

Settlement Services and Newcomer Wellbeing: Setting the Context

John Shields

Department of Politics and Public Administration

Ryerson University (X University)

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Introduction

- Current research with BMRC

Setting the Context:

1) The Canadian Model of Settlement Services (internationally a 'best practice')

- Core place of immigration to the Canadian development strategy

2) Settlement and integration as a two-way street

- ‘the warmth of the welcome’
- The multiculturalism and diversity pathways but in the historical context of a colonial white settler society

3) Nonprofit-base service provision: Advantages and challenges

- Strength in diversity of provision but coordination challenges
- Capacity and system stress

4) The value of community-based approaches to settlement and wellbeing

- Mission driven service and support

5) Nonprofits as service and voice organizations

- Represent and amplify the voice of newcomer communities
- Accountability to the community and workforce heavily drawn from the community of users

6) Settlement services – a hidden but important part of the larger Canadian social welfare system

- Important role in integration (active government involvement)
- IRCC some \$1 billion in support of settlement services outside Quebec

7) Resilience and adaptability

- For immigrants and settlement organizations ('doing more with less')

8) Shifts in immigration context and changes to settlement support systems

- Settlement footprint has expanded with increased complexity
- Increased emphasis on “the performance, outcomes, and ‘value for money’ of settlement programming (with increased stress on such factors as coordination of services)
- Shift longer term outcome-based funding (more dollars vs quality dollars)

9) COVID-19 pandemic as a disrupter and a revealer

- Significant disruptions to immigration flows, immigrant communities and settlement organizations
- Revealed stress points in the settlement system, problems of systematic racism; and more.
- Crises open up opportunities for revision and reinvention
- Service organizations shapeshifting into the future (developing hybrid models of delivery but needs to be developed in consultation with the community) (learning for each other needs to be done in cooperation and openness between service organizations not in a competitive setting).

10) Immigration as the key to post-pandemic recovery

- Recent federal election points to continuity in immigration and settlement policy (predictability for medium term)
- Going forward a need to strengthen the capacity and adaptability of the settlement service sector (social innovations and settlement system improvements)

Conclusion