que leurs familles et amis, en danger de persécution (ou de vivre davantage de persécution). En conséquence, les preuves disponibles sont souvent limitées. Avant le projet de loi C-31, les avocats disposaient d'un certain temps pour établir une relation de confiance avec le demandeur et pour apprendre à connaitre leur client, et ainsi déterminer avec eux quelles preuves il était nécessaire de se procurer. Le délai supplémentaire que le demandeur gagne en attendant de déposer sa demande une fois à l'intérieur du pays est précieux étant donné que le temps alloué à cet exercice une fois que le décompte commence est beaucoup plus court.

Les demandeurs qui n'ont pas de connaissances antérieures du système ne peuvent pas tirer profit de ce délai supplémentaire, et sont également défavorisés lorsqu'ils tentent de bénéficier des services offerts. Amina[2] nous a parlé des conséquences de ne pas connaitre quels avocats ont de l'expérience avec les dossiers de réfugiés LGBTQI. Elle s'est assez familiarisée avec le système pour avoir été en mesure de demander et de se qualifier pour de l'aide juridique. Mais lorsqu'une longue liste d'avocats lui a été présentée, elle n'avait aucune idée si l'un d'entre eux avait l'expertise nécessaire pour traiter d'un dossier de réfugié LGBTQI et, de plus, elle ne se rendait pas vraiment compte de l'importance de cette considération. Par conséquent, elle a maintenant de sérieux doutes quant à la capacité de son avocat de la représenter adéquatement et de gagner sa cause. Ne pas avoir accès à des services appropriés ou accéder à ces services dans des délais trop longs peut avoir des conséquences négatives importantes sur les résultats d'une demande, particulièrement compte tenu des délais plus courts. Même d'excellents décideurs prennent parfois de mauvaises décisions lorsqu'ils ne disposent pas de renseignements adéquats (Jordan et Morrisey, 2009).

Étant donné les difficultés qui ont été abordées dans cet article, en plus de beaucoup, beaucoup d'autres qui n'ont pas été couvertes ici, il est d'une importance vitale que des dispositions soient mises en place pour éviter que des demandeurs d'asile LGBTQI ne soient déportés et remis dans des situations où ils sont persécutés. Cependant, le projet de loi C-31 rend la mise en place de telles dispositions très difficile. Alors que la bonne nouvelle est que la section d'appel des réfugiés a finalement été instaurée par le projet de loi C-31, le temps alloué afin de compléter et déposer une demande d'appel est de seulement 15 jours, alors que par le passé les demandeurs disposaient d'un total de 45 jours. Les demandeurs provenant de pays POD, qui disposent de moins de temps, ne peuvent pas déposer de demande à la section d'appel des réfugiés.

En fait, les individus dont les demandes sont refusées ne peuvent plus se référer à l'Examen des risques avant renvoi (ERAR) et ne peuvent plus déposer de demandes sur la base de considérations d'ordre humanitaires. Les demandes ERAR sont des dispositions cruciales pour les demandeurs d'asile LGBTQI qui leur permettent de présenter de nouveaux renseignements qui n'avaient pas pu être inclus dans leurs demandes qui ont été refusées, et de telles dispositions servent à nous assurer que des individus ne vont pas se faire déporter vers un pays où leur vie est en danger et où ils risquent de se faire persécuter. Toutefois, les individus provenant de pays qui ne se trouvent pas sur la liste POD et dont la demande se fait refuser ne peuvent pas soumettre de demande ERAR pendant une année après leur audience, temps durant lequel ils seront probablement déportés, alors que les individus provenant de pays DOP dont la demande est rejetée ne peuvent pas appliquer pour le ERAR pendant une période de trois ans. Tous les individus dont la demande se fait refuser ne peuvent également pas présenter de demande pour considérations d'ordre humanitaires (CH) pendant un an, et ces demandes ne peuvent pas être déposées à partir de l'extérieur du pays.

Toutes les conséquences du projet de loi C-31 sur les réfugiés LGBTQI, en particulier dans un contexte où différentes formes d'oppressions se croisent, commencent seulement maintenant à être comprises par la communauté de chercheurs, par les décideurs politiques et par le public. Ces conséquences sont plus évidentes pour ceux qui travaillent directement avec la communauté LGBTQI, et l'équipe de recherche canadienne de *Envisioning* va continuer à diriger l'attention du public vers les expériences vécues des réfugiés LGBTQI. L'équipe de recherche canadienne, en collaboration avec des parties intéressées, va mettre des outils et des ressources à notre disposition, dont un rapport final qui va être publié durant l'hiver de 2015.

NOTES

1 Nom fictif

2 Nom fictif

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SETTLEMENT AND ADAPTATION OF AFRICAN IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN CALGARY

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Despite the growth of the African immigrant and refugee community in Calgary during the past decade, there is limited research that examines the settlement and adaptation experiences of this group of newcomers in Canada's fourth largest urban center. Through in-depth interviews with 13 members of this community, this article describes the integration experiences of these individuals and their families. A series of action steps are provided, which are designed to facilitate the integration and inclusion of African immigrants and refugees.

During the period, 2001-2006, approximately 6,035 African immigrants and refugees chose Calgary as their place of residence. There are numerous African communities in the city such as the Sudanese, Somalian, Ghanaian and Nigerian. However, there is a lack of research literature that explores the experiences of African newcomers focused on their settlement and adaptation to Calgary.

This study utilizes data drawn from the "Racism, Violence, and Health" (RVH) Project, a five-year action research project that addressed the impact of racism and violence on the health and well-being of African Canadians in three cities: Halifax, Toronto and Calgary. This paper focuses on the experiences of 13 African immigrants and refugees who chose Calgary as their place of residence. We conclude with a series of recommendations that will facilitate the integration and inclusion of African newcomers in Calgary.

The study's objectives were:

- To describe and understand the experiences of African newcomers in their settlement and adaptation process to Calgary
- To contribute to the existing knowledge base on African newcomer experiences in the Calgary context

BACKGROUND

According to the 2011 National Household Survey, immigration from Africa to Canada resulted in a slight increase. The 2006 Census data reported that approximately 6,035 African immigrants came to Calgary between 2001 and 2006 (Sta-

tistics Canada, 2013). There are numerous existing African communities such as the Sudanese, Ethiopian, Somalian, Ghanaian, and Nigerian. There are a number of community-based African organizations that provide assistance for African newcomers who are settling and adapting to living in the city.

Despite an increase in the number of African immigrants and refugees arriving to Calgary, the literature focusing on the settlement and adaptation of these newcomers is limited. In their mixed method study, Danso and Grant (2000) examined the experience of African immigrants in Calgary related to issues of housing and access, factors influencing available types of housing, and situations that Africans face in the Calgary housing market. Findings indicated that only a few Africans managed to fit well into the socio-economic structure of mainstream Calgary; the majority of participants experienced various difficulties related to housing (e.g., accessibility and affordability); and factors such as discrimination, ethnicity, fiscal constraints, and the receiving of immigrants to Canada emerged as major issues in the housing and employment sectors where respondents felt they were disadvantaged and denied equal opportunities.

Este and Tachable (2009) explored the perceptions and experiences of Sudanese refugee men as fathers in Calgary using in-depth interviews. The major findings from the study highlighted issues of underemployment, tensions with local child welfare systems, and lack of social supports. Underemployment emerged as the most salient challenge identified by the Sudanese fathers, who attributed the lack of recognition of their foreign credentials and racism as key reasons for their underemployment status.

Another recent contribution that provided some insights about African newcomer's experiences in Calgary was a study conducted by Este, Worthington, and Leech (2009). In-depth interviews were held with individuals from various African newcomer communities. The interrelated challenges of adjusting to living in Calgary as identified by participants included adapting to Canadian culture and practices; changes in gender roles, employment barriers, social isolation and lack of social support; intergenerational issues; and racism. Focus groups were held with service providers from health, social, and immigrant-serving agencies who were knowledgeable about issues related to the settlement and adaptation of African newcomers in Calgary. The major issue identified by the service providers was language barriers.

While the available literature on settlement and adaptation of African newcomers in Calgary is limited, the research completed to date highlights a number of barriers faced by these communities. This current study furthers our understanding of the realities of African immigrants and refugees in Calgary. A brief description of how the study was conducted constitutes the next part of this paper.

METHODOLOGY

This study was done using a pragmatic qualitative approach. An extensive interview guide was developed by members of the RVH research team. Thirteen in-depth face-to-face qualitative interviews with immigrants and refugees from different African communities in Calgary were conducted as part of the larger study. Employing an inductive approach, the data analysis process was facilitated using the software program Atlas.ti. A coding framework was developed, and two of the authors proceeded to do an in-depth analysis of the data.

As a result of the small sample size, the findings are not generalized to the population of African newcomers living in Calgary. However, the study's results do provide some insights regarding the settlement and adaptation experiences of a small core of this group. Thirteen individuals from different African immigrant and refugee communities in Calgary provided the data reported in this article. Participants migrated to Canada from countries including Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, and Southern Sudan (now known as the Republic of the South Sudan). Of the 13 individuals interviewed, 9 (69%) were men and 4 (31%) were women. The participants ranged in age from 23 to 54. From an educational perspective, 10 (76%) completed post-secondary education and 3 (24%) high school.

FINDINGS

Several key themes emerged from the queries that explored the settlement and adaptation of African immigrants and refugees living in Calgary. These findings provide a better understanding of the challenges that African newcomer participants encountered with regards to integration and inclusion while residing in the city of Calgary.

Racism and discrimination from institutions such as the employment sector significantly impacted the ability of African newcomers to settle and adapt in their new communities. Although many of the participants were highly skilled professionals in their home countries, obtaining a job in Calgary, especially one related to their field or area of expertise was very difficult. The lack of recognition of their foreign credentials, a practice that forced some of the participants to work at jobs where their knowledge and skill sets were not maximized, was a major challenge for participants. The following words by this male respondent clearly captured this sentiment, "I was a doctor back in my country and I am just doing any kind of survival job. I am frustrated." Another female participant attributed underemployment and unemployment to discriminatory systems, "The professional systems continue to exclude and continue to keep people in low-paying jobs and in some cases unemployed." Participants clearly expressed that accreditation was selective depending on the country in which the degree was obtained, as described by the following female:

> *For some reason a degree from Egypt is worth less than a degree from France. It might be the medical association or the pharmaceutical or the nursing association but they are all selective in who they grant immediate accreditation to and who they do not.*

The focus on the respondents' employment situation is not surprising as they viewed Canada as a place where they would have opportunities to gain meaningful employment, where their credentials and previous work experience would be recognized and valued. In addition, another major consequence of being underemployed or unemployed was the financial challenges that African newcomers and their families endured, especially living in an urban environment they believed was expensive. The economic marginalization of African immigrants and refugees in the labour market contributes to difficulties and tensions within families. This male respondent stated:

> *"You cannot provide food for your family without having to work 24 hours."*

Participants maintained that Africans often found themselves at a lower pay scale than their white counterparts. This female recounts her experience:

> *"I was underpaid. My boss felt that me being an African woman, I would be more inclined to settle for something far less than what I am worth."*

In addition to the unemployment, underemployment, and financial challenges that participants dealt with, all had migrated from collectivist cultures. African immigrant and refugee participants felt that the lack of social support by family members and the broader community was a barrier as described by the following participant:

> *"We come out of a culture of independence with strong bonds and ties, strong friendships of sharing, encouragement, and support. We come here not having that kind of network."*

For participants migrating from a society where there is a strong emphasis on the group rather than individuals, reliance on the provision of social support was critical.

Racism was another theme consistent with the majority of participants interviewed in the study. This female describes her lived experience with racism:

> *When people are constantly trying to make you feel like you're not equal to them, that you do not belong here, that you are somehow different but on a lower scale then they are over and over again at work, at school, you know that is how I have experienced racism.*

While racism was something experienced in the everyday lives of these individuals, the respondents stressed that racism was systemic and institutionalized, as illustrated by a female in the following quote, "I think systemic racism is affecting us... If we look at employment many of us have come here from different countries where educational – high educational qualification exist and many of those qualifications are not accepted here."

The education system was also identified as an institution where racism and discrimination was prevalent. This male respondent states:

> *"In some cases as a result of the racism is the school system, the self-confidence and self-esteem of some people have been totally shot and they may never come out of it."*

The following quote by a female Black mother illustrates how at school, the colour of her children's skin is used to determine whether or not someone belongs despite having been born in Canada:

> *"Sometimes the attitude from other classmates or from the teachers or maybe the principal gives them (children) they are not wanted here. For example, people will keep asking you – 'Where are you from?' And most of these kids were born here and they keep saying 'I'm from here, but they'll want to know where your parents are from. So all kinds of things give the impression that they do not belong."*

In the following section, we provide a series of recommendations designed to ease the integration and inclusion of African immigrants and refugees into the fabric of Canadian society.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION STEPS

In the effort to ensure that African immigrants and refugees are successfully integrated and are included in the fabric of Canadian society, action steps are required. The challenges associated with underemployment emerged as a salient theme by study participants. In particular, the lack of recognition of their foreign credentials, a practice that forced some of these individuals to work at jobs where their education and skills are not maximized. In commenting about underemployment Reitz, Curtis and Elrick (2014) remarked:

> *"Our findings confirm that immigrant skill underutilization not only persists in Canada but has grown; its economic significance in real terms is now more than*

twice what it was in the mid-1990's" (p. 19).

There is the need for the government of Alberta to work with various stakeholders such as licensure and regulatory bodies, and education institutions to create pathways for the recognition and acceptance of foreign credentials. Having greater opportunities to obtain employment commensurate with their education and skill sets may also reduce the daily financial pressures experienced by African newcomers.

It is imperative that organizations in all three sectors: public, private and nonprofit implement anti-racist policies and develop processes that are designed to eliminate racist practices and behaviours. It is extremely important for all employees to be recognized and valued for their contributions to their respective workplace environments. As noted by James, Este, Bernard, Thomas, Bejamin, Lloyd and Turner (2012) experiencing racism may result in detrimental impact on an individual's health psychologically, emotionally and physically, which in turn may negatively impact family dynamics.

Finally, as stressed in the literature Spitzer (2011), Simich (2008), Simich, Beiser and Malawi (2003) the provision of social support is of extreme importance in the integration process of immigrants and refugees. Service providers working with African newcomers especially during the first three to five years post-arrival, must engage in an ongoing assessment of types of social supports that are required and work with an array of actors to ensure these new "Canadians" are not isolated.

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L'ÉTABLISSEMENT ET L'ADAPTATION DES IMMIGRANTS ET DES RÉFUGIÉS AFRICAINS À CALGARY

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Malgré la croissance de la communauté d'immigrants et de réfugiés d'origine africaine à Calgary au cours de la dernière décennie, peu de recherches examinent les expériences d'établissement et d'adaptation de ce groupe de nouveaux arrivants au cœur du quatrième plus important centre urbain au Canada. À l'aide d'entrevues détaillées menées auprès de 13 membres de cette communauté, cet article décrit l'expérience d'intégration vécue par ces individus et leurs familles. Nous proposons plusieurs mesures pratiques conçues afin de faciliter l'intégration et l'intégration des immigrants et des réfugiés africains.

Entre 2001 et 2006, près de 6 035 immigrants et réfugiés d'origine africaine ont choisi de s'établir à Calgary. Plusieurs communautés africaines, dont la communauté soudanaise, éthiopienne, somalienne, ghanéenne et nigérienne, sont déjà établies dans cette ville. Cependant, il y a un manque de recherches sur les expériences d'établissement et d'adaptation vécues par les nouveaux arrivants africains à Calgary.

Cette étude se réfère à des données tirées du projet « Racism, Violence and Health » (RVH), un projet de recherche-action de cinq ans à propos des répercussions du racisme et de la violence sur la santé et le bien-être des Canadiens d'origine africaine dans trois villes : Halifax, Toronto et Calgary. Cet article porte sur les expériences de 13 immigrants et réfugiés africains qui ont choisi de s'établir à Calgary. Nous allons terminer en offrant une série de recommandations qui ont pour objectif de faciliter l'intégration et l'inclusion des nouveaux arrivants africains à Calgary.

Les objectifs de notre étude étaient :

- Décrire et comprendre les expériences des nouveaux arrivants africains lors du processus d'établissement et d'adaptation à Calgary
- Contribuer au corpus de connaissances existantes sur les expériences des nouveaux arrivants africains venus s'établir à Calgary