Very good	78 (18.7)
Excellent	48 (11.5)
Missing	0 (0)
<i>Migration-related factors</i>	
Sponsorship type	
GAR	202 (37.4)
PSR	312 (57.8)
Others	26 (4.8)
Missing	0 (0)
Time in Canada in years	3.9 (±1.6) 0-7
Missing	5 (0.9)

^{uj} Based on the question asking about their English/French benchmark level of language skill from none=0 to Level 10=10

^ε Based on a 4-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4.

^θ Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from poor=1 to excellent=5.

Table 6: Bivariate and multivariate associations between different factors and the duration of the attendance in the language classes among the Syrian refugee parents resettled in Canada

Characteristics	Language classes attendance duration in months				
	N (%)	Beta (SE), <i>P</i>	95% CI	Adj. Beta (SE), <i>P</i>	95% CI
Language proficiency at arrival ^u	518 (95.9)	-1.896 (0.256) <0.001	-2.400, 1.393	-1.394 (0.334) <0.001	-2.050, -0.738
<i>Socio-demographic factors</i>					
Age	537 (99.4)	-0.010 (0.088) <i>0.908</i>	-0.182, 0.162	0.266 (0.106) <i>0.012</i>	0.058, 0.473
Gender	538 (99.6)				
Female		Reference			
Male		-2.968 (0.938) <i>0.002</i>	4.811, -1.125	-3.077 (1.232) <i>0.013</i>	-5.497, -0.657
Education level [¶]	538 (99.6)	-1.804 (0.313) <0.001	-2.418, -1.190	-0.729 (0.426) <i>0.088</i>	-1.566, 0.108
Employment status	538 (99.6)				
Employed		-3.942 (1.201) <i>0.001</i>	-6.301, -1.582	-2.353 (1.317) <i>0.075</i>	-4.940, 0.235
Unemployed		Reference			
Number of children	538 (99.6)	1.047 (0.502) <i>0.037</i>	0.061, 2.033	-1.297 (0.531) <i>0.015</i>	-2.341, -0.254
Age of the youngest child	536 (99.3)				
Non school age (0-4 years)		Reference			
School age (>4 years)		0.567 (1.520) <i>0.709</i>	-2.419, 3.552	0.957 (1.456) <i>0.511</i>	-1.976, 3.780
Sense of belonging to ethnic community/ cultural group in Canada [§]	533 (98.7)	3.205 (0.812) <0.001	1.611, 4.800	2.730 (0.761) <0.001	1.234, 4.225
<i>Health-related factors</i>					
Physical health status ^θ	538 (99.6)	-0.182 (0.571) <i>0.750</i>	-1.304, 0.940	0.660 (0.597) <i>0.270</i>	-0.513, 1.833

Mental health status ^u	538 (99.6)	-0.257 (0.527) <i>0.626</i>	-1.292, 0.778	<i>0.372 (0.540)</i> <i>0.491</i>	-1.4, 33 0.689
Migration-related factors					
Sponsorship types	538 (99.6)				
GAR	Reference				
PSR		-5.995 (1.563) <0.001	-9.066, -2.925	-3.378 (1.690) <i>0.046</i>	-6.698, -0.058
Others		-0.609 (3.421) <i>0.076</i>	-12.811, 0.631	-4.620 (3.002) <i>0.125</i>	-10.519, 1.279
Time in Canada	533 (98.7)	3.613 (0.445) <0.001	2.739, 4.487	3.545 (0.439) <0.001	2.682, 4.409

^u Based on the question asking about their English/French benchmark level of language skill from none=0 to Level 10=10

^s Based on a 10-point Likert Scale questions ranging from none=0 to PhD=9

^o Reference GAR

^e Based on a 4-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4.

Table 7: Satisfaction with Language Classes (N=411)

Characteristics	Overall
	Mean($\pm$SD), Minimum-Maximum /Number (%)
Satisfaction with language classes[¶]	3.72, 1-5
Very unsatisfied	14 (3.4)
Unsatisfied	52 (12.7)
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	62 (15.1)
Satisfied	189 (46.0)
Very satisfied	94 (22.9)
Missing	0 (0)

[¶] Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very unsatisfied=1 to very satisfied=5

Table 8: Bivariate and multivariate associations between socio-demographic, health, and migration related factors and the satisfaction with language classes (N=411)

Characteristics	Satisfaction with language classes ^{cs}				
	N (%)	Beta (SE), <i>P</i>	95% CI	Adj. Beta (SE), <i>P</i>	95% CI
Language proficiency at arrival ^u	410 (99.8)	-0.134 (0.485) 0.009	-0.232, -0.009	-0.122 (0.065) 0.060	-0.250, 0.005
<i>Socio-demographic factors</i>					
Age	411 (100)	-0.023 (0.0135) 0.097	-0.049, 0.004	-0.001 (0.017) 0.929	-0.034, 0.031
Gender	411 (100)				
Female		Reference			
Male		-0.292 (0.160) 0.165	0.801, 0.217	-0.398 (0.2434) 0.102	-0.876, 0.080
Education level [*]	411 (100)	-0.110 (0.050) 0.035	-0.212, -0.008	-0.055 (0.071) 0.441	-0.194, 0.084
Employment status	411 (100)				
Employed		0.054 (0.186) 0.792	-0.645, 0.537	0.064 (0.229) 0.779	-0.385, 0.513
Unemployed		Reference			
Number of children	411 (100)	0.049 (0.069) 0.478	-0.091, 0.189	-0.043 (0.079) 0.592	-0.198, 0.113
Age of the youngest child	409 (99.5)				
Non school age (0-4 years)		Reference			
School age (>4 years)		-0.237 (0.211) 0.343	-0.907, 0.434	-0.115 (0.219) 0.600	-0.544, 0.315
Sense of belonging to ethnic community/ cultural group in Canada ^ε	409 (99.5)	0.445 (0.263) 0.118		0.380 (0.133) 0.004	0.119, 0.641
<i>Health-related factors</i>					
Physical health status ^θ	411 (100)	0.198 (0.110) 0.092	-0.036, 0.432	0.120 (0.102) 0.239	-0.080, 0.319
Mental health status ^θ	411 (100)	0.180 (0.136) 0.205	-0.110, 0.469	0.118 (0.096) 0.218	-0.070, 0.306

<i>Migration-related factors</i>					
Sponsorship types	411 (100)				
GAR	Reference				
PSR		-0.208 (0.212) <i>0.364</i>	-0.728, 0.311	0.046 (0.244) <i>0.849</i>	-0.431, 0.524
Others		-0.416 (0.495) <i>0.433</i>	-1.628, 0.796	-0.293 (0.452) <i>0.517</i>	-1.180, 0.594
Time in Canada	407 (99.0)	0.125 (0.093) <i>0.191</i>	-0.066, 0.315	0.089 (0.073) <i>0.221</i>	-0.054, 0.233

^u Based on the question asking about their English/French benchmark level of language skill from none=0 to Level 10=10

^s Based on a 10-point Likert Scale questions ranging from none=0 to PhD=9

^o Based on a 5-point Likert Scale questions ranging from poor=1 to excellent=5

^e Based on a 4-point Likert Scale questions ranging from very weak=1 to very strong=4.

Chapter Six: Discussion

This study provides a valuable opportunity to gain insights into the intricate integration processes experienced by Syrian refugee parents in Canada. It explores how key factors, such as a sense of belonging, are linked to the welcoming attitudes of members of the host country, including perceptions of being treated with respect by local residents, and how language proficiency evolves over time.

The research highlights the challenges and milestones that shape these domains during the transition to a new environment as refugees resettle. The study focused on Syrian refugee parents who have at least one child under 18 years of age. By evaluating their current experiences and future expectations while considering family dynamics, the study aimed to provide meaningful insights into how various aspects of integration relate to different factors in their new country of resettlement.

The findings from the three research projects indicate that Syrian refugee parents in Canada experience a strong sense of belonging that is closely linked to their perceptions of being respected by Canadians, as well as the respect their spouses receive. Additionally, the research shows that the language skills of Syrian refugee parents have improved since their arrival in Canada. Furthermore, the study highlights the significant connections between various factors and different domains of integration, emphasizing the importance of promoting an inclusive integration process.

Strengths and limitations

This dissertation has made significant research contributions that clarify the current experiences and future expectations of Syrian refugee parents as they work to create a new life for their families in Canada. It offers a unique opportunity to understand how they can

effectively integrate into Canadian society. First, this survey was conducted exclusively among Syrian refugee parents who have resettled in Canada, aiming to gather specific information about their experiences, and challenges related to the resettlement process. Second, the interviews were carried out by research assistants fluent in Arabic, particularly the Syrian dialect, which helped to minimize the risk of information bias. Finally, the findings of this study are important for gaining a deeper understanding of these families' transitions to a new country, which could inform the development of social services tailored to the specific needs of newcomer families and facilitate their integration into Canadian society.

This study has some potential limitations that should be considered. First, there is a possibility of selection bias since participants were enrolled using convenience sampling. Additionally, while Syrian refugees are spread across different provinces of Canada, but our study participants were recruited exclusively in Ontario. Furthermore, recruitment conducted by telephone during the pandemic may have led to the underrepresentation of more socially isolated or marginalized families. Therefore, the findings of the study should be interpreted cautiously due to their limited generalizability. Second, this study is cross-sectional in design. Thus, it is difficult to demonstrate the direction of the causal relationships among variables and the outcomes of interest. Third, there is a risk of information bias, as we did not employ valid or reliable scales for some variables, such as sense of belonging and perceived respect among the participants. Fourth, there may be social desirability bias as participants may be reluctant to report negative feelings toward the new country due to fear of retribution, or a need to demonstrate gratitude for the resettlement opportunity. Finally, the results may be impacted by confounding variables, such as participants caring for a sick person at home, as well as each

individual's personality and coping abilities, which can influence both predictors and outcome variables, potentially leading to a false association.

Implications and future directions

Current research findings, along with insights from a qualitative study, may provide a valuable opportunity to explore the more comprehensive ways in which integration domains evolve and transform over time in a new country. This exploration aims to deepen our understanding of the factors and processes that shape successful integration experiences for a refugee population in a country of resettlement.

Future research could also delve into the various elements that play a vital role in fostering strong and healthy relationships between spouses in the host country. By identifying these factors, we can gain insights into how they contribute to a greater sense of belonging and community for newcomers in Canada. Understanding these dynamics could ultimately lead to more supportive environments that help refugee families thrive and integrate into the Canadian society.

The findings of the study results can serve as an effective educational tool in public settings to address challenges related to discrimination, racism, and negative perceptions of incoming refugees. Our study's results are based on this model and align with findings from previous literature. These findings may assist stakeholders, including government agencies, sponsors, and policymakers, in addressing the challenges faced by Syrian refugee parents resettling in Canada.

Additionally, these findings can be used to create practical learning resources, such as customized language programs for older refugees, and to improve educational materials that

emphasize the connection between mental health and language learning. This will help address the potential challenges and negative attitudes faced by incoming refugees.

Further research into the nature of friendships, particularly within the Syrian community compared to those with English-speaking neighbors or colleagues, could enhance our understanding of how these relationships impact language acquisition.

Ultimately, the findings from this study may contribute to the development of enhanced social services, including healthcare and settlement resources, that cater to the specific needs of newcomer families. This, in turn, would facilitate their successful integration into their new country of resettlement.

Overall significance and conclusion

This dissertation focuses on Syrian refugee parents who have at least one child under 18 years of age. By exploring their current experiences and future expectations while tracking family dynamics, this research provides a unique opportunity to understand how integration processes evolve over time in a new country. In particular, this research reveals important insights into how the degree to which participants and their spouses feel respected by Canadians influences the refugees' sense of belonging in their new host country. Furthermore, the study indicates that higher education, participation in language classes, and improved mental health are linked to progress in refugees' Canadian language benchmark levels over time. It also highlights that several factors influence participation in language classes within the host country, including initial Canadian language benchmark levels, gender, age, number of children, duration of time spent in Canada, and a strong sense of belonging to an ethnic community or cultural group. These findings can guide the development of effective learning tools to address the challenges and negative perceptions faced by incoming refugees. The results of this study, along with future

research, may contribute to the creation of enhanced learning services tailored to the specific needs of newcomer families, thereby facilitating their successful integration into Canadian society.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical approval certificate

Ethics Approval 2025-04-30, 8:05 AM



YORK
UNIVERSITÉ
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OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS (ORE)
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Memo

To: Hala Tamim, Kinesiology and Health Science

From: Alison M. Collins-Mrakas, Sr. Manager and Policy Advisor, Research Ethics
(on behalf of the Chair, Human Participants Review Committee)

Issue Date: Tue Apr 29 2025

Expiry Date: Wed Apr 29 2026

RE: New Country, New Parenthood: Syrian Refugees in the Context of Resettlement
Certificate #: e2025-127

I am writing to inform you that the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee has reviewed and approved the above project.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at: 416-736-5914 or via email at: acollins@yorku.ca.

Yours sincerely,

Alison M. Collins-Mrakas M.Sc., LL.M.
Sr. Manager and Policy Advisor,
Office of Research Ethics

RESEARCH ETHICS: PROCEDURES to ENSURE ONGOING COMPLIANCE

Upon receipt of an ethics approval certificate, researchers are reminded that they are required to ensure that the following measures are undertaken so as to ensure on-going compliance with Senate and TCPS ethics guidelines:

<https://ore.research.yorku.ca/approvals/?c=4563> Page 1 of 2

1. **RENEWALS:** Research Ethics Approval certificates are subject to annual renewal.

Failure to renew an ethics approval certificate or (to notify ORE that no further research involving human participants will be undertaken) may result in the closure of the protocol. No further research activities may be undertaken until such time as a new protocol has been reviewed and approved. Further, it may result in suspension of research cost fund and access to research funds may be suspended/withheld.

2. **AMENDMENTS:** Amendments must be reviewed and approved **PRIOR** to undertaking/making the proposed amendments to an approved ethics protocol;
3. **END OF PROJECT:** ORE must be notified when a project is complete;
4. **ADVERSE EVENTS:** Adverse events must be reported to ORE as soon as possible;
5. **AUDIT:**
 - a. More than minimal risk research may be subject to an audit as per TCPS guidelines;
 - b. A spot sample of minimal risk research may be subject to an audit as per TCPS guidelines.

FORMS: As per the above, the following forms relating to on-going research ethics compliance are available on the Research website:

1. Renewal
2. Amendment
3. End of Project
4. Adverse Event

Appendix B: Questionnaire

1. Participant ID:

2. Family ID Number:

3. Socio-Demographic Cluster:

The following set of questions will address general demographics.

معلومات ديموغرافية / شخصية: الأسئلة التالية تتناول المعلومات الشخصية بصفة عامة.

4. Is the participant the mother or father?

هل المشارك الأم أو الأب؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب

5. What is your age?

ما هو عمرك؟

6. Are you? هل أنت

- Single/unmarried/ أعزب- غير متزوج
- Married/ متزوج
- Common law/ علاقة قانونية
- Separated, but still legally married (منفصل ولكن لا يزال متزوجاً من الناحية القانونية)
- Divorced/ مطلق
- Widowed/ أرمل
- Other/ غير ذلك

7. Are you and your spouse related?

هل يوجد قرابة بينك وبين زوجك/زوجتك؟

- First cousins / قرابة من درجة أولى
- Second cousins / قرابة من درجة ثانية
- Distant relatives / قرابة بعيدة
- No relation / لا قرابة
- Don't know/prefer not to answer/ أفضل عدم القول/ لا أعرف

8. Which of the following best describes your racial or ethnic group?

أي مما يلي يصف بشكل أفضل المجموعة العرقية والاثنية التي تنتمي إليها؟

- Arab/ عربي

- Armenian/ أرمني
- Kurdish/ كردي
- Other/ غير ذلك

9. What language would you feel most comfortable speaking in with others?

ما هي اللغة التي تشعر فيها بالارتياح الشديد عند التحدث مع الآخرين؟

- Arabic/ العربية
- Armenian/ الأرمنية
- Kurdish/ الكردية
- Turkish/ التركية
- English/ الإنجليزية
- French/ الفرنسية
- Other/

10. How many children do you have? _____

كم عدد الأطفال لديك؟ _____

11. What is the age of your oldest child?

كم عمر طفلك الأكبر؟

12. What is the age of your youngest child?

كم عمر طفلك الأصغر؟

13. Not counting your children or your spouse, how many other relatives (anyone you consider family) do you currently have living in Toronto?

دون حساب شريك حياتك أو أطفالك، كم عدد أقاربك الذين يعيشون حالياً في تورنتو؟

14. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

ما هو أعلى مستوى دراسي أنهيته في التعليم الرسمي؟

- None/ لا يوجد
- Elementary school (up to grade 6)/ مدرسة ابتدائية (حتى الصف ٦)
- Secondary school (up to grade 9)/ مدرسة إعدادية (حتى الصف ٩)
- High school (up to grade 12)/ مدرسة ثانوية (حتى الصف ١٢)
- Trade certificate/diploma/ شهادة/دبلوم تجارة
- College diploma/ شهادة معهد
- University degree (BA/BSc)/ درجة جامعية (بكالوريوس علوم)
- Master degree/ درجة الماجستير
- PhD/ درجة الدكتوراه
- Professional degree (engineering, dentistry, law, etc.)

درجة جامعية عالية (هندسة، طب أسنان، قانون، إلخ)

15. What is your religion?

ما هي ديانتك؟

- Muslim/ مسلم
- Christian/ مسيحي
- Prefer not to answer/ أفضل عدم الإجابة
- Other/ غير ذلك

16. How religious do you consider yourself?

إلى أي مدى تعتبر نفسك متدين؟

- Not at all religious/ لست متديناً على الإطلاق
- A little religious/ متدين قليلاً
- Fairly religious/ متدين
- Very religious/ متدين جداً
- Other
- Do not know/ لا أعرف
- Prefer not to answer/ أفضل عدم الإجابة

17. What year did you leave Syria? _____

متى غادرت سوريا؟ _____

18. After displacement, in which country outside of Syria did you primarily live?

في أي دولة كنت تعيش خارج سوريا قبل المجيء إلى كندا؟

- Jordan/ الأردن
- Lebanon/ لبنان
- Turkey/ تركيا
- Egypt/ مصر
- Iraq/ العراق
- Other/ غير ذلك

19. During your refuge outside Syria, did you live in a refugee camp?

خلال فترة لجوئك خارج سوريا، هل عشت في مخيم للاجئين؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا
- Prefer not to answer/ أفضل عدم القول

20. When did you arrive to Canada? (month/year) _____

متى وصلت إلى كندا؟ (شهر/سنة) _____

21. Integration Cluster :

22. Are you in Canada as a privately sponsored refugee, a refugee sponsored by the Canadian government or on a blended visa-office?

هل أنت في كندا:

- Government assisted refugee (GAR)/ لاجئ تحت كفالة الحكومة
- Privately sponsored refugee (PSR)/ لاجئ تحت كفالة خاصة
- Blended visa-office refugee (BVOR)/ لاجئ من خلال مكتب تأشيرات مختلط
- Unsure/ غير متأكد
- Other/ غير ذلك

23. Who is your private sponsor?

من هو كفيلك الخاص؟

- Family member(s)/ فرد (أفراد) عائلة
- Religious organization/ منظمة دينية
- Community organization/ منظمة مجتمعية
- A group of private individuals (e.g. Group of 5)
مجموعة من الأفراد للكفالة الخاصة (على سبيل المثال مجموعة من ٥)
- Other

24. If PSR or BVOR, how satisfied are you with the support and services you receive from your sponsor?

إذا كنت على كفالة خاصة أو كفالة مختلطة، ما مدى رضاك عن الدعم والخدمات التي تتلقاها من كفيلك؟

- Very satisfied/ راض جداً
- Satisfied/ راضٍ
- Neither satisfied or unsatisfied/ لا راضٍ ولا غير راضٍ
- Unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ
- Very unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ بشدة

25. Are you a Canadian citizen?

هل انت مواطن كندي؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا
- Don't know/prefer not to answer/ أفضل عدم القول/لا أعرف

26. To what extent would you recommend other Syrian refugees to come to Canada?

إلى أي مدى قد تتوصح اللاجئين السوريين الآخرين بالتقدم إلى كندا؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة

- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / الى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / الى ابعد الحدود

27. Which neighborhood in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) do you currently live in?

في أي حي في منطقة تورنتو الكبرى تعيش حالياً؟

- Downtown Toronto / وسط مدينة تورنتو
- North York / شمال يورك
- Scarborough and East York / إيست يورك و سكاربرو
- Etobicoke / إيتوبيكوك
- Mississauga / ميسيساغا
- Other / غير ذلك

28. To what extent have your neighbors supported you?

إلى أي مدى حصلت على دعم من جيرانك؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / الى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / الى ابعد الحدود

29. How many of your friends in this city would you say you feel emotionally close to? Close means with which you feel comfortable talking about personal matters?

كم صديقاً من أصدقائك في هذه المدينة يمكن أن تقول إنك تشعر بأنه مقرب منك؟ وتعني كلمة مقرب هنا شخص تشعر بالارتياح معه في التحدث عن الأمور الشخصية؟

- None / لا يوجد
- One / واحد
- Two or three / اثنين أو ثلاثة
- Four or more / أربعة أو أكثر

30. How satisfied are you with the quality of the friendships you have here?

ما هي نسبة رضاك عن نوعية الصداقات التي لديك هنا؟

- Very satisfied / راضٍ جداً
- Satisfied / راضٍ
- Neutral / Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied / محايد - لا راضٍ ولا غير راضٍ
- Unsatisfied / غير راضٍ
- Very Unsatisfied / غير راضٍ بشدة

31. How often do you need an interpreter for your appointments?

ما هو مدى احتياجك إلى مترجم شفهي لمواعيدك؟

- Always/ دائماً
- Sometimes/ أحياناً
- Never/ أبداً

32. Social Support Cluster:

مجموعة الدعم الاجتماعي:

33. I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being.

لدي علاقات قريبة توفر لي الإحساس بالأمان العاطفي والراحة.

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

34. There is someone I could talk to about important decisions in my life.

هناك شخص يمكنني التحدث معه عن قرارات مهمة في حياتي.

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

35. I have relationships where my competence and skill are recognized.

لدي علاقات حيث يتم الاعتراف بكفاءتي ومهارتي.

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

36. I feel part of a group who share my attitudes and beliefs.

أشعر أنني جزء من مجموعة تشارك مواقف ومعتقداتي.

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

37. There are people I can count on in an emergency.

هناك أشخاص يمكنني الاعتماد عليهم في حالات الطوارئ.

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق

- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

38. Housing Cluster:

The following questions will address your housing

السكن: فيما يلي مجموعة من الأسئلة تتعلق بسكنك.

39. Where do you currently live?

أين تعيش في الوقت الراهن؟

- Shelter/ مأوى
- Subsidized/Social Housing (e.g. Toronto community housing)
الإسكان الاجتماعي (على سبيل المثال إسكان تورنتو المجتمعي)
- Supportive/Transitional/ temporary or substandard housing (e.g. hotel)
سكن مدعوم/ انتقالي/ مؤقت أو أقل من المستوى (أي لا تزال في مركز استقبال – الفندق)
- Living on the streets/ أعيش في الشوارع
- Living in in an institution (e.g. a hospital)
العيش في إحدى المؤسسات (على سبيل المثال مستشفى)
- Rooming house or room in a house/ بيت من غرفة أو غرفة في منزل
- Rented apartment/ شقة بالإيجار
- Rented house/ منزل بالإيجار
- Own my own home/ أملك منزلي
- Other
- Rented basement / قيو بالإيجار

40. How many bedrooms are in your home?

كم عدد غرف النوم في منزلك؟

41. What is the number of people living in your home?

كم عدد الأشخاص الذين يعيشون في منزلك؟

42. How much do you pay for rent/mortgage per month?

كم تدفع للإيجار / الرهن العقاري في الشهر؟

- Less than \$1000 / أقل من 1000 دولار
- Between \$1000 and \$1500 / بين 1000 دولار و 1500 دولار
- Between \$1500 and \$2000 / بين 1500 دولار و 2000 دولار
- Between \$2000 and \$2500 / بين 2000 دولار و 2500 دولار
- Between \$2500 and \$3000 / بين 2500 دولار و 3000 دولار
- Between \$3000 and \$4000 / بين 3000 دولار و 4000 دولار
- More than \$4000 / أكثر من 4000 دولار

- Prefer not to answer/ I don't know / لا أعرف / أفضل عدم الإجابة

43. Overall, how satisfied are you with your housing?

بشكل عام ما هو مدى رضاك عن منزلك؟

- Very satisfied/ راض جداً
- Satisfied/ راض
- Neither satisfied or unsatisfied/ لا راضى ولا غير راضى
- Unsatisfied/ غير راضى
- Very unsatisfied/ غير راضى بشدة

44. Employment and Income Cluster:

The following questions will address your employment and income.

التوظيف والدخل: فيما يلي مجموعة أسئلة تتعلق بعملك ودخلك.

45. Are you currently working?

هل تعمل حالياً؟

- Yes, I am working from home / نعم، أعمل من منزلي
- Yes, I am working in-person / نعم، أعمل خارج المنزل
- No, I am not currently working / لا أعمل حالياً

46. What is your work/occupation in Canada?

ما هو عملك / مهنتك في كندا؟

- Do not work in Canada / لا أعمل في كندا
- Field of trade and economy/ مجال التجارة والاقتصاد
- Field of industry/ مجال الصناعة
- Field of Agriculture/ مجال الزراعة
- Field of health and medicine/ مجال الصحة والطب
- Field of building and construction/ مجال البناء والاعمار
- Field of education/ مجال التعليم
- Field of engineering/ مجالات هندسية
- Business and finance/ المال والاعمال
- Field of justice/ مجال القضاء
- Field of military/ المجال العسكري
- Craftsmanship/ الاعمال الحرفية
- Field of the arts/ مجال الفنون
- Office employee/ موظف حكومي
- Driver/ سائق
- Other

- Food industry / مجال الطعام/الغذاء

47. What was your work/occupation in Syria?

ما هو عملك/ مهنتك في سوريا؟

- Did not work in Syria/ لم أكن أعمل بسوريا
- Field of trade and economy/ مجال التجارة والاقتصاد
- Field of industry/ مجال الصناعة
- Field of Agriculture/ مجال الزراعة
- Field of health and medicine/ مجال الصحة والطب
- Field of building and construction/ مجال البناء والاعمار
- Field of education/ مجال التعليم
- Field of engineering/ مجالات هندسية
- Business and finance/ المال والاعمال
- Field of justice/ مجال القضاء
- Field of military/ المجال العسكري
- Craftsmanship/ الاعمال الحرفية
- Field of the arts/ مجال الفنون
- Office employee/ موظف حكومي
- Driver/ سائق
- Other
- Food industry / مجال الطعام/الغذاء

48. During the past month, what were your household's sources of income? Choose all that apply

خلال الشهر الماضي ما هي المصادر لدخل عائلتك؟ رجا اختيار كل ما ينطبق

- Wages from a job/employment / أجر عن عمل
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Child Benefits / مزايا الطفل
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Employment Insurance (EI) / تأمين العمالة
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) / برنامج أونتاريو للمساعدات الاجتماعية / برنامج أونتاريو لدعم ذوي الإعاقة
 - Yes/ نعم

- No/ لا
 - Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) / إعانة الاستجابة للطوارئ في كندا
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
 - RAP/ برنامج مساعدة اللاجئين
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
 - Private sponsor/ كفيل خاص
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
 - Other/ غير ذلك
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
49. During the past year, did you ever eat less because there was not enough food or money for food?
 خلال العام الماضي هل اضطررت لتقليل الطعام بسبب عدم وجود طعام كافٍ أو مال لشراء الطعام؟
- Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
50. During the past year, did you need to visit a food bank because there was not enough food or money for food?
 خلال العام الماضي هل اضطررت لزيارة بنك الطعام بسبب عدم وجود طعام كافٍ أو مال لشراء الطعام؟
- Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
51. Approximately how much money did you have when you first moved to Canada (in CAD)?
 تقريباً كم من المال كان لديك عندما انتقلت إلى كندا لأول مرة (بالدولار الكندي)؟
52. Thinking about your time in Syria before the war, would you say most people would have categorized a household like yours as
 عندما كنت تعيش في سوريا قبل الحرب ، هل تعتقد أن معظم الناس قد صنّفوا وضعك العائلي بالتالي:
- Lower income / منخفض الدخل
 - Lower middle income / منخفض إلى متوسط الدخل

- Middle income / متوسط الدخل
- Upper-middle income / متوسط الى عالي الدخل
- Upper income / عالي الدخل
- Don't know/prefer not to answer/ لا أعرف أفضل عدم القول

53. In your current condition, here in Canada, would you say most people would categorize a household like yours as

في وضعك الحالي، هنا في كندا، هل تعتقد أن معظم الناس قد يصنفوا عائلتك بالنالي:

- Lower income / منخفض الدخل
- Lower middle income / منخفض الى متوسط الدخل
- Middle income / متوسط الدخل
- Upper-middle income / متوسط الى عالي الدخل
- Upper income / عالي الدخل
- Don't know/prefer not to answer/ لا أعرف أفضل عدم القول

54. Education Cluster:

The following set of questions will address your current education.

التعليم: فيما يلي مجموعة من الأسئلة تتعلق بتعليمك الحالي.

55. Please rate your current overall ability in English or French, whichever you are more comfortable with.

يرجى تقييم قدرتك الإجمالية الحالية باللغة الإنجليزية أو الفرنسية، أيهما أكثر راحة لك.

- Excellent/ ممتاز
- Good/ جيد
- Fair/ مقبول
- Poor/ ضعيف
- Very poor/ ضعيف جداً
- Not at all/ لا توجد مطلقاً

56. What is your current Canadian Language Benchmark level?

ما هو مستواك الحالي حسب المقياس الكندي للغة؟

- Level 1 / المستوى ١
- Level 2 / المستوى ٢
- Level 3 / المستوى ٣
- Level 4 / المستوى ٤
- Level 5 / المستوى ٥
- Level 6 / المستوى ٦
- Level 7 / المستوى ٧
- Level 8 / المستوى ٨

- المستوى 9 / Level 9
- المستوى 10 / Level 10
- لا أعرف / I don't know
- المستوى 0 / Level 0

57. What was your Canadian Language Benchmark level when you first arrived to Canada?

ما كان مستواك حسب المقياس الكندي للغة الخاص بك عندما وصلت لأول مرة إلى كندا؟

- المستوى 1 / Level 1
- المستوى 2 / Level 2
- المستوى 3 / Level 3
- المستوى 4 / Level 4
- المستوى 5 / Level 5
- المستوى 6 / Level 6
- المستوى 7 / Level 7
- المستوى 8 / Level 8
- المستوى 9 / Level 9
- المستوى 10 / Level 10
- لا أعرف / I don't know
- المستوى 0 / Level 0

Language Classes Cluster:

58. Have you taken at least one government-funded English/French language class (LINC)?

هل أخذت صف واحد على الأقل في دورات اللغة الإنجليزية أو الفرنسية الممولة من الحكومة؟

- Yes, i am currently taking language classes online / نعم، حالياً عبر الإنترنت
- Yes, i have previously taken language classes / نعم أخذت دورات اللغة مسبقاً
- No, i did not take language classes / لا لم آخذ دورات اللغة

(ONLY ASK THE REST OF THIS CLUSTER IF THEY HAVE TAKEN A LANGUAGE CLASS)

59. Approximately how many months of English/French language classes have you taken in total?

ما هو إجمالي عدد الأشهر التي أمتصتها في دورات اللغة الإنجليزية أو الفرنسية؟

60. During these months, on average, how many hours of language classes do you attend per week?

خلال تلك الأشهر كم متوسط عدد الساعات التي تحضرها في الأسبوع في دورات اللغة؟ _____

61. Please rate your overall satisfaction with these language classes.

يرجى تقييم مدى رضاك العام عن دروس اللغة.

- Very satisfied / راض جداً

- Satisfied/ راضٍ
- Neither satisfied or unsatisfied/ لا راضٍ ولا غير راضٍ
- Unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ
- Very unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ بشدة

62. What changes would you like to see within the language classes? Please select all that apply:

ما هي التغييرات التي تود أن تراها في صفوف اللغة؟ يرجى اختيار كل ما ينطبق:

- More students that speak my native language
عدد طلاب أكثر الذين يتحدثون لغتي الأم
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Less students that speak my native language
عدد طلاب أقل الذين يتحدثون لغتي الأم
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Smaller class sizes
أحجام صفوف أصغر
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Larger class sizes
أحجام صفوف أكبر
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Change schedule/offer classes at different times
تغيير الجدول / عرض محاضرات في أوقات مختلفة
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Different curriculum/teaching styles
مناهج وأساليب تدريس مختلفة
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- More discussion within classes/more opportunities to practice
مناقشات أكثر داخل الصفوف / فرص أكثر للتدريب والممارسة
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Other / غير
- Online class accessibility/eligibility/ إمكانية الوصول أو المشاركة بالصفوف عبر الإنترنت
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا

63. Did you experience barriers in accessing language classes, such as too far, too expensive, can't find child care?

هل صادفتك عقبات للحصول على دروس تعلّم اللغة، مثل تكلفة للغاية، بعيدة جداً، الحصول على رعاية للأطفال؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا

64. What barriers, if any, have you experienced in accessing the language classes? Choose all that apply.

ما هي العقبات، إن وجدت، التي تعرضت لها للحصول على دروس تعلّم اللغة؟ (رجاء وضع علامة أمام كل ما ينطبق عليه)

- Too expensive/ تكلفة للغاية
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Can't find appropriate or affordable child care for my children
لا أستطيع الحصول على رعاية مناسبة أو رخيصة للأطفال
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Not enough time because of other obligations/ لا يوجد وقت كافٍ بسبب التزامات أخرى
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Too far/ بعيدة جداً
 - Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
- Other, please specify/ غير ذلك

65. Subjective Cluster:

Please complete the following statements with the option that best represents your experience.

يرجى اكتمال العبارات التالية أدناه مع الخيار الذي يمثل تجربتك على أفضل وجه.

66. The cost of living in Canada is:

تكلفة المعيشة في كندا هي:

- Much more expensive than I expected pre-migration / أعلى بكثير مما توقعت قبل اللجوء
- Slightly more expensive than I expected pre-migration / أعلى بقليل مما توقعت قبل اللجوء
- As expensive as I expected pre-migration / غالي كما توقعت قبل اللجوء
- Slightly less expensive than I expected pre-migration / أقل تكلفة بقليل مما كنت أتوقع قبل اللجوء
- Much less expensive than I expected pre-migration / أقل تكلفة بكثير مما توقعت قبل اللجوء

67. The weather in Canada is:

الطقس في كندا هو:

- Much colder than I expected pre-migration / أبرد بكثير مما توقعته قبل اللجوء
- Slightly colder than I expected pre-migration / أبرد بقليل مما توقعته قبل اللجوء
- As cold as I expected pre-migration / بارد كما توقعته قبل اللجوء
- Slightly warmer than I expected pre-migration / أكثر دفئاً بقليل مما كنت أتوقع قبل اللجوء
- Much warmer than I expected pre-migration / أكثر دفئاً بكثير مما توقعته قبل اللجوء

68. The people of Canada are:

إن شعب كندا هم:

- Much friendlier than I expected pre-migration / أكثر ودية بكثير مما كنت أتوقع قبل اللجوء
- Slightly friendlier than I expected pre-migration / أكثر ودية بقليل مما كنت أتوقع قبل اللجوء
- As friendly as I expected pre-migration / وديون كما توقعته قبل اللجوء
- Slightly less friendly than I expected pre-migration / أقل ودية مما كنت أتوقع قبل اللجوء
- Much less friendly than I expected pre-migration / أقل ودية بكثير مما توقعته قبل اللجوء

69. How difficult has the transition into Canada been for you?

ما مدى صعوبة الانتقال إلى كندا و التأقلم بالنسبة لك؟

- Very difficult / صعب جداً
- Difficult / صعب
- Neutral / محايد/عادي
- Not difficult / غير صعب
- Not difficult at all / غير صعب على الإطلاق

70. How difficult do you think the transition into Canada has been for your children?

ما مدى صعوبة الانتقال إلى كندا و التأقلم بالنسبة لأطفالك؟

- Very difficult / صعب جداً
- Difficult / صعب
- Neutral / محايد/عادي
- Not difficult / غير صعب
- Not difficult at all / غير صعب على الإطلاق

71. To what extent do you feel that your living in Canada is a sacrifice you make for your children everyday?

إلى أي مدى تشعر أن حياتك في كندا هي تضحية تقدمها لأطفالك كل يوم؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً

- An extreme amount / الى ابعد الحدود

72. Do you find Canadians to be welcoming and accepting?

هل تجد الكنديين مرحبين ومتقبلين؟

- Almost always/ تقريباً دائماً
- Usually/ عادة
- Only sometimes/ أحياناً فقط
- Never/ أبداً

73. Do you feel that Canadians treat you with respect?

هل تشعر أن الكنديين يعاملونك باحترام؟

- Almost always/ تقريباً دائماً
- Usually/ عادة
- Only sometimes/ أحياناً فقط
- Never/ أبداً

74. How would you describe your sense of belonging to:

كيف تصف شعورك بالانتماء إلى:

Your neighborhood

حيّك

- Very Strong/ قوي جداً
- Strong/ قوي
- Weak/ ضعيف
- Very weak/ ضعيف جداً

75. Canada

كندا

- Very Strong/ قوي جداً
- Strong/ قوي
- Weak/ ضعيف
- Very weak/ ضعيف جداً

76. Your ethnic community or cultural group here in Canada

مجتمعك الاثني أو العرقي أو مجموعتك الثقافية هنا في كندا

- Very Strong/ قوي جداً
- Strong/ قوي
- Weak/ ضعيف
- Very weak/ ضعيف جداً

77. How safe from physical abuse do you think women are in Canada?

إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن المرأة آمنة من الاعتداء الجسدي في كندا؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / إلى أبعد الحدود

78. How safe from physical abuse do you think women are in the Middle East?

إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن المرأة آمنة من الاعتداء الجسدي في الشرق الأوسط؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / إلى أبعد الحدود

79. How safe from verbal and emotional abuse do you think women are in Canada?

إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن المرأة آمنة من الاعتداء اللفظي و المعنوي في كندا؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / إلى أبعد الحدود

80. How safe from verbal and emotional abuse do you think women are in the Middle East?

إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن المرأة آمنة من الاعتداء اللفظي و المعنوي في الشرق الأوسط؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / إلى أبعد الحدود

Perceived Security Cluster:

81. Do you feel safe in your home with the people you live with?

هل تشعر بالأمان في منزلك مع الأشخاص الذين تعيش معهم؟

- Yes/ نعم
- Somewhat/ إلى حد ما

- No/ لا
- Not sure/ prefer not to answer/ غير متأكد\أفضل عدم الإجابة

82. Do you feel safe in your community?

هل تشعر بالأمان في مجتمعتك؟

- Yes/ نعم
- Somewhat/ إلى حد ما
- No/ لا
- Not sure/ prefer not to answer/ غير متأكد\أفضل عدم الإجابة

Attitudes towards Schools Cluster:

المواقف تجاه المدارس:

83. Do you have one or more children who attend/attended school in Canada?

هل لديك طفل أو أطفال يذهبون أو ذهبوا إلى المدرسة في كندا؟

- Yes / نعم
- No / لا

(ONLY ASK THE REST OF THE CLUSTER IF THEY REPLY YES)

84. Please rate your overall satisfaction with your child(ren)'s school(s) in Canada.

يرجى تقييم مدى رضاك بشكل عام عن مدرسة أطفالك في كندا.

- Very satisfied/ راض جداً
- Satisfied/ راض
- Neither satisfied or unsatisfied/ لا راضٍ ولا غير راضٍ
- Unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ
- Very unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ بشدة

85. How often do you as a parent face discrimination in your child(ren)'s school events?

ما هو مدى مواجهتك التمييز كوالد/والدة في الأحداث المدرسية لأطفالك؟

- Never / أبداً
- Seldom / نادراً
- Quite often / أحياناً
- Very often / في معظم الأحيان
- Always / دائماً

86. How involved are you with your child(ren)'s education (e.g. solving homework, keeping track of examination dates and grades, etc.)?

ما مدى ارتباطك بتعليم أطفالك (حل الواجبات المنزلية، اتباع مواعيد ودرجات الامتحانات، الخ)؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة

- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / الى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / الى ابعد الحدود

87. Family Functioning Cluster:

The following questions will address your family relationships.

مجموعة أداء العائلة:
سنتناول الأسئلة التالية العلاقات الأسرية.

88. Planning family activities is difficult because we misunderstand each other.

إن التخطيط للأنشطة العائلية أمر صعب لأننا نسيء فهم بعضنا البعض.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

89. In time of crisis we can turn to each other for support.

عند الأزمات ، يمكننا اللجوء إلى بعضنا البعض للحصول على الدعم.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

90. We cannot talk to each other about sadness we feel.

لا يمكننا التحدث مع بعضنا البعض عن الحزن الذي نشعر به.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

91. Individuals are accepted for what they are.

يتم قبول الأفراد على ما هم عليه.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

92. We avoid discussing our fears and concerns.

تجنب مناقشة مخاوفنا واهتماماتنا.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree^[11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

93. We can express feelings to each other.

يمكننا التعبير عن المشاعر لبعضنا البعض.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree^[11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

94. There are lots of bad feelings in the family.

هناك الكثير من المشاعر السيئة في الأسرة.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree^[11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

95. We feel accepted for what we are.^[11]

نشعر بالقبول على ما نحن عليه.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree^[11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

96. Making decisions is a problem for our family.^[11]

يشكل اتخاذ القرارات مشكلة لعائلتنا.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree^[11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

97. We are able to make decisions about how to solve problems.^[11]

نحن قادرون على اتخاذ القرارات حول كيفية حل المشاكل.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree^[11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

98. We don't get along well together. [11]

نحن لا نتفق معًا بشكل جيد.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree [11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

99. We confide in each other.

نحن نثق في بعضنا البعض.

- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة
- Agree [11] / أوافق
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة

100. Family Roles Cluster:

The following questions will address the roles within your family members.

أدوار الأسرة: نتناول الأسئلة التالية أدوار أفراد عائلتك.

101. Where did you get married?

أين تزوجت؟

- Syria / سوريا
- Host country (مثل لبنان، تركيا) / بلد مضيف
- Canada / كندا

102. Did the roles of your family members change from when you were living in Syria? Such as controlling the finances and the main caregiver for the children

هل تغيرت أدوار أفراد أسرتك عما كانت عليه عندما كنت تعيش في سوريا؟ مثل من يتحكم في الشؤون المالية للعائلة و مقدم الرعاية الرئيسي للأطفال

- Yes / نعم
- No / لا
- I don't know / لا أعرف

103. When you were living in Syria/host country, who was the main caregiver to the children?

عندما كنت تعيش في سوريا / البلد المضيف ، من كان مقدم الرعاية الرئيسي للأطفال؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب

- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

104. Currently, who is the main caregiver to the children?

حاليا، من هو مقدم الرعاية الرئيسي للأطفال؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب
- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

105. When you were living in Syria/host country, who made the day-to-day decisions for the family?

عندما كنت تعيش في سوريا/ البلد المضيف ، من الذي كان يتخذ القرارات اليومية للعائلة؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب
- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

106. Currently, who makes the day-to-day decisions for the family?

حاليا، من الذي يتخذ القرارات اليومية للعائلة؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب
- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

107. When you were living in Syria/host country, who controlled the finances for the family?

عندما كنت تعيش في سوريا / البلد المضيف ، من الذي كان يتحكم في الشؤون المالية للعائلة ؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب
- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

108. Currently, who controls the finances for the family?

حاليا، من الذي يتحكم في الشؤون المالية للعائلة؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب

- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

109. When you were living in Syria/host country, who made the major life decisions for the family?

عندما كنت تعيش في سوريا / البلد المضيف ، من الذي كان يتخذ قرارات الحياة الرئيسية للعائلة؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب
- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

110. Currently, who makes the major life decisions for the family?

حالياً، من الذي يتخذ قرارات الحياة الرئيسية للعائلة؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب
- Both mother and father / الأم و الأب
- Other, please specify / شخص آخر

111. General Health Cluster:

The following questions will address your health status

الصحة: الأسئلة الآتية سوف تتعلق بحالتك الصحية

112. Do you have a family doctor?

هل لديك طبيب عائلة؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا
- Don't know/ لا أعرف

113. Do you smoke cigarettes?

هل تدخن السجائر؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا

114. How many cigarettes per day? _____

_____ كم سيجارة في اليوم؟

115. Do you smoke argile/shisha?

هل تدخن أرغليه/شيشا؟

- Yes/ نعم

- No/ لا
116. How often do you smoke argile/shisha?
كم مرة تدخن أرغيلة/شيشا ؟
- Several times a day / عدة مرات في اليوم
 - Once everyday / مرة في اليوم
 - Few times per week / عدة مرات في الاسبوع
 - Once per week / مرة في الاسبوع
 - Few times per month / عدة مرات في الشهر
 - Other/ غير ذلك
117. Do you drink alcohol?
هل تشرب الخمر/الكحول؟
- Yes/ نعم
 - No/ لا
118. How often do you drink alcohol
كم مرة تشرب الخمر/الكحول؟
- Several times a day / عدة مرات في اليوم
 - Once everyday / مرة في اليوم
 - Few times per week / عدة مرات في الاسبوع
 - Once per week / مرة في الاسبوع
 - Few times per month / عدة مرات في الشهر
 - Other/ غير ذلك
119. In general, would you say your physical health is:
بصورة عامة، كيف ترى صحتك الجسدية؟
- Excellent/ ممتازة
 - Very good/ جيدة جداً
 - Good/ جيدة
 - Fair/ لا بأس بها
 - Poor/ سيئة
120. Have you ever tested positive for COVID-19?
هل حصلت على نتيجة إيجابية لاختبار فيروس كورونا-19 مسبقاً ؟
- Yes / نعم
 - No / لا
 - I don't know/ prefer not to answer / لا أعرف / أفضل عدم الإجابة
121. If any, how severe were your COVID-19 symptoms, such as coughing, shortness of breath, fever, etc?

إذا شعرت بأعراض فيروس كورونا-١٩ كالسعال أو الحمى أو ضيق التنفس الخ، ما كانت مدى خطورة أو شدة تلك الأعراض؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / الى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / الى ابعـد الحدود
- I did not experience any symptoms / لم أشعر بأي أعراض

122. Did any of your close friends or family members get seriously ill or pass away because of COVID-19?

هل توفي أحد من أصدقائك المقربين أو أفراد عائلتك أو أصيب بمرض خطير بسبب الإصابة بفيروس كورونا-١٩ ؟

- Yes / نعم
- No / لا
- I don't know/prefer not to answer / لا أعرف / أفضل عدم الإجابة

123. Are you going to take the vaccine for the Coronavirus-19 when it becomes available to you?

هل ستأخذ لقاح لفيروس كورونا-١٩ عندما يصبح متوفر؟

- Yes / نعم
- No / لا
- I don't know / لا أعرف
- Prefer not to answer/أفضل عدم الإجابة
- I have already taken the Coronavirus-19 vaccine / لقد أخذت اللقاح مسبقاً

Fear of Coronavirus-19 Cluster:

الخوف من فيروس الكورونا-١٩ :

124. I am most afraid of coronavirus-19.

أنا خائف من فيروس كورونا-١٩ لأقصى حد

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Neither agree nor disagree / محايد
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

125. It makes me uncomfortable to think about coronavirus-19.

التفكير بفيروس كورونا-١٩ يشعرني بعدم الارتياح

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Neither agree nor disagree / محايد

- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

126. My hands become clammy when I think about coronavirus-19.

أشعر بتعرق في كفي عندما أفكر بفيروس كورونا-١٩

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Neither agree nor disagree / محايد
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

127. I am afraid of losing my life because of coronavirus-19.

أخشى أن أفقد حياتي بسبب فيروس كورونا-١٩

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Neither agree nor disagree / محايد
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

128. When watching news and stories about coronavirus-19 on social media, I become nervous or anxious.

أبتأبني القلق أو التوتر عندما أشاهد أخبارًا أو قصصًا عن فيروس كورونا-١٩

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Neither agree nor disagree / محايد
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

129. I cannot sleep because I'm worrying about getting coronavirus-19.

لا يمكنني النوم بسبب قلقي من الإصابة بعدوى فيروس كورونا-١٩

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Neither agree nor disagree / محايد
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

130. My heart races or palpitates when I think about getting coronavirus-19.

تتسارع دقات قلبي عندما أفكر بالإصابة بعدوى فيروس كورونا-١٩

- Strongly disagree / لا أوافق بشدة
- Disagree / لا أوافق
- Neither agree nor disagree / محايد
- Agree / أوافق
- Strongly agree / أوافق بشدة

131. Mental Health Cluster:

The following questions will address your mental health status

الصحة النفسية: فيما يلي مجموعة من الأسئلة تتعلق بحالة صحتك النفسية

132. In general would you say your mental health is?

بشكل عام هل تقول إن صحتك النفسية:

- Excellent/ ممتازة
- Very good/ جيدة جداً
- Good/ جيدة
- Fair/ مقبولة
- Poor/ سيئة

133. If you struggle(d) with mental health issues, who do/did you contact for this/these problem(s)/concern(s)? (Please select all that apply):

إذا كنت تعاني من مشاكل نفسية، من من هذا القائمة ممكن لك أن تجر له عن مشاكلك أو مخاوفك؟ يرجى اختيار كل ما ينطبق:

- Psychiatrist/ Psychologist

عالم نفسي/طبيب نفسي

- ☐ Yes/ نعم
- ☐ No/ لا

- Social worker / Counselor

عامل اجتماعي / مستشار

- ☐ Yes/ نعم
- ☐ No/ لا

- Minister/imam/clergy / Spiritual healer / Traditional healer/medium

رجل دين/ امام /معالج الروحي /معالج تقليدي

- ☐ Yes/ نعم
- ☐ No/ لا

- Friends / family members

اصحاب /افراد العائلة

- ☐ Yes/ نعم
- ☐ No/ لا

- Medical doctor

طبيب

- ☐ Yes/ نعم
- ☐ No/ لا

- Private sponsor

كفيل الخاص

- ☐ Yes/ نعم
- ☐ No/ لا

- No one

لا أحد

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا
- Other/ غير ذلك

134. How would you rate your quality of life?

كيف نقيم جودة حياتك؟

- Very poor / ضعيف جداً
- Poor / ضعيف
- Neither poor nor good / متوسط
- Good / جيد
- Very good / جيد جداً

135. PTSD Cluster:

In your life, have you ever had any experience that was so frightening, horrible, or upsetting that, in the past month, you:

هل تعرضت خلال حياتك لأي تجربة كانت مرعبة أو مخيفّة أو محزنة لدرجة أنك في الشهر الماضي:

136. Have had nightmares about it or thought about it when you did not want to?

تعرضت لكوابيس بخصوصها أو فكرت فيها على غير رغبتك؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا

137. Tried hard not to think about it or went out of your way to avoid situations that reminded you of it?

حاولت جاهداً عدم التفكير فيها وفعلت كل ما بوسعك لتجنب المواقف التي تذكرك بها؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا

138. Were constantly on guard, watchful, or easily startled?

كنت دائماً حذراً أو متنبهاً أو سهل الانزعاج؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا

139. Felt numb or detached from others, activities, or your surroundings?

شعرت بفقدان الحس أو الانفصال عن الآخرين أو الأنشطة أو البيئة المحيطة؟

- Yes/ نعم
- No/ لا

140. DASS 21 Cluster:

Please read each statement and choose an option which indicates how much the statement applied to you over the past week.

اقرأ كل من النصوص التالية ثم اختر الرقم ٠، ١، ٢، ٣ الذي يبين درجة انطباق هذا الشعور عليك في الأسبوع الماضي.

141. I found it hard to wind down

وجدت صعوبة في الاسترخاء و الراحة

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشئ أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

142. I was aware of dryness of my mouth

شعرت بجفاف في حلقى

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشئ أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

143. I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all

لم يبدو ان بإمكانى الإحساس بمشاعر إيجابية على الإطلاق

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشئ أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

144. I experiences breathing difficulty (eg, excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)

شعرت بصعوبة في التنفس (تسدة التنفس السريع، اللهتان بدون القيام بمجهود جسدي مثلاً)

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشئ أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

145. I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things

وجدت صعوبة في أخذ المبادرة بعمل الأشياء

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً

- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
146. I tended to over-react to situations
كنت أميل إلى ردة فعل مفرطة للظروف والأحداث
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
147. I experienced trembling (eg, in the hands)
شعرت برجفة (باليدين مثلاً)
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
148. I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy
شعرت بأنني أستهلك الكثير في الطاقة العصبية (شعرت بأنني أستهلك الكثير من قدرتي علي تحمل التوتر العصبي)
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
149. I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself
كنت خائفاً من مواقف قد أفقد فيها السيطرة علي أعصابي وأسبب إحراجاً لنفسي
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق علي بتاتاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق علي بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق علي بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق علي كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
150. I felt that I had nothing to look forward to
شعرت بأن ليس لدي أي شيء أطلع إليه

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
151. I found myself getting agitated
- شعرت بأنني مضطرب ومنزعج
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
152. I found it difficult to relax
- أجد صعوبة في الاسترخاء
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
153. I felt down-hearted and blue
- شعرت بالحزن والغم
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
154. I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing
- كنت لا أستطع تحمل أي شيء يحول بيني وبين ما أريد في القيام به
- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
 - Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
 - Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
 - Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات
155. I felt I was close to panic

شعرت بأنني على وشك الوقوع في حالة من الرعب المفاجئ بدون سبب

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

156. I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything

فقدت الشعور بالحماس لأي شيء

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

157. I felt I wasn't worth much as a person

شعرت بأن قيمتي قليلة كشخص

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

158. I felt that I was rather touchy

شعرت بأنني أميل إلى الغضب بسرعة

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

159. I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (eg, sense of heart rate increase, heart missing a beat)

شعرت بضربات قلبي بدون مجهود جسدي (زيادة في معدل الدقات، أو غياب دقة قلب مثلاً)

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

160. I felt scared without any good reason

شعرت بالخوف بدون أي سبب وجيه

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

161. I felt that life was meaningless

شعرت بأن الحياة ليس لها معنى

- Did not apply to me at all / لا ينطبق عليّ بشئاً
- Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time / ينطبق عليّ بعض الشيء أو قليلاً من الأوقات
- Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of the time / ينطبق عليّ بدرجة ملحوظة أو بعض الأوقات
- Applied to me very much, or most of the time / ينطبق عليّ كثيراً جداً أو معظم الأوقات

162. Healthcare Services Cluster:

مجموعة خدمات الرعاية الصحية:

163. Do you have insurance that covers all or part of your prescription medication expenses?

هل لديك تأمين يغطي كل أو جزء من نفقات الأدوية الخاصة بك؟

- Yes- all expenses / نعم - جميع النفقات
- Yes- part of my expenses / نعم - جزء من النفقات
- No / لا
- I don't know / لا أعرف

164. How satisfied are you with the healthcare services you receive?

ما مدى رضاك عن خدمات الرعاية الصحية التي تتلقاها؟

- Very satisfied/ راض جداً
- Satisfied/ راضٍ
- Neither satisfied or unsatisfied/ لا راضٍ ولا غير راضٍ
- Unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ
- Very unsatisfied/ غير راضٍ بشدة

165. To what extent do you trust healthcare professionals in Canada?

ما هو مدى ثقافتك في أخصائيي الرعاية الصحية في كندا؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط

- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / الى ابعء الحدود

166. How often do you require an interpreter present when accessing healthcare services in Canada?

ما هو مدى احتياجك إلى مترجم عندما تستخدم أي من الخدمات الرعاية الصحية في كندا؟

- Always/ دائماً
- Sometimes/ أحياناً
- Never/ أبداً

167. When needed, how often were you offered an interpreter?

عند الحاجة، كم مرة عرض عليك مترجماً؟

- Always/ دائماً
- Sometimes/ أحياناً
- Never/ أبداً

168. Did you take the flu shot last year in Canada?

هل أخذت لقاح الأنفلونزا السنة الماضية في كندا؟

- Yes / نعم
- No / لا
- I don't know / لا أعرف
- Prefer not to answer/ أفضل عدم الإجابة

169. Oral Health Cluster:

170. In general, how would you rate the health of your teeth and mouth?

بصورة عامة، كيف تقيم صحة فمك و أسنانك؟

- Excellent/ ممتاز
- Good/ جيد
- Fair/ مقبول
- Poor/ ضعيف
- Very poor/ ضعيف جداً

171. When was the last time you went to a dentist?

متى كانت آخر مرة زرت بها طبيب الأسنان؟

- Less than a year ago/ منذ أقل من سنة
- 1 year to less than 2 years ago / منذ أكثر من سنة و لكن أقل من سنتين
- 2 years to less than 3 years ago / منذ أكثر من سنتين و لكن أقل من ٣ سنين
- 3 years to less than 4 years ago / منذ أكثر من ٣ سنين و لكن أقل من ٤ سنين
- 4 years to less than 5 years ago / منذ أكثر من ٤ سنين و لكن أقل من ٥ سنين

- 5 or more years ago / منذ ٥ سنين أو أكثر
- Never / لم أزر طبيب الأسنان

172. How often do you usually visit the dentist?

كم مرة عادة تزور عيادة طبيب الأسنان؟

- More than once a year for checkups / أكثر من مرة كل السنة للفحص
- About once a year for checkups / مرة كل السنة للفحص
- Less than once a year for checkups / أقل من مرة كل السنة للفحص
- Only for emergency care / للطوارئ فقط

173. Do you have insurance that covers all or part of your dental expenses?

هل لديك تأمين يغطي كل أو جزء من نفقات العناية بالأسنان الخاصة بك؟

- Yes- all expenses / نعم - جميع النفقات
- Yes- part of my expenses / نعم - جزء من النفقات
- No / لا
- I don't know / لا أعرف

Final Questions Cluster:

الأسئلة النهائية:

174. What is your favorite thing about Canada?

ما هو الشيء المفضل لك في/عن كندا؟

1. Child Information Cluster:

معلومات الطفل:

For this section, please answer about your eldest child who is younger than 18 years of age.

في هذا الجزء ، يرجى الإجابة عن طفلك الأكبر الذي عمره أقل من ١٨ سنة.

2. Participant ID:

3. Family ID:

4. Is the participant the mother or the father?

هل المشارك الأم أو الأب؟

- Mother / الأم
- Father / الأب

5. How old is your child?

كم عمر طفلك؟

6. What is their gender?

ما هو جنسهم؟

- Male / ذكر
- Female / أنثى
- Other / غير

7. In general, would you say your child's physical health is:

بشكل عام ، هل نقول أن صحة طفلك الجسدية هي:

- Excellent/ ممتازة
- Very good/ جيدة جداً
- Good/ جيدة
- Fair/ مقبولة
- Poor/ سيئة

8. In general, would you say your child's mental health is:

بشكل عام ، هل نقول أن صحة طفلك النفسية هي:

- Excellent/ ممتازة
- Very good/ جيدة جداً
- Good/ جيدة
- Fair/ مقبولة
- Poor/ سيئة

9. Please rate your child's ability to communicate in English.

يرجى تقييم قدرة طفلك على التواصل باللغة الإنجليزية.

- Excellent/ ممتازة
- Very good/ جيدة جداً
- Good/ جيدة
- Fair/ مقبولة
- Poor/ سيئة

10. Please rate your child's ability to communicate in your native language.

يرجى تقييم قدرة طفلك على التواصل بلغتك الأم.

- Excellent/ ممتازة
- Very good/ جيدة جداً
- Good/ جيدة
- Fair/ مقبولة
- Poor/ سيئة

11. What grade are they in in school?

في أي صف هم في المدرسة؟

- Grade 1 / الصف الأول
- Grade 2 / الصف الثاني
- Grade 3 / الصف الثالث
- Grade 4 / الصف الرابع
- Grade 5 / الصف الخامس
- Grade 6 / الصف السادس
- Less than grade 1 / أقل من الصف الأول
- Grade 7 / الصف السابع
- Grade 8 / الصف الثامن
- Grade 9 / الصف التاسع
- Grade 10 / الصف العاشر
- Grade 11 / الصف الحادي عشر
- Grade 12 / الصف الثاني عشر
- Grade 13 / الصف الثالث عشر
- Does not apply / لا ينطبق

12. Please rate your child's performance in school.

يرجى تقييم أداء طفلك في المدرسة.

- Excellent/ ممتازة
- Very good/ جيدة جداً
- Good/ جيدة

- Fair/ مقبولة
- Poor/ سيئة
- Does not apply / لا ينطبق

13. How often does your child face discrimination in their school in Canada?

ما مدى مواجه طفلك التمييز في المدرسة في كندا؟

- Never / أبداً
- Seldom / نادراً
- Quite often / أحياناً
- Very often / في معظم الأحيان
- Always / دائماً
- Does not apply / لا ينطبق

14. In general, to what extent do you think your child has experienced bullying from their peers in their school in Canada?

بشكل عام إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن طفلك قد تعرض للتنمر من أصحابه في مدرستهم في كندا؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / إلى أبعد الحدود
- Does not apply / لا ينطبق

15. In general, to what extent do you think your child has bullied their peer(s) in their school in Canada?

بشكل عام إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن طفلك تنمر على أصحابه في مدرستهم في كندا؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط
- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / إلى أبعد الحدود
- Does not apply / لا ينطبق

16. In general, to what extent does your child struggle to establish close ties and friendships in school?

بشكل عام إلى أي مدى يعاني طفلك من إقامة علاقات وثيقة وصداقات في المدرسة؟

- Not at all / ليس البتة
- A little / قليلاً
- A moderate amount / إلى حد متوسط

- Very much / كثيراً جداً
- An extreme amount / الى ابعد الحدود
- Does not apply / لا ينطبق