

# Using Formative Research to Understand Immigrant Settlement in Southern Alberta, Canada

Social Marketing Quarterly  
2025, Vol. 31 (3) 237–256  
© The Author(s) 2025



Article reuse guidelines:  
[sagepub.com/journals-permissions](https://sagepub.com/journals-permissions)  
DOI: 10.1177/15245004251354831  
[journals.sagepub.com/home/smq](https://journals.sagepub.com/home/smq)



Debra Z. Basil<sup>1,\*</sup> , Kathleen Boniol<sup>1,\*</sup>, and Janelle Marietta<sup>1,\*</sup> 

## Abstract

**Background:** Worldwide migration is on the rise due to factors such as political turmoil and natural disasters, as well as personal desires for upward mobility and safety. New immigrants face many challenges throughout their settlement into a new community. As Canada welcomes record numbers of new immigrants, it is important that communities across Canada find ways to support new immigrants. The immigrant settlement experience can be improved by identifying key barriers during the settlement process and implementing social marketing approaches to overcome them.

**Focus of the Article:** This article focuses on identifying key barriers to immigrant settlement in Southern Alberta, Canada, using formative research, to provide a foundation for developing social marketing programs with strategic non-profit partners to facilitate immigrant settlement.

**Research Question:** What challenges do immigrants face when settling in Southern Alberta, and how can social marketing efforts facilitate immigrant settlement?

**Program Design/Importance of the Social Marketing Field:** Social marketing can help connect immigrants to resources during their settlement. In this study, we explore how new immigrants access information during their settlement and what barriers they face throughout their settlement experience. We identify ways that organizations can utilize social marketing to better assist newcomers in their settlement, and discuss the importance of taking a participatory research approach.

**Methods:** This research analyzes survey responses from 77 new immigrants in Southern Alberta, Canada. Surveys were conducted in English, Spanish, and Tagalog, primarily online through Qualtrics' survey platform, augmented by eight hard copy responses. Participants were recruited through word of mouth, local non-profit organizations and government offices, and recruiting at community events. Additionally, interviews were conducted with representatives of an umbrella organization from the greater region that supports immigrant settlement and links settlement service providers. Finally, a community-based participatory research group provided additional insights.

---

<sup>1</sup>Marketing Area, Dhillon School of Business, University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge, AB, Canada

\*All authors contributed equally.

## Corresponding Author:

Debra Z. Basil, Marketing Area, University of Lethbridge, Dhillon School of Business, 4401 University Drive, Lethbridge, AB T1K 3M4, Canada.

Email: [debra.basil@uleth.ca](mailto:debra.basil@uleth.ca)

**Results:** The leading reason for respondents to move to Southern Alberta was to be with people they know, such as family, spouse, or friends, followed by educational purposes. Broadly, our results suggest that employment, finances, friends and family, and transportation are the primary concerns faced by immigrants. Loneliness can also hinder satisfactory settlement. Survey and interview results suggest that participants had a relatively low level of awareness and usage of nonprofit and civil society organization services during their initial settlement period.

**Recommendations for Research or Practice:** Well-crafted social marketing programs can aid immigrant settlement. Moving forward, the authorship team is further engaging in a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach to develop a social marketing program to address priority needs in the community as identified by the CBPR team. CBPR helps to assure program design will meet the needs and resources of relevant stakeholders. We call on academic researchers to engage community members when designing social marketing programs. We encourage organizations offering settlement services to utilize social marketing to increase communication efficiencies and improve the settlement experience for new immigrants.

**Limitations:** This research is formative. It is cross-sectional, thus precluding assessments of causality. Although we provide three data sources, we engage a relatively small number of participants in each.

### **Keywords**

social marketing, immigration settlement, community-based participatory research, mid-sized cities, formative research, Canada

## **Introduction**

Nearly 4% of the world's population can be classified as migrants. Although Covid-19 briefly interrupted this growth trend, migration is flowing again (Batalova, 2022). Political turmoil and extreme weather events, as well as personal aspirations such as a desire for education and a better life, will continue to push people beyond their native borders. As the proportion of the world's population who are choosing or forced to migrate continues to grow, it is important to facilitate this process. As the United States of America (USA) increases the stringency of their immigration policies, greater demand is likely to fall on Canada. In this study, we tackle a small piece of this enormous issue. We report here on formative research examining the challenges faced by immigrants to Canada, in and around the mid-sized city of Lethbridge, Alberta. We identify barriers that newcomers report experiencing during their settlement process and discuss potential social marketing solutions. This work is the first step in our efforts to develop a social marketing program to facilitate immigrant<sup>1</sup> settlement in Southern Alberta, Canada.

## **Background and Literature**

### **Settlement**

Migration has a tremendous impact on countries, communities, and individuals. In 2020, there were over 280 million migrants worldwide. These individuals need food, shelter, and stability; if these needs are met, immigrants can offer a great deal to the communities they join. Immigrants often represent a younger workforce, which is needed in many developed countries such as Canada with an aging population (Statistics Canada, 2022, April 27). Immigrants provide a much-needed boost to the Canadian labour force (Banting & Soroka, 2020; Ley & Hiebert, 2001) and

offer a diversity of ideas (Costigan et al., 2016). Over 420,000 new Canadian immigrants were estimated to arrive in 2023 (Government of Canada, 2020; Singer, 2019). By 2036, immigrants are likely to compose an estimated 30% of the Canadian population (Government of Canada, 2021). With these increases, communities across Canada will need to find ways to support new immigrants in their settlement process.

Immigration researchers describe a three-stage settlement process: immediate settlement for basic needs, intermediate settlement for navigating systems, and long-term integration as societal participants (Mwarigha, 2002; Shields et al., 2016). The immediate settlement stage is extremely important, as it serves as the foundation for newcomers' lives in Canada. A rocky immediate settlement stage can lead to situations such as forced departure, loss of legal status (Hendriks & Burger, 2020), or mental health problems such as depression (Stewart et al., 2011). Even skilled immigrants face significant challenges with settlement (Kaushik & Drolet, 2018). Our work focuses on the immediate settlement stage, with some carryover to the intermediate stage.

### *Barriers and Challenges Faced by Immigrants*

**Basic Needs.** When arriving in a new country, basic needs must first be met. Lack of affordable housing, limited employment opportunities, and lack of language skills present large barriers to settlement, according to two studies with service providers, one in a small community and the other in a mid-sized community within Western Canada (Drolet & Teixeira, 2022; Teixeira & Drolet, 2024). A review of immigrant health outcomes in rural Canada highlighted the importance of social inclusion, gender, employment, and housing as determinants of effective settlement (Patel et al., 2019).

**Loneliness.** Loneliness is another common challenge (e.g., de Jong Gierveld et al., 2015; Wu & Penning, 2015). Loneliness can negatively impact both physical and mental health (Lee et al., 2020); thus, it is an important issue to tackle. Feelings of belonging can reduce loneliness (de Jong Gierveld et al., 2015), as can sharing experiences (Simich et al., 2005). Loneliness can result from social isolation, the fear of language barriers, and employment constraints (Rashid et al., 2013). In Alberta, Canada, women found comfort by going to settlement service providers, libraries, and religious locations (Chai, 2022), demonstrating the important role played by these service providers. Therefore, we examine loneliness among immigrants in our sample.

**Trust.** Trust is essential for relationship building. Immigrants prefer obtaining information from those they trust, such as family members, community members, or elders (Mason et al., 2021; Simich et al., 2005). Lack of trust hinders immigrants' integration within their host country (De Vroome, 2013). Trust can be violated in many ways; one that is particularly relevant to the immigrant population is the experience of discrimination, as it reduces trust (Wilkes & Wu, 2019).

**Discrimination.** Discrimination, microaggressions, and racism can affect an individual's trust in others. Discrimination can happen based on perceived stereotypes and characteristics like age, gender, appearance, race, or ethnicity (Wilkes & Wu, 2019). In Canada, immigrants experience racial profiling and can be victims of hate crimes (Holley & Jedwab, 2019; Wilkes & Wu, 2019). Race and ethnicity are two leading factors associated with experiencing discrimination (Statistics Canada, 2022). Immigrants are frequently members of visible minority populations, making them potential targets for discrimination. Discrimination can reduce trust, which can deter immigrants from forming relationships and integrating into their communities, therefore contributing to loneliness.

## *Social Marketing*

Social marketing<sup>2</sup> promotes voluntary behavior change beneficial to individuals and society (Andreason, 1994). It addresses barriers, offers benefits, and involves the target audience in solutions (Lee & Kotler, 2011). Formative research is an essential first step in developing a social marketing program, to help researchers understand the needs and motivations of the target audience (Carins et al., 2016). Program development benefits from a collaborative, co-creation approach, closely involving all stakeholders in program design (Domegan et al., 2016).

We are seeking to collaborate with strategic non-profit partners to develop a social marketing program to facilitate immigrant settlement in Southern Alberta, Canada. In this formative stage, we examine the barriers perceived by newcomers in the Lethbridge area, levels of loneliness and discrimination experienced, communication tools used to attain immigration information, use of services from nonprofit and civil society organizations (NPOs/CSOs) supporting immigrant settlement, and satisfaction with the settlement process. We supplement this with perspectives of individuals working at umbrella organizations that facilitate communication and coordination among NPOs/CSOs that support immigrant settlement. This information will help us determine an appropriate path forward for the intended program. Alberta's population increased by over 39,000 in the third quarter of 2023 due to international immigration (CREA, 2024), underscoring the importance of this research. Although our primary goal is to positively impact Southern Alberta, we foresee our work being generalizable across many parts of Canada and even outside of Canada. In the longer-term we intend to test its generalizability.

## *Community-Based Participatory Research*

Increasingly, social marketers are engaging participatory design, which recognizes the importance of involving relevant stakeholders in the program development process (Willmott et al., 2024). Participatory design is practiced in a variety of ways, involving varying levels of stakeholder engagement (Willmott et al., 2024). For example, the co-create, build, engage (CBE) framework (Rundle-Thiele et al., 2021) and community-based social marketing (McKenzie-Mohr, 2011) both represent participatory approaches to social marketing. This research is part of a larger research program, intended to design and implement a social marketing program to facilitate immigrant settlement. Community-based participation is an important part of this process.

## **Research Questions**

This formative research examines barriers and unmet needs, loneliness, discrimination, communication, and NPO/CSO use for immigrants in Southern Alberta, Canada, with the longer-term goal of developing a social marketing program to facilitate immigrant settlement. Thus, in this work we examine the following:

- RQ1: What are immigrants' motivations and expectations when coming to Southern Alberta?
- RQ2: How do immigrants receive and prefer to receive, immigration information?
- RQ3: What barriers and unmet needs are experienced during the settlement process?
- RQ4: Do immigrants in Southern Alberta experience loneliness and/or discrimination?
- RQ5: How satisfied are immigrants with their settlement experience in Southern Alberta?
- RQ6: Do immigrants access support services from NPOs/CSOs during their settlement process?

## Survey Methods

This study used a mixed methods approach. First, a survey was conducted to examine immigrant experiences and use of NPO/CSO services. Second, interviews were conducted with NPO/CSO representatives. Finally, a community-based participatory research advisory group was formed and convened. Ethics approval was attained through the institutional review board at the authors' university. The survey was primarily conducted online, programmed on Qualtrics' survey platform. The survey was offered in English, Spanish, and Tagalog, consistent with major immigrant populations in the area. Survey translation was performed by native speakers, then checked independently by other native speakers. Participants were recruited through word of mouth, contact with local non-profit organizations and government offices, and recruiting efforts at community festivals and events. Recruiting began during Covid-19 and thus was extremely difficult. Even after Covid-19 restrictions began lifting, recruiting proved to be a challenge. To attain further responses, we offered a hard copy option, but only 8 respondents participated in this way. This was a useful finding, suggesting that interviews might be a more appropriate approach than surveys as we move forward.

### *Survey Demographics*

After removing 10 substantially incomplete responses we had responses from 77 individuals. The modal and median age group was 26–35. Female-identifying participants composed 67.7% of the participants. With the option of selecting all that apply, the most selected race groups were Latino (19.5%), Black (18.2%), and Southeast Asian (14.3%). The median and modal level of education was bachelor's degree (54%). Married participants represented 49.3%, and 51.5% had children. The sample included several international students (37.7%). Students frequently come to Canada to study, with the hope of staying in Canada after graduation. Lethbridge has a two-year college and a four-year university, making it an attractive community for foreign students. A family status visa was held by 22.1% of the participants, and 19.5% entered on a work visa. Refugees made up 10.4% of participants. Over half (52.1%) of participants had been in Canada three years or less. All but one were here 9 years or less. Over half came to Southern Alberta with family (54.7%).

### *Survey Instrument and Data Analysis Platform*

At the beginning of the survey, participants agreed to informed consent, which was required to proceed. The survey questions examined participants' experiences immigrating to Southern Alberta, their communications strategies, their means of receiving immigration information, familiarity with and use of local non-profit and government agencies, loneliness, trust levels, experiences of discrimination, and demographics. Questions were asked on a 5-point scale, unless otherwise noted. Some categorical questions were included as well as a very limited number of short open-ended questions. For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were run in SPSS version 27.

## Survey Findings

### *Motivation and Expectations*

Participants were asked what their main reason was for moving to the Lethbridge area. These open-ended responses were coded, and the leading response was to be with people they know-family, spouse, or friends (22%). Next, participants were motivated to come to Lethbridge for educational purposes (17%). Work and life opportunities motivated some of the respondents (12%).

Participants were asked about their expectations of Canada prior to moving. They were given a list of positive outcomes and asked to select all that fit their expectations about moving to Canada. The most frequently selected option was to have a better life (68%). Participants also felt that they would have good work opportunities (56%), and that Canada would be safer than their home country (53%). To a lesser extent they believed Canada would be multicultural, affordable, and offer opportunities for their children (see [Figure 1](#)).

### Meeting Needs

When basic needs are not met, individuals cannot thrive in their environment. To understand participants' needs, they were asked to indicate the top three challenges they faced, by dragging and dropping from a list of provided options. Participants indicated that they faced difficulty finding work (33.8%) or finding work comparable to what they had done previously (35.1%), which combined represents 68.8% of respondents expressing employment challenges. They also faced financial challenges (45.5%), had difficulty making friends or felt lonely (40.3%), and faced transportation challenges (36.4%). For a full listing see [Figure 2](#).

Building on this topic, participants were asked what would have been helpful to them during their first year of being in Southern Alberta that they did not receive, with the option of selecting all that apply. Financial assistance was the most selected option (49.4%), followed by friends and family (41.6%), and assistance finding employment (40.3%). See [Figure 3](#) for a full listing.

### Loneliness

During their first two years in Southern Alberta, the majority of participants felt lonely at least some of the time (96%), and a sizable minority (41.4%) felt lonely most or all of the time. The modal response was "about half the time", which was the scale mid-point. The mean score for loneliness was 3.14 after assigning numerical scores to the five-point verbal scale responses. This was not significantly different from the scale mid-point ( $t(69) = .99, p = .33$ ), suggesting a

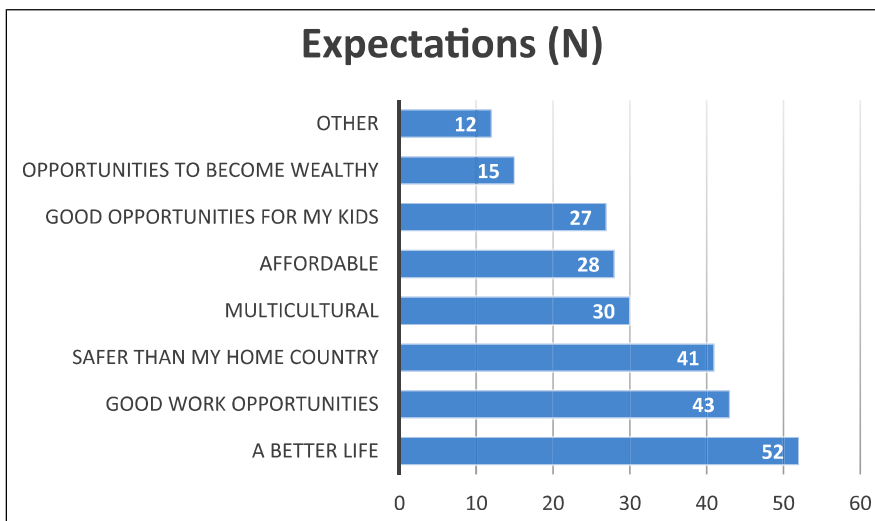


Figure 1. Immigrant expectations.

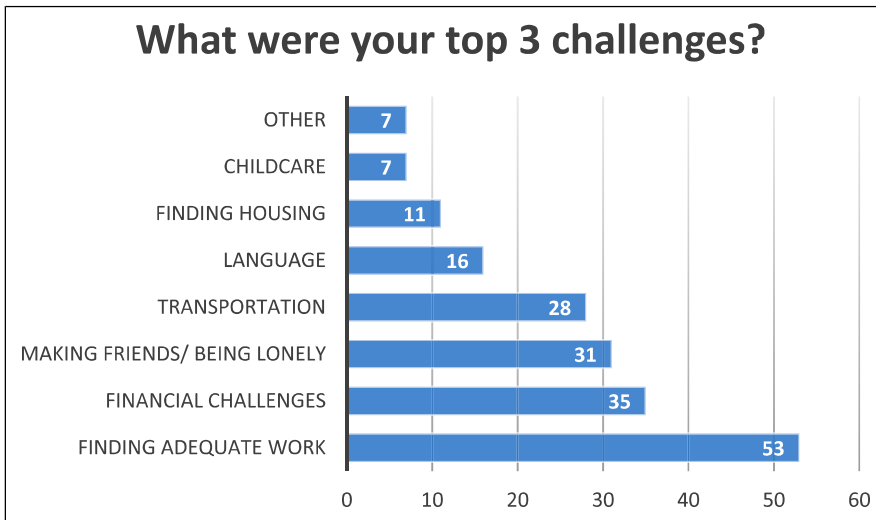


Figure 2. Immigrants' top 3 challenges.

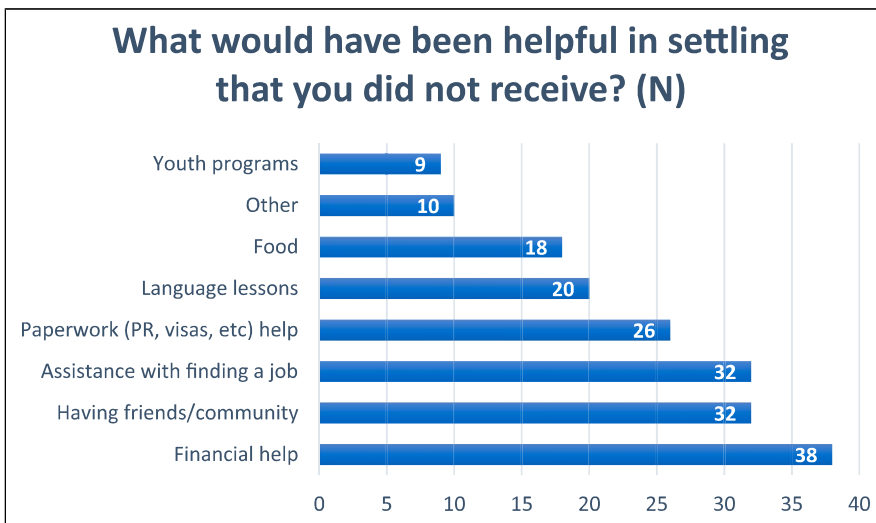


Figure 3. What would have been helpful?

moderate level of loneliness in the first two years after immigrating. Since the first two years of settlement are an important period for developing a strong foundation, and loneliness can have deleterious consequences, this issue is important for successful settlement.

Joining a group could be a way to alleviate loneliness, therefore we asked participants whether they joined some form of an organization or community when they arrived in Southern Alberta. Most participants did not look for a community to join when they arrived (57.4%), and those who did were not significantly less lonely ( $M = 3.17$  vs.  $M = 3.23$ ;  $t(66) = .54, p = .59$ ). 56.3% reported being involved with at least one group, most commonly a religious organization (35.2%), though religious affiliation did not significantly alleviate loneliness ( $t(65) = .43, p = .67$ ).

### *Trust*

Participants were asked their level of trust in various organizations, this time on a four-point scale. Moderate trust was evident for Canadian institutions such as banks, schools and police ( $M = 3.23$ ), and this was significantly above the scale mid-point of 2.5 ( $t(73) = 6.75, p < .001$ ), which is promising, since official Canadian organizations often facilitate various aspects of settlement. Trust was also evident for Canadian nonprofit organizations ( $M = 2.85, t(73) = 2.49, p = .015$ ), which is fortunate, as NPOs/CSOs often provide settlement assistance.

Participants expressed moderate levels of trust for their employer ( $M = 2.72$ ), Canadian mass media ( $M = 2.63$ ), and coworkers ( $M = 2.57$ ), all of which were numerically above but statistically did not differ from the scale mid-point ( $p > .05$ ). Low levels of trust were expressed for social media ( $M = 1.95, t(73) = -3.99, p < .001$ ).

Further exploring issues of trust, participants were asked whether they had received misinformation from their employer. Over a quarter of those responding indicated that they had (28.6%), whereas just under half indicated that they had not (45.7%), and some were unsure (24.3%). Most felt it was unintentional (60%); however, a quarter felt their employer had intentionally lied. Half felt the misinformation was due to laziness on the employer's part.

### *Racism*

Nearly 40% of the participants responding to this question have experienced racism since moving to Southern Alberta (39.5%). Of those who experienced racism, over half felt it affected their level of trust in Canadians around them (60%).

### *Information and Communication*

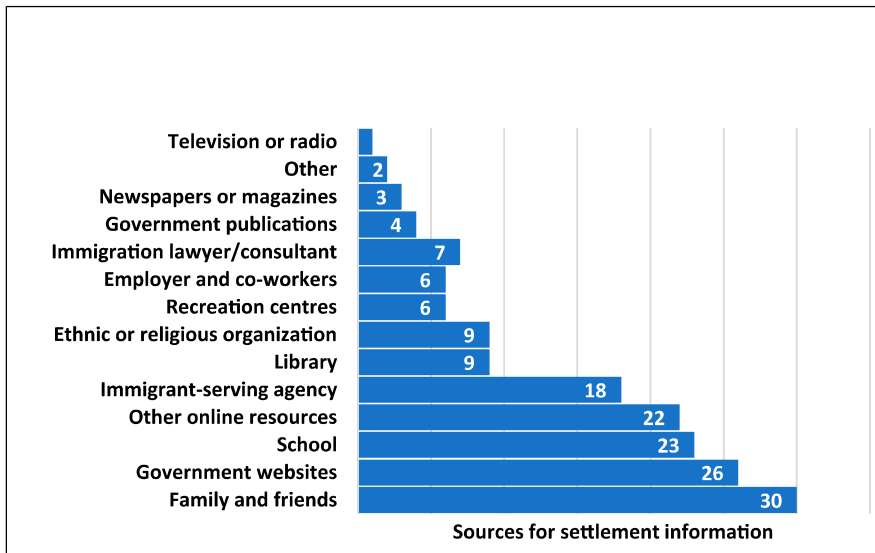
Social marketing programs must be able to reach the target audience effectively. Of those responding, the preferred way to receive immigration settlement information is from websites (35.6%), individual appointments (25.4%), and email (23.7%).

Participants were asked where they commonly accessed settlement information about Southern Alberta, with the option of selecting all that apply. The most selected responses were family and friends (39%), government websites (33.8%), school (30%), other online sources (26%) and immigrant-serving agencies (22.1%; see [Figure 4](#)).

To gain further insight into how to reach immigrants, participants were asked which communication tools they use most to communicate with friends and family, using a 5-point scale. Messenger apps are used most frequently ( $M = 3.87$ ), followed by direct personal communication (face-to-face or telephone,  $M = 3.77$ ), social media ( $M = 3.38$ ) and finally email ( $M = 2.66$ ). This suggests that using a messenger app may be an effective way to reach the target group.

### *Nonprofit Familiarity and Use*

Participants were asked about their usage of NPO/CSO services, and when they first used the services. They responded to a comprehensive list of 37 local NPOs/CSOs. These NPOs/CSOs did not exclusively serve immigrants, but they offered services that might be helpful for settlement. The intent with these questions was to determine whether the participants had used the NPO/CSO services during their initial settlement. Greatest use was seen for the University and/or College (36.4%) which is not surprising, since there were several students in the sample. This was followed by the library (33.3%), Lethbridge Family Services (24.2%), which tied with the YMCA (24.2%), and the church of their choice (16.7%). Unfortunately, early use of these services was



**Figure 4.** Sources of settlement information.

limited. During their first year of settlement, and even during the second and third years, use was quite low, as can be seen in [Figure 5](#). Only the university and the library exceeded 25%, and this use is likely due to the student participants. These results suggest that immigrants may not be taking advantage of services offered by NPOs/CSOs at a time when they might be helpful for their initial settlement process.

### Satisfaction

Participants indicated moderate levels of satisfaction with their settlement experience, measured on a five-point scale ( $M = 3.48$ ), which is significantly above the scale mid-point ( $t(66) = 3.3, p = .002$ ). Similarly, they tended to feel that Southern Alberta has met their expectations ( $M = 3.47$ ), which was significantly above the scale mid-point ( $t(59) = 3.12, p = .003$ ). Both represent positive responses; however, both also suggest considerable room for improvement.

These two items (satisfaction and meeting expectations) were highly correlated ( $r = .63, p < .001$ ). Although it is preferred to have at least three items when using Cronbach's alpha to assess scale reliability, it can nonetheless be useful supplementary information in this case. The Cronbach's alpha was .77. Given the high significant correlation, similar means, and strong scale reliability, these two items were averaged to create a satisfaction scale. This scale measure was used to assess the relationship between participant satisfaction and relevant measures reported above.

Using the created satisfaction scale, there was no significant gender difference in settlement satisfaction ( $t(59) = .8, p = .44$ ). There was a significant negative correlation between satisfaction and loneliness during their first two years ( $r = -.25, p = .048$ ). There was no significant difference in satisfaction for those not involved with an organization compared to those involved with at least one of the organizations listed ( $t(65) = .05, p = .96$ ). There was also no significant difference in satisfaction for those who looked to join a community when they first arrived in Southern Alberta compared to those who did not ( $t(58) = .1, p = .93$ ), suggesting that organizational involvement on its own may not be a solution to loneliness or a tool to increase settlement satisfaction.

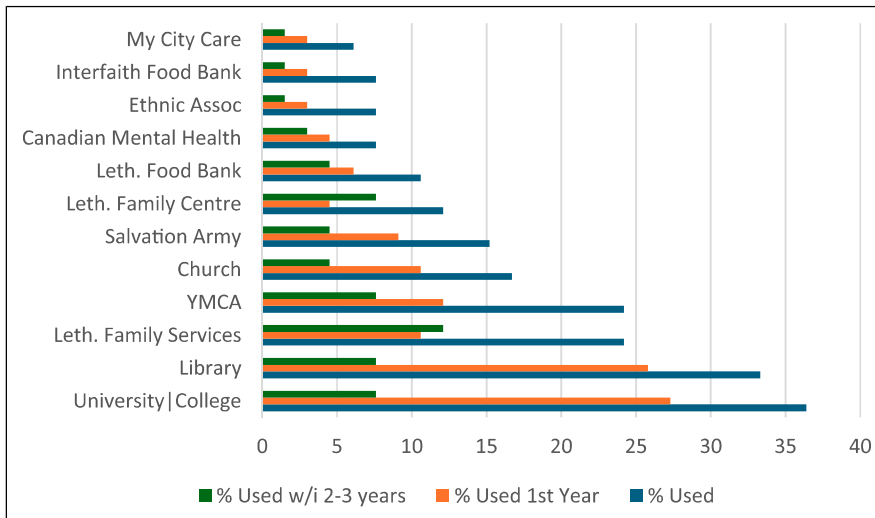


Figure 5. NPO/CSO use.

Surprisingly, there was also no significant difference in satisfaction for those who had experienced racism or discrimination and those who had not ( $t(63) = .22, p = .83$ ). This may be because these are short-term, discrete experiences which do not outweigh their ongoing experience in Canada. However, participants were also asked if the discrimination they experienced affected their trust in Canadians. For those responding yes to this question, satisfaction was significantly lower ( $t(18.9) = 2.2, p = .04$ , unequal variances). This indicates that participants may be resilient to brief discriminatory encounters, but when those rise to a level that impacts their trust in those around them, it can have wider consequences. Importantly, this interpretation is speculative, as no causal association can be confirmed given the cross-sectional nature of these data.

## Interview Methods

Depth interviews were conducted with personnel from three branches of an NPO/CSO umbrella organization that helps to coordinate immigrant settlement services within their respective communities. First, one interview was conducted with an individual in the local Lethbridge branch. Next, individuals were interviewed from two other branches of this organization, representing other communities across the broader geographic region, for comparison. By engaging three branches of this umbrella organization for immigrant settlement, we gained a broader perspective than what may have been attained from individual NPOs/CSOs. Replicating in other communities offered insight into the prevalence and generalizability of these findings.

Interviews were conducted online and lasted approximately 1 hour each. An interview guide served as the basis for questions, focusing on perceptions of immigrant settlement support. Ethics approval was attained, and informed consent was gained. Data were analyzed thematically.

## Interview Findings

Four key themes emerged from the interviews, each expressed by all three interview participants. First, all indicated the need for targeted programs (14 comments). They felt programs were needed to address specific needs of different immigrant statuses, and for different demographics such as

youth or seniors. Second, they felt that awareness of services was lacking (12 comments). This includes knowing about the services at the time they are needed, understanding what the service offers, and trusting its efficacy and its providers. A need for community education was the third emergent theme (9 comments). This theme encompasses educational needs for both immigrants and non-immigrants to facilitate settlement, integration, and acceptance within the community. The final theme was community connection (8 comments). Within this theme participants indicated a need for resources and physical space for immigrants to connect with others, including both immigrants and non-immigrants. [Table 1](#) provides representative quotes supporting each theme, and [Figure 6](#) offers a visual representation of comment distribution across the themes.

## Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Methods

Next, we created and convened a community-based participatory research team. Our CBPR team consists of five members from the local community identifying with various relevant stakeholder groups, including immigrants, individuals who have worked with and/or served on governing boards for immigrant-serving NPOs/CSOs, and business managers who frequently employ immigrants. The CBPR team was engaged to help determine the shape of our forthcoming social marketing program and will be involved throughout our future efforts.

### *CBPR Findings*

Results from the survey and interviews were shared with the CBPR team. With CBPR team members' own experiences and perspectives augmenting our research, the team discussed viable paths toward facilitating immigrant settlement. The need for targeted programs, particularly to help youth and families was seen as a particularly pressing need in our community. Ensuring awareness of existing services at opportune times was also identified as an important issue. These topics will be at the forefront of our considerations moving forward.

## Ongoing Research Program

The research reported here is part of a larger research program to facilitate immigrant settlement in Southern Alberta. Our CBPR team will be engaged throughout the process. CBPR prioritizes community benefit and equal partnership over the desire for academic publications ([Fursova, 2023](#); [Sandwick et al., 2018](#)). As such, the process is generally somewhat more protracted than a unilateral approach. The disadvantages of this slower pace are more than offset by the value of engaging relevant stakeholders in efforts about which they are uniquely knowledgeable.

While participatory research is increasingly being practiced in social marketing, its execution is far from consistent. In particular, the level of involvement practiced varies tremendously, with some only engaging community members in the role of informant, rather than truly embracing a co-creation partnership ([Su et al., 2018](#)). In our view, CBPR requires community involvement throughout the process. For example, the design of an interview protocol and selection of interview participants could easily influence research outcomes. If academic researchers make these decisions, the research may be biased toward the researcher's preconceived ideas. For this reason, we have committed to engaging our CBPR team throughout our research process as we proceed, including protocol design and selection of interview participants. Additional stages of our research going forward will include further interviews with NPO/CSO representatives, interviews with immigrants, and program co-creation workshops. Each stage will involve collaboration with our CBPR team.

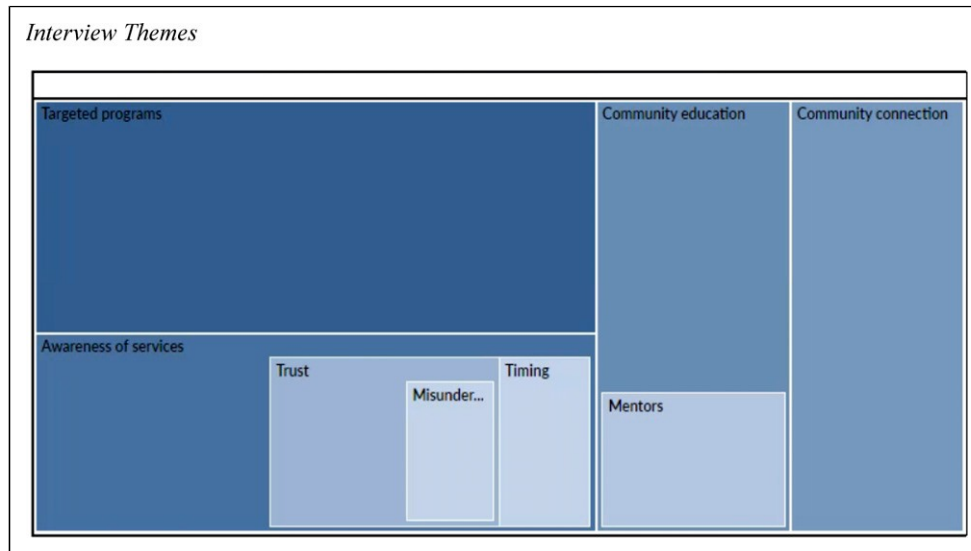
**Table 1.** Emergent Interview Themes.

| Theme                 | Org | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Targeted programs     | 1   | "What is really a huge gap is being able to offer services to other groups other than our refugees"                                                                                                                                                              |
|                       | 2   | "Serving those outlying communities is kind of challenging...it's hard for them to come to our office in downtown Kelowna. So, we need to do more outreach in those regions."                                                                                    |
|                       | 3   | "These immigrants are bringing their parents to help them with childcare or other stuff, but these older people need support, and there's no funding that we have right now to help them."                                                                       |
| Awareness of services | 1   | "If you weren't a GAR, you didn't know where services were or how to get the services. By the time you figured that out, you didn't really need them."                                                                                                           |
|                       | 2   | (Participant also an immigrant) "In the beginning, I didn't want to actually ask for help from any organizations that I don't know much about. So, I've been struggling... I wasted some time searching services and navigating the Canadian systems by myself." |
|                       | 3   | "Even people didn't know about the settlement agency... the Muslim community thought it was a religious thing, so they were not even going there."                                                                                                               |
| Community education   | 1   | "One of the employers that came to some of our learning events admitted that they were basically white middle-aged 50-year-old men, and just all this stuff was brand new to them."                                                                              |
|                       | 2   | "We would like to invite students to join our pre-employment workshops and the job class like every Mon so they could benefit from our workshops and also that we have a mentor program."                                                                        |
|                       | 3   | "Sometimes the problem is (blinded) people think that this new government is spending money on new immigrants and not them, and there's sometimes friction between (blinded) and immigrants. So I wanted to see how we can work together."                       |
| Community connections | 1   | "We asked a similar question in this other survey... 'Do you feel connected to your community?' I can't remember the exact percentage, but it was very high (that) said no."                                                                                     |
|                       | 2   | "We encourage immigrants to volunteer as a way to build connections with the community, but we need more funding to expand these programs and recruit more participants."                                                                                        |
|                       | 3   | Festivals like (blinded) fest and the (blinded) festival help people feel part of the community but organizing them requires city support and external funding. If we could make these events sustainable, they would continue to foster belonging."             |

## Discussion

For immigrants to fully realize their aspirations in migrating, and for communities to fully benefit from newcomers, a smooth settlement process is essential. Organizations seeking to facilitate settlement for immigrants must understand what unmet needs are perceived, what opportunities are currently available or what opportunities could reasonably be created to meet these needs, and how to communicate these opportunities effectively to encourage behavior adoption. This research illuminates immigrant challenges, using a survey approach to understand perceptions of their settlement process, augmented by interviews with representatives from NPO/CSO settlement organizations, and consultation with a team of knowledgeable community stakeholders (CBPR team).

Social marketing approaches to behavior change can focus on the behavior of different individuals within a behavioral context, at varying levels within that behavioral sphere. Arguably,



**Figure 6.** Interview themes.

the most intuitive of these is to focus on the behavior of the individual, which in this case would be the immigrants hoping to successfully settle in Southern Alberta. This is the downstream or micro-level of behavior. For context, the meso-level focuses on those in their immediate circle to assist with behavior change, such as friends and family, and the upstream or macro-level focuses on the broader environment such as structural issues or community programs (Hübscher et al., 2022). The primary focus of our social marketing program is intended for a downstream audience, specifically immigrants themselves. It will nonetheless also be important to attend to the upstream audience, which includes the NPOs/CSOs that will be serving the downstream audience. Their engagement will be essential for successful program execution.

Our survey data suggest that immigrants move to Southern Alberta, Canada for a better life. They hope for improved work opportunities and greater safety. They are often joining friends and family who already live here, or pursuing an education. Broadly, our results suggest that employment, finances, friends and family, and transportation are the primary concerns faced by immigrants. Loneliness can be a barrier to satisfactory settlement. Importantly, these needs are generally intertwined, with each need influencing other needs. Immigrants have a relatively low level of awareness of settlement supports available from NPOs/CSOs, and rarely access these supports during their immediate settlement period.

Themes emerging from our NPO/CSO interview data suggest the need for targeted programs to benefit specific groups, because different groups have different needs, and generic, “one size fits all” approaches often leave service gaps. Increased awareness and use of existing programs, greater community connections, and education for both immigrants and non-immigrants were also identified as pressing needs.

The CBPR team we formed will be closely involved in all aspects of this project going forward. This team identified the need for targeted family/youth programs, and the need to increase awareness and uptake of existing services as important areas of focus.

In developing a social marketing program to facilitate immigrant settlement, the space in which immigrant perceptions, NPO/CSO service providers’ perceptions, and CBPR team perceptions overlap indicates particularly important areas for action. Two topic areas were seen as particularly

important by all three of these groups: (1) targeted programs that support immigrant families and youth; and (2) increasing timely awareness and uptake of existing immigrant support programs. Going forward with our fully engaged CBPR team, these two topics will be further examined through immigrant and NPO/CSO interviews, and one of them will likely serve as the basis of our final program.

To maximize program efficiency while minimizing budget, it is helpful to fully leverage available existing resources. There are several excellent organizations in Southern Alberta that assist newcomers with settlement. Our data reveal that immigrants tend to trust established institutions and non-profit organizations within Canada, but may not feel the services are appropriate for or targeted to them individually. Our three stages of data collection also suggest that although services exist, immigrants often do not use them during their settlement stage. All three informant groups perceived that immigrants may not be aware of available services at the optimal time for settlement. As we move forward, working with our CBPR team, we will seek to leverage existing resources, whether the program focus is on increasing program awareness and uptake overall or on offering family settlement support.

If we design and implement a family settlement support program, several existing NPOs/CSOs offer helpful services. For example, our data suggest that immigrants are generally not familiar with fifth on fifth Youth Services, which could be a valuable resource for families struggling with youth settlement issues. Similarly, Lethbridge Family Services offers a variety of programs to support families, such as counseling, a childcare room for immigrants, and a newcomer girls' group, in addition to their other immigrant support efforts ([Lethbridge Family Services, 2024](#)). Our data suggest these programs are not commonly being accessed by newcomers.

Loneliness is another issue identified in this research as a challenge faced by newcomers. The City of Lethbridge identified social isolation as a priority social issue in the 2024 Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy Update following their community needs assessment ([City of Lethbridge, 2024](#)). Creating opportunities to connect and interact with other immigrants, as well as with local Canadian residents, would be a valuable offering for newcomers. This may especially be true for stay-at-home caregivers who lack opportunities to make connections in the workplace. Providing opportunities for meaningful connections could be a very cost-effective way of increasing immigrant settlement satisfaction since such opportunities can be created at a relatively low cost and can offer tremendous psychological benefit.

Our data suggest that immigrants may be unaware of the existence of such resources, or of how to access the resources if they are aware of them, and thus unable to take advantage of the benefits they offer. Through our research, we identified the ways in which immigrants receive, and prefer to receive, settlement information. This knowledge can be useful for a program focused on awareness and uptake of existing organizational support. Our research indicates that immigrants receive settlement information from websites and personal appointments with those assisting settlement. While helpful, these resources require that the individual reach out to seek this assistance. Our research also indicates that newcomers prefer to use messaging apps when communicating with friends and family. Connecting with newcomers through a messenger app may offer a valuable tool for "push" style communication, allowing organizations to share information that the newcomer may not have known to ask for. Immigrant settlement occurs in stages ([Mwarigha, 2002](#)), and organizations facilitating settlement are often aware of newcomer needs at various stages, as well as what existing resources can help newcomers to meet these needs, but they must be able to reach these individuals in a timely manner to help. Upon initial arrival, immigrants could be asked to opt into a push-style messaging program that will offer them information on available programs and services at the appropriate time to meet their needs. Information about resources to support family settlement, for example, could then be shared periodically, and reminders could be offered as well. Overwhelming individuals with information

upon arrival may be ineffective. Relevant information may be lost or forgotten, since it was not needed at the time. A messaging program could provide information at appropriately spaced intervals according to when the newcomer is likely to need the information. This approach could connect newcomers with existing services at the time they are needed, through a medium that newcomers commonly access, to facilitate settlement more effectively. Development of such a program would require careful attention to social marketing processes (Kotler & Lee, 2008), with particular attention to barriers to adoption that an app can present (Basil, 2019), especially due to potential technology and language limitations. Attention to all three levels of the product 'p' in social marketing would be particularly important. It would be essential to carefully consider the benefits offered by the app (core product), the features the app would offer (actual product), and any additional support components offered such as language translation (augmented product; Lee & Kotler, 2016, p. 51).

Both designing a family focused settlement support program, and increasing awareness and uptake of existing service, perhaps through the development of an app to provide information on settlement services in a push format, are under serious consideration by the research team. While these strategies both fit well with our data from immigrants' interviews, NPO/CSO interviews, and CBPR team consultation, they are offered speculatively. Collaboration with our CBPR team, and further research with immigrants and NPOs/CSOs informed by our CBPR team, will determine program development.

## **Conclusion**

Immigrants in the Lethbridge area are moderately satisfied with their settlement process, but they indicate facing significant challenges as well. Employment, finances, transportation, and loneliness are key challenges faced. Additionally, a large minority have faced racism. NPO/CSO representatives perceive a need to improve awareness of program availability in a timely manner, to increase connection to the community, to offer targeted programs, and to improve education. These perceptions are echoed by our CBPR team and consistent with our immigrant survey results. To develop an effective social marketing program to address these issues, it is crucial to involve relevant stakeholders in the process. We are using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) process to do this. Through involvement of our CBPR team and further research we will identify and develop a social marketing program to assist newcomer settlement.

## ***Implications for Social Marketing Practice***

Immigration issues have not received a great deal of attention in social marketing, but these issues are becoming increasingly important in communities around the world. When immigrants arrive in a new community, a smooth settlement process not only benefits the immigrant, but it also facilitates their acceptance within the community, potentially mitigating resistance that could emerge from community members. This research suggests that Canadian immigrants tend to trust non-profit organizations and government-run institutions. This trust can provide organizations with legitimacy, helping them gain acceptance when developing social marketing settlement programs for an immigrant community.

We propose that the way forward must involve active engagement from relevant stakeholders, using a CBPR strategy. Immigrants, service providers, and employers are all essential participants in solution development. Importantly, the CBPR method must flow through the entire program development effort, from designing interview protocols and selecting interview participants, to interpreting data and designing the final program. It is common for research efforts to claim a CBPR approach while having minimal stakeholder involvement. We

encourage anyone seeking to design a social marketing program to fully involve relevant stakeholders. This involvement is likely to slow the process and may pose additional challenges for academic researchers with issues such as gaining research ethics approval and maintaining a sufficient publication schedule. Nonetheless, we believe that community stakeholder involvement should be an essential component in all social marketing program development efforts. Such involvement will increase program acceptance by the target audience, because they will have helped to design a program that works for them. Finally, community stakeholder involvement is imperative for ethical reasons, to assure that we, as researchers, are doing “with” rather than doing “to” the target audience.

### ***Limitations and Future Research***

This formative research offers valuable insights into the lived experiences of immigrants and settlement service providers in Southern Alberta, Canada, suggesting opportunities for social marketing efforts to facilitate newcomer settlement. Nonetheless, the limitations of this research should be considered. We used a survey approach, which does not offer the opportunity for participants to elaborate on their responses and does not allow us to determine causality. Our sample was small and limited to individuals willing and able to respond to an internet survey (with limited opportunity provided for responding via hard copy), so those less comfortable with technology may not have participated. Our survey was provided in three languages, which addressed the most common languages spoken by newcomers to the area, but those speaking other languages may not have been able to participate. This research was cross-sectional, so causality cannot be determined. We also conducted a small number of depth interviews with NPOs/CSOs. Though the results were reassuringly consistent across organizations, there is still a need to hear from more voices. Finally, the information gained from our CBPR team was very helpful, but further collaboration is required. Thus, this work offers useful information, but also suggests that further research is needed.

Personal experience influences individuals’ perspectives on information. We wish to acknowledge that one of our authors is an immigrant, one is the child of immigrants, and a third has been closely involved with the immigration of a spouse. We acknowledge that these experiences could have influenced our approach to this work; however, we remained cognizant of this throughout the process to avoid inserting personal bias.

### **Acknowledgements**

The authors gratefully acknowledged assistance by undergraduate students Andres Banda Penafiel, John Paul de Haas, Kathleen Lopez, and Caitlin Whelpton. Kathleen Boniol completed this work while in the MSc program at the University of Lethbridge. She is now employed by the City of Lethbridge.

### **Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

### **Funding**

The authors disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This work was supported by a Partnership Engage Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, grant number 892-2020-3040.

## Ethical Statement

### Ethical Considerations

This research received ethics approval from the University of Lethbridge.

### Consent to Participate

All research participants completed an informed consent document. For the survey, consent was written (online, clicking an acceptance box). For the interviews and community-based participatory research group, participants received a copy of informed consent in advance. At the start of the meeting, researchers and participants reviewed the document together, then the participants gave verbal consent.

## ORCID iDs

Debra Z. Basil  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1363-5414>

Janelle Marietta  <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-5025-2519>

## Data Availability Statement

All survey data will be made available through the authors' university's preferred data archiving platform. Interview transcripts will not be shared, out of concern for participant confidentiality. If requested, authors will provide a fair summary of the transcripts. Please contact the corresponding author for survey data information or a transcript summary.

## Notes

1. We use immigrant and newcomer interchangeably throughout this work, to represent those newly arriving and settling in Canada from other countries.
2. To assure this work is accessible to those just beginning their journey with social marketing, we offer a brief summary of social marketing, though we realize many readers will be familiar with these principles.

## References

- Andreason, A. (1994). Social marketing: Its definition and domain. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 13(1), 108–114. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-10-2020-0214>
- Banting, K., & Soroka, S. (2020). A distinctive culture? The sources of public support for immigration in Canada, 1980–2019. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 53(4), 821–838. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0008423920000530>
- Basil, D. Z. (2019). The big picture in social marketing. In D. Z. Basil, G. Diaz-Meneses, & M. D. Basil (Eds.), *Social marketing in action: Cases from around the world* (pp. 3–21). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13020-6\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-13020-6_1)
- Batalova, J. (2022). *Top statistics on global migration and migrants*. Migration Policy Institute. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/top-statistics-global-migration-migrants>
- Carins, J. E., Rundle-Thiele, S. R., & Fidock, J. J. (2016). Seeing through a glass onion: Broadening and deepening formative research in social marketing through a mixed methods approach. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32(11-12), 1083–1102. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257x.2016.1217252>
- Chai, C. L. (2022). Picturing settlement experiences: Immigrant women's senses of comfortable and uncomfortable places in a small urban center in Canada. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 23(3), 1567–1598. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-021-00903-4>
- City of Lethbridge. (2024). A path forward: Community wellbeing and safety strategy update. <https://www.lethbridge.ca/media/jv0dlih0/attachment-3-lethbridge-cwss.pdf> (Accessed 7 February 2025).

- Costigan, C., Lehr, S., & Miao, S. (2016). Beyond economics: Broadening perspectives on immigration to Canada. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 48(1), 19–44. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ces.2016.0006>
- CREA. (2024). Alberta migration. *Canadian Real Estate Association: Alberta Real Estate Association*. <https://creastats.crea.ca/board/area-migration>
- de Jong Gierveld, J., Van der Pas, S., & Keating, N. (2015). Loneliness of older immigrant groups in Canada: Effects of ethnic-cultural background. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 30(3), 251–268. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10823-015-9265-x>
- de Vroome, T., Hooghe, M., & Marien, S. (2013). The origins of generalized and political trust among immigrant minorities and the majority population in The Netherlands. *European Sociological Review*, 29(6), 1336–1350. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jct018>
- Domegan, C., McHugh, P., Devaney, M., Duane, S., Hogan, M., Broome, B. J., Layton, R. A., Joyce, J., Mazzonetto, M., & Piwowarczyk, J. (2016). Systems-thinking social marketing: Conceptual extensions and empirical investigations. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32(11-12), 1123–1144. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257x.2016.1183697>
- Drolet, J. L., & Teixeira, C. (2022). Fostering immigrant settlement and housing in small cities: Voices of settlement practitioners and service providers in British Columbia, Canada. *The Social Science Journal*, 59(3), 485–499. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.soscij.2019.07.010>
- Fursova, J. (2023). Co-authorship with community partners as research co-creation. *Engaged Scholar Journal: Community-Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning*, 9(1), 86–93. <https://doi.org/10.15402/esj.v9i1.70805>
- Government of Canada. (2020). *Notice – supplementary information for the 2021–2023 immigration levels plan*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/notices/supplementary-immigration-levels-2021-2023.html>
- Government of Canada. (2021). *Canada welcomes the most immigrants in a single year in its history*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2021/12/canada-welcomes-the-most-immigrants-in-a-single-year-in-its-history.html>
- Hendriks, M., & Burger, M. (2020). Unsuccessful subjective well-being assimilation among immigrants: The role of faltering perceptions of the host society. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 21(6), 1985–2006. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-019-00164-0>
- Holley, P., & Jedwab, J. (2019). *Welcoming immigrants and refugees to Canada: The role of municipalities toolkit for inclusive municipalities in Canada and beyond*. Canadian Commission for UNESCO.
- Hübscher, C., Hensel-Börner, S., & Henseler, J. (2022). Social marketing and higher education: Partnering to achieve sustainable development goals. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 12(1), 76–104. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-10-2020-0214>
- Kaushik, V., & Drolet, J. (2018). Settlement and integration needs of skilled immigrants in Canada. *Social Sciences*, 7(5), 76. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci7050076>
- Kotler, P., & Lee, N. (2008). *Social marketing: Influencing behaviors for good*. Sage Publications.
- Lee, J., Hong, J., Zhou, Y., & Robles, G. (2020). The relationships between loneliness, social support, and resilience among Latinx immigrants in the United States. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 48(1), 99–109. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10615-019-00728-w>
- Lee, N. R., & Kotler, P. (2011). *Social marketing: Influencing behaviors for good*. Sage Publications.
- Lee, N. R., & Kotler, P. (2016). *Social marketing: Changing behaviors for good*. Sage Publications.
- Lethbridge Family Services. (2024). *Lethbridge family services homepage*. <https://www.lfsfamily.ca/>
- Ley, D., & Hiebert, D. (2001). Immigration policy as population policy. *Canadian Geographies/Géographies canadiennes*, 45(1), 120–125. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1541-0064.2001.tb01175.x>
- Mason, A., Salami, B., Salma, J., Yohani, S., Amin, M., Okeke-Ihejierka, P., & Ladha, T. (2021). Health information seeking among immigrant families in Western Canada. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 58(May-June), 9–14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pedn.2020.11.009>

- McKenzie-Mohr, D. (2011). *Fostering sustainable behavior: An introduction to community-based social marketing*. New Society Publishers.
- Mwarigha, M. S. (2002). *Towards a framework for local responsibility: Taking action to end the current limbo in immigrant settlement- Toronto*. Urban Planning and Development Services.
- Patel, A., Dean, J., Edge, S., Wilson, K., & Ghassemi, E. (2019). Double burden of rural migration in Canada? Considering the social determinants of health related to immigrant settlement outside the cosmopolis. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 16(5), 678. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16050678>
- Rashid, R., Gregory, D., Kazemipur, A., & Scruby, L. (2013). Immigration journey: A holistic exploration of pre- and post-migration life stories in a sample of Canadian immigrant women. *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care*, 9(4), 189–202. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijmhsc-07-2013-0018>
- Rundle-Thiele, S., Dietrich, T., & Carins, J. (2021). Cbe: A framework to guide the application of marketing to behavior change. *Social Marketing Quarterly*, 27(3), 175–194. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15245004211021643>
- Sandwick, T., Fine, M., Greene, A. C., Stoudt, B. G., Torre, M. E., & Patel, L. (2018). Promise and provocation: Humble reflections on critical participatory action research for social policy. *Urban Education*, 53(4), 473–502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085918763513>
- Shields, J., Drolet, J., & Valenzuela, K. (2016). Immigrant settlement and integration services and the role of nonprofit service providers: A cross-national perspective on trends, issues, and evidence (RCIS Working Paper No. 2016/1). Ryerson Centre for Immigration & Settlement. <https://doi.org/10.32920/ryerson.14652747>
- Simich, L., Beiser, M., Stewart, M., & Mwakarimba, E. (2005). Providing social support for immigrants and refugees in Canada: Challenges and directions. *Journal of Immigrant Health*, 7(4), 259–268. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10903-005-5123-1>
- Singer, C. R. (2019). How many immigrants come to Canada each year? *Immigration.ca*. <https://www.immigration.ca/how-many-immigrants-come-to-canada-each-year/>
- Statistics Canada. (2022a). *Discrimination before and since the pandemic*. General Social Survey—Social Identity.
- Statistics Canada. (2022b). *In the midst of high job vacancies and historically low unemployment, Canada faces record retirements from an aging labour force: Number of seniors aged 65 and older grows six times faster than children 0-14*. The Daily.
- Stewart, M., Shiza, E., Makwarimba, E., Spitzer, D., Khalema, E. N., & Nsaliwa, C. D. (2011). Challenges and barriers to services for immigrant seniors in Canada: “You are among others but you feel alone”. *International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care*, 7(1), 16–32. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17479891111176278>
- Su, C., Fox, M., Ortega-Williams, A., & McBride, C. (2018). Towards new ethics protocols for community-based research (URBAN Research Network Working PaperURBAN Research Network 2018, pp. 1–18). Retrieved from <https://urbanresearchnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/community-protocols-urban.pdf>
- Teixeira, C., & Drolet, J. L. (2024). (In this issue). Settling in a Mid-sized City in the Interior of British Columbia: A Case Study of Recent Immigrants’ Housing Experiences in Kelowna (Central Okanagan Valley). *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 56(3), 99–122. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-017-9550-9>
- Wilkes, R., & Wu, C. (2019). Immigration, discrimination, and trust: A simply complex relationship. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 4, Article 32. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2019.00032>
- Willmott, T. J., Schmidtke, D. J., & McLeod, S. (2024). Nothing about us without us: Participatory design application in social marketing. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 14(2), 137–142. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jsocm-04-2024-281>
- Wu, Z., & Penning, M. (2015). Immigration and loneliness in later life. *Ageing and Society*, 35(1), 64–95. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0144686x13000470>

**Author Biographies**

**Debra Z. Basil, PhD**, is a Professor of Marketing at the Dhillon School of Business, University of Lethbridge. She is a Board of Governors' Research Chair and co-founder of the Institute for Consumer and Social Well-being. Her research addresses issues of well-being in many forms, and she has published in areas including social marketing, volunteerism, cause-related marketing, immigration, and publishing ethics.

**Kathleen Boniol, MSc, BMgt, BA**, is based in Lethbridge, Alberta. She holds a Master of Science in Marketing, a Bachelor of Management in Marketing, and a Bachelor of Arts in General Social Science. Her interdisciplinary background informs her interest in the intersections of consumer behaviour, social systems, and strategic communication.

**Janelle Marietta** is a PhD Candidate in the Cultural, Social, and Political Thought program with a focus in marketing at the University of Lethbridge. Housed in the Dhillon School of Business, she is an active researcher in the areas of social marketing, not-for-profit marketing, immigration settlement, and community-based participatory research. She has 15+ years' experience working in leadership roles in the not-for-profit sector in Canada. Her interests and experience in the not-for-profit field include poverty reduction strategies, community impact, partnerships, and program evaluation.