Newcomers and Social Inclusion in Peel Region, Ontario: Examining the Importance of Settlement Services.

by

Cassandra Thomas

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

Graduate Department of Geography
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Cassandra Thomas (2012)
Newcomers and Social Inclusion In Peel Region, Ontario: Examining the Importance of Settlement Services.

Cassandra Thomas

Master of Arts

Graduate Department of Geography
University of Toronto

2012

Abstract

This research examines settlement services and their ability to provide assistance with social inclusion for newcomer youth in the Peel Region, Ontario. Focus groups are used to examine the experiences and perceptions of settlement services and their ability to enhance social inclusion among 44 newcomer youth. The findings indicate that newcomer youth have positive perceptions of settlement services. Furthermore, there are five arenas in which settlement services are assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth. These include relational inclusion, labour market inclusion, spatial inclusion, educational inclusion, and socio-political inclusion. Additional research is required to examine the social inclusion impacts that settlement services have on newcomer youth over the life-course. Moreover, reconsidering government initiatives and policies involving funds for settlement services and community organizations is necessary.
There are a number of people I would like to thank for their contribution to this research. I want to thank my supervisor Dr. Kathi Wilson for her guidance and feedback throughout the research process. I would also like to thank Dr. Joseph Leydon for his ongoing support and motivation, which were truly appreciated over the past year at UTM. Additionally, I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Jennifer Asanin Dean for her valuable insight, patience and kind words of encouragement. I would also like to thank Effat Ghassemi, the executive director of the Newcomer Centre of Peel and all of the program leaders for their support on this project. Furthermore, I have much gratitude for the participants in this research who shared their stories with me. I wish them all the best in the future. Thank you to Dr. Alan Walks for being a part of my thesis committee and for your detailed feedback and recommendations. To Alexandra, Ashley, Kristen, Renee, Sarah and Stephanie, thank you for your ongoing friendships, encouraging words, and for keeping me sane. I want to thank Tyler for always believing in me. Finally, I would like to thank my family. To my sisters, Cara and Catrina, and my brother, Mark, I am so grateful for your laughter, hugs and support. To my parents Alexander and Heather, I would not have made it through this year without you. Thank you for your love and teaching me “hard work makes your own luck”.
# Table of Contents

**Chapter 1: Introduction**  
1.1 Background and Research Question

**Chapter 2: Literature Review**
2.1 Introduction
2.2 Social Inclusion in Relation to Exclusion
2.3 The Concept of Social Inclusion
2.4 Social Inclusion in Canada
2.5 Multiculturalism and the Social Inclusion of Immigrants in Canada
2.6 Social Inclusion and Newcomer Youth
2.7 Conclusion

**Chapter 3: Research Methods**
3.1 Introduction
3.2 Research Approach
3.3 Research Setting and Research Partnership
3.3.1 Research Partnership
3.4 Research Design
3.5 Participants and Data Collection
3.6 Data Analysis
3.7 Assessing Rigour

**Chapter 4: Results**
4.1 Introduction
4.2 Services Used within the Peel Region
4.2.1 Reasons for Attending Youth Programs
4.3 Aspects of Social Inclusion Assisted by Settlement Services
4.3.1 Relational Inclusion
4.3.1.1 Friendships
4.3.1.2 Family Relationships
4.3.2 Labour Market Inclusion
4.3.3 Spatial Inclusion
4.3.4 Educational Inclusion
4.3.5 Socio-political Inclusion
4.3.5.1 Volunteering
4.3.5.1 Decision Making
4.4 Summary

**Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusions**
5.1 Summary of Key Findings
5.2 Limitations and Areas for Further Research
5.3 Theoretical Contributions
5.3.1 Insights into the Multiculturalism Act and Settlement Services
5.4 Policy Recommendations
5.4.1 Current Government Initiatives
5.4.2 Role of Community Agencies

**REFERENCES**
List of Tables

**Table 3.1**: Socio-demographic Profile of Youth Participants..........................34
**Table 4.1**: Settlement Service Youth Programs/Workshops..............................43
List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Focus Group Questions .......................................................... 100
Appendix 2: Information Letter .................................................................. 101
Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form ............................................................ 103
Appendix 4: Socio-demographic Survey ...................................................... 105
Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Background and Research Question

Immigrants represent a growing proportion of the Canadian population, responsible for two-thirds of the total population growth between 2001 and 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2009). Data from the 2006 Census indicates that there were approximately 6.1 million individuals in Canada who were foreign-born, representing one in five (19.8%) of the national population (Statistics Canada, 2009). By 2030, immigrants will account for virtually all of Canada’s population growth (Statistics Canada, 2009; Hiebert, 2005). Moreover, newcomer populations – those living in Canada for less than five years – made up 17.9 percent of the total foreign-born population in 2006, totaling approximately 1.1 million newcomers entering Canada between January 1, 2001 and May 16, 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2009).

In addition to unprecedented population growth, Canada’s recent immigrant populations continue to diversify. Traditionally, European countries were the main source regions for immigrant populations (Statistics Canada, 2009). However, leading countries are now China and India (Statistics Canada, 2009). In total, six of the top ten countries for immigrant populations were part of Asia and the Middle East, making up 58.3 percent of newcomers in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2009; Hiebert, 2005; Fleras & Elliot, 2003). Though European descendents continue to represent a significant portion of the population (16.1%), this number was surpassed by the combined populations of immigrants from Central and South America (8.9%), and Africa (10.6%). These trends depict that immigration has been a major contributor to the diverse and multicultural country that Canada has become and will continue to be in the future.

Given that newcomers have the potential to contribute to Canadian life in various ways, it is crucial to recognize their importance to the country’s social, political, cultural, and economic growth and development. This has been achieved through Canada’s Multiculturalism Act. The Act states that it “recognizes the importance of the effective
economic and social integration of immigrants” to ensure that all immigrants become “fully participating citizens” (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988, p. 3). With this recognition, it is important to examine the effectiveness of the measures taken to achieve the Multiculturalism Act’s goal of integration.

With increasing newcomer populations, researchers have sought to understand the impacts of immigration and service needs for these populations to be successfully integrated into Canada (Berman, 2009; Omidvar and Richmond, 2003; Papillon, 2002). To date, assistance for newcomer populations includes acclimatization, housing, schooling, language assistance, labour market adaptation, and expanding social networks (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Wang & Truelove, 2003; Papillon, 2002). This diverse assistance for newcomers is integral to become fully participating citizens in Canada.

Assistance for newcomers to Canada is provided by a variety of agencies and organizations such as educational institutions, non-government organizations (NGOs), and churches (Wang & Truelove, 2003). All are funded by levels of government, with the largest source of funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (Wang & Truelove, 2003). These organizations endeavor to address assistance needs and provide newcomers with facilities for successful integration within their areas of settlement (Caidi & Allard, 2005).

Newcomers have been known to settle in three of Canada’s largest metropolitan areas; Toronto, Montréal and Vancouver (Statistics Canada, 2009). This settlement is the leading factor for growth in these regions (Statistics Canada, 2009; Wang & Truelove, 2003). However, within these cities, newcomers begin to settle in certain municipalities, leading to concentrated population growth within specific areas. For example, new research and trends suggest that immigrants are now settling outside of the traditional urban core enclaves, such as downtown areas of Toronto, and into suburban communities like Mississauga or Markham (Statistics Canada, 2009; Bauder & Sharpe, 2002; Murdie & Teixeira, 2000). These settlement changes pose challenges to the provision of services for newcomer immigrants in suburban areas, as many of the past service providers were located to serve inner city populations (Wang & Truelove, 2003). Research has started to
examine the diverse challenges newcomers face in accessing settlement services in suburban communities.

However, in regards to past research on settlement services, most of the data provided within the literature has placed its emphasis on geographic accessibility. While important, this research does little to reveal the variety of needs of newcomer populations or the ability of organizations to assist with these needs (Omidvar and Richmond, 2003; Wang and Truelove, 2003). In addition, it is limited when considering immigrant sub-populations and their specific service needs. As immigrant youth are beginning to make up a significant portion of the population in Canada – 15.1 percent of the total newcomer population in 2006 – it is important to understand the success of settlement service initiatives in assisting with their integration (Statistics Canada, 2009). Without systems in place to assist newcomer youth with integration into suburban societies, these youth may lack the resources needed to become socially included and may be at greater risk of social isolation (Hogan, 2009).

Social isolation has been linked to many issues for marginalized populations. For example, social isolation has been linked to declines in health conditions. Of concern to researchers are observations that newcomers who come to Canada with good health, as measured by higher self-reported health, reduced chronic conditions, and disability, report a decline in health to levels at or below that of the Canadian population after initial immigration (Asanin & Wilson, 2008; McDonald & Kennedy, 2004; Newbold & Danforth, 2003; Ali, 2002; Perez, 2002; Dunn & Dyck, 2000). However, social inclusion has been shown to positively affect individual’s lives materially, through such factors as income and housing, and physiologically, such as lower rates of depression (Marmot, 2003; Berkman & Kawachi, 2000; Kawachi & Kennedy, 1998). Thus, social inclusion within all levels of local life is important for combating these declining health effects for newcomer populations. This thesis does not explore aspects of health, but recognizes a link between social inclusion and the health of immigrant populations, demonstrating the importance for increasing social inclusion for newcomers in Canada.

Currently, there are limitations in the social inclusion literature pertaining to both
newcomers and settlement services. For instance, while the importance of social inclusion is widely acknowledged within the health literature, there is less information on how social inclusion may affect the health of newcomer populations. Moreover, when researching settlement services, there is little research on ways settlement services assist with social inclusion for immigrant populations, and specifically newcomer youth. Given these gaps in the literature, the focus of this study is to examine the ways settlement services assist with social inclusion for newcomer youth within the Peel Region, Ontario. Hence, this study provides a qualitative exploration of these related areas of research.

This study was guided by the following research questions: 1) what are the current experiences of newcomer youth who use settlement services? and 2) how are settlement services contributing to social inclusion?

This thesis is composed of five chapters. The second chapter sets the context for this research by outlining the literature surrounding the topic of social inclusion. Additionally through a critical review of the literature, this chapter discusses the connections between settlement services, social inclusion, and youth. This chapter concludes by highlighting gaps in the literature that this research seeks to address.

The third chapter discusses the methods used in this research. Specifically, the nature of this study is discussed and the research setting is introduced. A discussion of the use of focus groups among 44 newcomer youth is presented alongside the strategies used for data collection and analysis. Finally, the chapter discusses the steps taken to maintain rigour throughout the research process.

The research findings are presented in the fourth chapter. The chapter first introduces experiences and perceptions of participants regarding settlement services, which sets the context for understanding how settlement services are enhancing social inclusion for newcomer youth in the Peel Region. This chapter discusses the five arenas of social inclusion; relational, the labour market, spatial, educational, and socio-political, where settlement services are assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth.

The final chapter discusses the significance of the research findings. After summarizing
the key results, this chapter provides a discussion of the theoretical implications of the findings and recommendations for local-level policy pertaining to settlement service programming. This chapter also suggests areas for further research.
2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide a theoretical understanding of the relationship between social inclusion, settlement services, and newcomer youth in a Canadian context. This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section provides an overview of the background of social inclusion in relation to social exclusion and its continuous development as a separate concept in research and policy. The second section explores the diverse understandings of social inclusion within research and policy endeavors. In the third section, Canadian research examples of social inclusion are discussed, identifying major gaps within the current literature. In addition, the link between social inclusion and health of marginalized populations is discussed. The fourth section discusses social inclusion and its relationship to the Multiculturalism Act, while also identifying the small but growing body of research that explores settlement services. The final section discusses social inclusion in relation to newcomer youth and literature limitations associated with social inclusion, settlement services, and youth.

2.2 Social Inclusion in Relation to Exclusion

Social inclusion is a concept that is gaining momentum as a focus of both policy and research. In particular, there has been growing interest in its ability to explain and respond to disadvantage within societies (Daly & Silver, 2008; Levitas, Pantazis, Fahmy, Gordon, Lloyd, & Patsios 2007; Silver, 1994). Often, social exclusion is defined very concretely as the inability of individuals or populations to participate fully in societal life due to structural inequalities (Raphael, 2009). Social exclusion is also known as “the consequence of a series of problems affecting an individual or group such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low income, poor housing, high crime, ill-health and family breakdown” (Eurofound, 2012; Cameron, 2006; Social Exclusion Unit, 2001, p. 10;). While social exclusion is a concretely defined term, social inclusion is
often discussed in relation to social exclusion. Cameron (2006), for example, suggests social inclusion is defined negatively within social exclusion literature as ‘not social exclusion’ (p. 396). Furthermore, social inclusion is often referred to as the breaking down of the exclusive barriers preventing full participation in society (Caidi & Allard, 2005). This relation between inclusion and exclusion can be seen within European countries’ strategies to eliminate social exclusion. Examples of these strategies can be seen in the United Kingdom, with action plans such as the Social Exclusion Unit established in 1997 and the ‘Working Together’ plan on social inclusion from 2008 to 2010 (Guildford, 2000). An additional definition put forth by Lo, Wang, Wang, and Yuan (2007), describes social inclusion as the closing of the physical, social and economic barriers separating people. Given the interconnectedness of the terms social inclusion and social exclusion, it is important to examine social exclusion in order to fully understand social inclusion.

The concept of social exclusion first emerged in Europe in the 1970s as a response to poverty and unemployment issues (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Guildford, 2000). This was associated with post-war economic downturn and heightened ethnic and racial tensions developing within societies. These problems threatened social solidarity in European countries such as the United Kingdom and France (O’Brien & Penna, 2007; Caidi & Allard, 2005; Podnieks, 2006; Atkinson, 2000; Silver, 1994). Thus, the concept of social exclusion was used as a tool to target populations that were believed to threaten a country’s solidarity.

France was the first to use the term exclusion in policy debates (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Atkinson, 2000; Guildford, 2000). As many populations were left out of decision-making and policies were not addressing the diverse needs of citizens, social exclusion became a way to explain their marginalization (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Atkinson, 2000; Guildford, 2000). In 1974, Rene Lenoir, Secretary of the State for Social Action, argued that social exclusion was causing disconnections between individuals who lacked income-earning capacity and wider society (Guildford, 2000). He believed that this threatened an individual’s ability to possess a sense of collective identity, termed social cohesion (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Guildford, 2000). It was believed that this collective identity
would provide a starting point for all citizens to work towards the same goals and become meaningful members of French society (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Barata, 2000). Thus, the neoliberal government used the notion of social exclusion as an explanation of a key societal problem – economic marginalization of individuals and populations (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Barata, 2000). Therefore, focus was placed on economic policies, where assistance was only provided to low-income populations.

Measures to combat social exclusion in Europe were not introduced until the late 1980s, after neoliberal restructuring policies targeting the poor failed to reduce social spending and promote economic development (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Guildford, 2000). Focus on social exclusion required recognition of the different processes contributing to increased societal issues, such as racial prejudices and class structures (Podnieks, 2006; Caidi & Allard, 2005). Subsequently, governments changed their view of poor populations in control of their separation from wider society to the view that social processes were the root causes of increased separation based on income levels. In other words, due to increased economic restructuring and labour market shortages, poverty was increasing, leading to greater social exclusion of poor citizens such as ethnic minorities, recent migrants, and those with low levels of education (Podnieks, 2006; Caidi & Allard, 2005). In light of this, governments needed to develop new and innovative solutions to reduce social exclusion, and in so doing brought the term ‘social inclusion’ to the forefront of social policy discourse. It was thought that social inclusion would protect individual citizens from economic and social risks, which would support the population as a whole (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Guildford, 2000; Gore, 1995). However, European policies still focused on labour market assistance.

The 1990s saw a drastic change in social inclusion, as those studying European social policy advocated that economic assistance and employment training were not enough to promote social inclusion (Guildford, 2000). In addition, countries such as France and the United Kingdom adopted the concept of social capital, which focused on the available resources embedded in a societal structure accessed by populations to create “a sense of belonging and a level of involvement in community affairs” (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Waterston, Alperstein, & Brown, 2003; Lin, 2001). Through social capital, community
participation and development became integral for successful integration in society. Social inclusion generated the social capital needed by enhancing levels of trust required for a vibrant economy and well-functioning society (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Labonte, 2004; Lin, 2001; Barata, 2000; Guildford, 2000). Thus, social inclusion needs to include an economic dimension, but also go beyond this to include “a multitude of situations and processes which [are] often loaded with…social, cultural, and political connotations” (Rawal, 2008, p. 164-165; Aasland & Flotten, 2001). This includes supporting differences within universal programs such as schooling and health care, and enhancing civic and community participation of marginalized citizens (United Nations, 2008; Luxton, 2002). However, definitions of social inclusion were related to specific issues within societies, varying in meaning according to political and ideological ideas (Rawal, 2008; Remennick, 2003; Jackson, 1999; Silver, 1994). This led to a fluid and ever-changing definition of social inclusion between countries.

Moreover, as European countries experienced post-war trends in increased migration from Africa, South Asia, and the Caribbean, debate began to centre on the absence of other sources of equality, such as ethnicity (Bell, 2008). Anti-discrimination laws and policies were developed through a social inclusion framework to prohibit discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin within the labour market and other aspects of social life (Bell, 2008).

Given social inclusion’s ability to be used across a range of issues, the binary formulation of inclusion and exclusion simplifies the complexity of social inclusion discourse. This binary suggests that those excluded are powerless and limited to a category that is undesirable, rather than power being dispersed and having different degrees of participation (Rawal, 2008; Aasland & Flotten, 2001). Placing all social groups in two distinct categories of either included or excluded may produce assumptions that everyone within a society experiences the same types of disadvantage— even though these experiences are often highly racialized, gendered, and economically related – and that groups cannot be both included and excluded in some way within society (Salooje, 2003). Thus, the dichotomous view of social inclusion and exclusion does little to help understand actual situations and processes that populations face (Rawal, 2008; Caxaj &
Berman, 2010; Hopkins, 2004; Wridt, 2004; Jackson, 1999). Although these definitions relating to social exclusion provide a starting point for understanding social inclusion, when social inclusion is described as being mutually opposite to social exclusion, research and policy continues to passively focus on the negative problems and deficits of those labeled excluded, such as income inequality and unemployment (Silver, 2010; Cameron, 2006). These definitions do not tell us what social inclusion is, but by contrast, tell us that societies are experiencing a range of specific problems such as alienation and marginalization (Silver, 2010; Cameron, 2006). These frameworks of social inclusion ignore the unique experiences of differing populations, the impacts brought on by host societies, as well as the specific social, political, or cultural needs of minority communities (Cameron, 2006).

As many scholars suggest, social exclusion and social inclusion are distinct. While social exclusion defines those who do not experience a rising standard of living as ‘excluded’, social inclusion becomes a more active way to combat the diverse inequalities within society (Cameron, 2006; O’Hara, 2006; Caidi & Allard, 2005; Labonte, 2004; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Lødemel & Stafford, 2002; Frieler, 2000; Guildford, 2000). This highlights the importance of examining social inclusion as a separate and more empowering framework. In examining social inclusion, it has the ability to address the specific needs of a population, community, or institution (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Salooje, 2003). The following section will highlight some of the ways social inclusion has been adapted to fit various research and policy contexts.

2.3 The Concept of Social Inclusion

In some instances, social inclusion has been understood to reflect a pursuit of equality (Fairclough, 2000; Levitas, 2005; Kelly, 2010). In an attempt to reconcile social democratic values of equal and respectful treatment for all, social inclusion promotes an even distribution of wealth and the redistribution of opportunities within a population, focusing more on the tangible needs of citizens such as employment and housing (Kelly, 2010; Levitas, 2005; Fairclough, 2000). However, this limited view does little to examine
unique difficulties of populations in attaining wealth and opportunities. It does not highlight the social, political, or cultural experiences that underlie individual struggles with poverty and the labour market. These struggles are integral to understanding the specific needs of populations.

Some frameworks equate social inclusion with participation, referring to the ability of populations to partake meaningfully and actively within all social, economic, cultural, and political domains within society (Friendly & Lero, 2002; Sen, 2000). For example, much of the disability research discusses social inclusion as the ability of an individual to participate fully in society (Podnieks, 2008; Bates & Davis, 2004). Bates and Davis’ (2004) comparative study of social capital and social inclusion within learning disability services defines social inclusion as the ability of individuals living with learning disabilities to have full and fair access to activities, social roles and relationships directly alongside non-disabled citizens (Podnieks, 2008; Bates & Davis, 2004). Another example can be seen in Labonte’s (2004) and Guildford’s (2000) work, where they define social inclusion as the participation in family, community and society when discussing marginalized populations such as women and ethnic minorities. These definitions extend beyond studying the macro-levels within society to highlight the importance of micro-level arenas such as family and friendships, as this is where social inclusion is often experienced. Furthermore, these definitions are extending beyond socio-economic status as the sole indicator of social inclusion. In addition, these definitions begin to outline the specific populations that are impacted by the inability to participate.

Though participation proves to be complex and ever changing within all areas of society, it can often be confused with assimilation; conformity to mainstream culture (Brubaker, 2001). Social inclusion has moved away from the notion of a monocultural society in which those who differ must strive to be part of it (Galabuzi & Teelucksingh, 2010). Rather, social inclusion now acknowledges the need to bridge the gap of acceptance between marginalized groups and members of dominant society for successful integration (Galabuzi & Teelucksingh, 2010; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003). Some researchers believe that this is particularly true of North American urban centers that
experience large immigration (Chung Yan & Lauer, 2008 p. 230; Cheong, Edwards, Goulbourne, & Solomos, 2007; Putnam, 2001). For example, Chung Yan and Lauer (2008) explored settlement houses and their ability to help ethno-culturally diverse newcomers integrate into Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The study found that the incorporation of diverse interests, rather than solely majority interests, was critical for integrating newcomers into the larger urban community (Chung Yan & Lauer, 2008).

Therefore, as societies continue to diversify based on socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, social inclusion as a process rather than a state can be the foundation for acceptance, especially in countries such as Canada.

Social inclusion has the ability to extend beyond a state of equality and participation and focus on the processes of challenges faced, such as racism or poverty. For example, the Laidlaw Foundation describes social inclusion as an ongoing development as opposed to a fixed state that can be easily changed (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2003; Labonte, 2002). This ongoing development requires proactive investment and continuous action to bring about the conditions for inclusion, which includes recognition of diversity and validations of lived-experiences among populations (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2003; Labonte, 2002). The Laidlaw Foundation is a key private and public-interest organization that addresses social policy within the Canadian context. The organization focuses on approaches to include marginalized populations, such as women, immigrants, children, and youth within the economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions of life (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2003; Luxton, 2002; Mitchell & Shillington, 2002; Kilbride & Anisef, 2001; Frieler, 2000). The Foundation has multiple working papers that discuss social inclusion as the process of incorporating excluded populations into Canadian society by removing barriers to participation in public life. These barriers can be structural, including health care and education, as well as material, such as inadequate housing. According to the Laidlaw Foundation social inclusion consists of two parts: the first part being soft inclusion, and the other more deep-seated and structurally focused (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Salooje, 2003). Soft social inclusion refers to integrating excluded populations into existing society, while the latter seeks to transform social practices and institutions that fracture society, such as laws and
polices (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2003). This
description highlights the importance of both structural and material barriers, as well as
the macro-level processes, but describes these as separate initiatives that must be
considered in order to tackle social inclusion.

Although the Laidlaw Foundation describes a relationship between social inclusion and
integration, it is important to note distinctions between the terms. The term integration
can be described as an outcome of becoming a member of society (Li, 2003). In addition,
integration can also be described as a process, as those faced with entering a new society
come from different experiential backgrounds and may face different barriers to
integrating. Thus, discussing integration as a process allows for an understanding of the
unique challenges that individuals face and acknowledging that becoming part of host
society may differ temporally. The Laidlaw Foundation describes integration as a process
that forms one part of social inclusion; soft social inclusion (Caidi & Allard, 2005;
Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2003). However, the Foundation also states the
difference between integration and social inclusion, as social inclusion goes further to
highlight the macro-level structures that create barriers to becoming fully participating
members of society, such as citizenship rights or employment. Thus, when focusing
primarily on soft social inclusion, integration and social inclusion hold a close
relationship regarding the process of becoming part of host society.

As noted previous, social inclusion has been a central concept for the development of
social policy in Europe for over a decade, showing its effectiveness in promoting social
development, as well as its adaptability to different cultural and political traditions
(Podnieks, 2006; Guildford, 2000). While European discourse on social inclusion is
useful to understanding how social values operate to secure cohesion within the
European context, it provides little help in discussing the Canadian context. This is
largely based on policy differences towards diversity and social inclusion between the
two countries. For example, due to their focus on solidarity, conformity, and reinforcing
social bonds, France’s social inclusion policies support assimilation (Caidi & Allard,
2005; Barata, 2000). This differs from Canada’s policy approaches on diversity and
social inclusion and would not be successful at integrating marginalized populations into
Canadian society. Thus, the success of the concept of social inclusion within policy debates will always continue to depend on the extent and degree to which it successfully deals with social exclusion and the removal of the barriers that create divided societies (Salooje, 2003).

2.4 Social Inclusion in Canada

When populations are socially included within a society, many significant benefits arise. In Canada, social inclusion has been recognized as a social determinant of health and used as an aid in health promotion of marginalized groups (SDOH) (Raphael, 2009; O’Hara, 2006). In an overview of the SDOH in Canada, Raphael (2009) defines the SDOHs as economic or social conditions that shape the health of individuals and communities as a whole. These economic and social conditions in which individuals live their lives have a cumulative effect upon the probability of developing chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes (Raphael, 2009). The multi-dimensionality of social inclusion provides a way to understand how other SDOH, such as poor housing, low income, and unemployment are interrelated and negatively affect health (O’Hara, 2006).

Research on social inclusion in Canada has examined its direct effects on material circumstances, such as income and housing, as well as physiological effects such as depression and anxiety, as one’s socio-economic position within society has emotional and social consequences (Hogan, 2009; Miriam, Reutter, Makwarimba, Veenstra, Love, & Raphael, 2008; Marmot, 2003; Berkman & Kawachi, 2000; Kawachi & Kennedy, 1997). For example, Hogan (2009) examines the impacts of rental housing on social inclusion and health status of low-income elderly populations in Prince George, British Columbia, Canada. Participants explain that housing costs make it difficult to afford transportation or attend social events in the community, leading to social isolation. In addition, participants discuss that housing costs reduce their ability to buy adequate food, and obtain dental care and their overall health suffers as a result (Hogan, 2009). In addition, Miriam et al. (2008) compared the community life and self-perceived health of low and high income participants in Alberta, Canada. They found that higher-income
respondents were involved in more cultural and educational activities where they reported increased social inclusion resulting from this participation. This social inclusion increased participants’ sense of belonging, control, and happiness (Miriam et al., 2008). These examples show that social inclusion affects several different aspects of individuals’ lives, including material and physiological effects.

Thus, social inclusion is about more than just paid employment. This can be seen in studies that have documented the social gradient in populations who do not suffer economically. The Whitehall studies conducted on middle-class civil servants in Britain began in 1967 with phases of the project continuing to date. These studies highlight that the social gradient in health and mortality is influenced by social position and participation in society as opposed to income (Kosteniuk & Dickinson, 2003; Marmot, 2003).

The ability to form a sense of belonging in society, through both employment and other social means has been shown to pave a path towards greater health (Caxaj & Berman, 2010). Building these social relationships with others in society reduces stress and contributes to positive physical health (Simich, Beiser, Stewart & Mwakarimba, 2005). Those who are excluded socially, economically, culturally, and politically face health impacts such as a greater risk for substance abuse, delinquency, and depression, which are all damaging to overall individual health (Anisef & Killbride, 2010; Zwi & Alvarez-Castillo, 2003; Baum, 1998).

Thus, creating socially-inclusive societies where people feel equal and able to participate in formal and informal activities helps to build meaning in their lives, network with others, access resources, improve their own capacities, and has been found to improve individual health and population health as described above (Correa-Velez, Gifford & Barnett, 2010). This shows the importance of social inclusion within research.

With social inclusion affecting population health, Health Canada has identified four groups that are at risk of experiencing social exclusion: women, Aboriginal Peoples, racialized groups, and new immigrants (Galabuzi, 2009; CIHR, 2002). Much research
has documented the economic inclusion of these at-risk groups but other challenges, such as obtaining access to public services or developing a social network, are rarely examined in studies of social inclusion (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Papillon, 2002). As immigrant populations continue to increase within Canada, more research is needed on the multiple challenges immigrants face (Statistics Canada, 2009; Papillon, 2002). This includes examinations of the cultural, social, and political levels that affect social inclusion within Canadian society.

2.5 Multiculturalism and the Social Inclusion of Immigrants in Canada

Immigration policies in Canada are largely concerned with how to regulate the incoming process of migrants (Chung Yan & Lauer, 2008). Within Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada admits a diverse socio-economic group of immigrants – from refugees, to family class, to business immigrants – illustrating differences in pre- and post- migration experiences, creating a diverse social and economic population (Hiebert, 2000). Due to the diverse nature of Canada’s population, the government has implemented Canada’s Multiculturalism Act to promote integration of diverse populations into Canadian society.

The first phase of multiculturalism began in the 1970s in response to issues of language between English and French speaking Canadians (Salooje, 2003). In this phase, bilingualism and biculturalism dominated discussions, as the state encouraged groups to preserve their distinct language and culture (Salooje, 2003). However, these initiatives encouraged separation within society along lines of language and culture. As a result, when immigrants from non-traditional countries arrived in Canada, segregation into separate ethno-cultural communities developed (Salooje, 2003). Thus, the idea of multiculturalism first brought forth by Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau reached its limit, as it was incapable of responding to the political dimensions of diversity (Salooje, 2003). Multiculturalism policies needed to be expanded to address new issues faced by diverse populations.
By 1987, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Multiculturalism saw that the core issues that preoccupied visible minority communities, such as issues of power, equality, participation, removal of discriminatory barriers, institutional accommodation, and anti-racism were not being addressed by policy initiatives (Salooje, 2003). New legislation of multiculturalism was needed to discuss these issues for Canada’s increasing population of immigrants. In 1988, The Multiculturalism Act was given a protected place in the Canadian Constitution, giving value to marginalized groups (Salooje, 2003). With the passage of the legislation, multiculturalism came to occupy a position of considerable significance in the debate on Canada’s national identity (Salooje, 2003).

The success of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in promoting integration is an issue of debate, as many groups suggest that the act promotes individual rights which detract from building a common ground and has led to increased fragmentation within Canada (Salooje, 2003; Kymlicka & Norman, 2000; Bibby, 1999). However, the Act provides a way for the Federal government to balance a number of critical issues, such as diversity and social cohesion, minority and majority rights, cultural identity and citizenship, and inclusion and equality of all cultural groups within Canada (Salooje, 2003).

Many researchers acknowledge that the Multiculturalism Act is itself a policy on social inclusion for newcomer populations (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Salooje, 2003). For example, Caidi and Allard (2005) describe that Canada’s national agenda of multiculturalism informs the mobilization of immigrant social inclusion along the lines of diversity and tolerance. The act states a socially inclusive society should “promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the eliminations of any barrier to that participation” (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988, p. 3; Caidi & Allard, 2005, p. 311). Thus, the Canadian Government’s action towards immigrant groups is to create a society where barriers to exclusion are broken down and newcomers are able to integrate successfully.

Literature that addresses the experiences of recent immigrants and the challenges they face in integrating into Canadian life is extensive. Many challenge the assumptions of
equal access to opportunity, which has been defined in policies such as the Multiculturalism Act or the Employment Equity Act. Immigrant populations still deal with racism, discrimination, and lack access to opportunities and resources such as housing, information, and paid employment (Reitz, Banarjee, Phan, & Thompson, 2009; Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Ornstein, 2000). For example, Teelucksingh and Galabuzi (2005) examined racial discrimination in the Canadian labour market, comparing the work force participation of visible minority groups in various occupations. The study shows that although visible minority populations are growing faster than the Canadian born population, these groups do not advance proportionately in the labour market and continue to have higher rates of unemployment and income gaps (Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005). Thus, immigrants still deal with issues that prevent full integration within society.

However, much of this research focuses on economic integration (Boyd, 2002; Preston & Giles, 1995; Pendakur & Pendakur, 1998; Picot & Hou, 2003, Ornstein, 2000, 2006; Frenette & Morissette, 2003; Teelucksingh & Galabuzi, 2005; Reitz & Banerjee, 2005; Galabuzi & Teelucksingh, 2010). For example, using census data from 2001, Picot and Hou (2003) found that the rise of low-income rates in the cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver largely affected immigrant populations. In addition, Reitz and Banerjee (2007) describe the overall economic situation of visible minorities in Canada, including employment earnings with a trend towards lower earnings for recent immigrants. Their review displays that there is a clear racial dimension of economic inequality in Canada.

Although these studies are integral to understanding the economic experiences of immigrants, they are limited in explaining the social, cultural, and political experience of integration and the policies that address such issues. As previously stated, it is important to look at these areas as they assist in examining the unique experiences of differing populations as well as the specific needs that often underlie the difficulties faced with poverty and access to the labour market.

More recently, research has begun to study these lesser-known areas that affect social inclusion. For example, Ozcurumez’s (2009) study examines political participation of
Turkish immigrants living in Canada. The study states that when Turkish immigrants increase their political participation within their own cultural organizations and associations, this increases their likelihood to be included within Canadian organizational spheres (Ozcurumez, 2009). In addition, the research highlights the importance of social, political, and cultural inclusion within Canadian society for this marginalized population. Caidi and Allard’s (2005) discuss the success of information service providers, and more specifically libraries, in providing newcomers with information to become socially included in Canada. The authors suggest that a lack of access to information creates barriers that prohibit newcomers from fully participating in education, work, and everyday life – thus becoming socially excluded. Without information, Caidi and Allard (2005) assert that newcomers will fail to develop the capacity to fully settle, to take up opportunities, and participate actively in society (Caidi & Allard, 2005). This study highlights the importance of programs, policies, and funding priorities in providing information that enables newcomers to integrate socially, culturally, politically, and economically in to Canada.

In addition, Papillon (2002) discusses the Canadian Federal Government’s role in sustaining diversity of communities through the social inclusion of immigrants. He explains that when newcomers contribute not only to the economic life of a location, but also to the social and cultural life, an environment highly conducive to creativity and innovation is produced. He refers to the importance of health promotion, social networks, institutions at the local level, and agrees that inclusion is a two-way process and that recognition of difference is integral to inclusion.

As research begins to extend from a focus on economic inclusion, new strategies for immigrant integration in Canada are beginning to develop. These strategies involve supporting newcomer integration in all domains of social life. Settlement services are one way in which governments are supporting newcomer integration. The main goal of settlement services is to help immigrants integrate into Canadian society by providing programs such as orientation, translation, interpretation, referral to community resources, provision of general information, basic language training, employment-related services, and other accreditation and qualifications in order to be competitive within society.
(Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012a; Herbert, 2000; Peel Region, 2011). These programs are provided to new immigrants by a variety of agencies and organizations within Canada. Some settlement programs are provided by government agencies, but almost all are provided by nonprofit-agencies. Citizenship and Immigration Canada is the largest source of funding for these non-profit organizations. Some organizations serve all cultural and ethnic backgrounds, whereas others are ethno-specific, catering to the needs of specific groups entering Canada.

Local settlement organizations provide a range of resettlement advice and services that are key contributors to successful removal of exclusive barriers, aiming at greater integration of newcomers within the community (Hopkins, 2006). Research suggests that community outreach by settlement organizations diminishes social exclusion from wider society and sense of belonging to the larger community is enhanced (Caxaj & Berman, 2010, p. 21; Wridt, 2004). In addition to providing structured education and assistance in employment and language, settlement services also provide social interaction (Cajax & Berman, 2010). Embedded in settlement services are social resources that are important for network building which newcomers may lack (Chung Yan & Lauer, 2008; McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001). Simich et al.’s (2005), research with 137 immigrant service providers and policy makers in Toronto, Vancouver, and Edmonton, discussed the benefits of social supports for newcomers. Participants believed that social supports help newcomers by fostering a sense of empowerment, community, social integration, assist with network building, and allow members to share experiences and problems (Simich et al., 2005). However, this study does little to evaluate existing settlement services or discuss differing experiences and perceptions of diverse immigrant populations in Canada. Furthermore, Caxaj and Berman (2010) call for “an evaluation of the quality and accessibility of services” and “an evaluation of measures in place to promote safe and inviting environments for full participation” (p. 22). In relation to this, there is a lack of research on the extent to which settlement services contribute to social inclusion for different immigrant populations in Canada (Chung Yan & Lauer, 2008). For example, there is limited research discussing differing needs of newcomer youth between
the ages of 13 and 24. As this population of newcomers grew to sixteen percent in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2009), the need to study this newcomer subpopulation has increased.

2.6 Social Inclusion and Newcomer Youth

Over the past 20 years, youth studies in general appear to maintain several themes, including identity, belonging, education, health, and justice. ‘Youth’ is typically described as a biographical period within the life-course (ex. adolescent years) as opposed to a fixed definition (8-18 years of age) (McLeod, 2010; Kelly, 2010).

Within health research, discussions of youth have centered on social relationships, local inequalities, and material or political circumstances that shape youth’s pathways towards health (Caxaj & Berman, 2010; Backett-Milburn, Cunningham-Burley, & Davis, 2003). A Canadian study of these influences can be seen in Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC), a cross-national survey aimed at enhancing understanding of youth health (Salehi. 2010). In their analysis of neighbourhood social capital, using findings from HBSC, Elgar, Trites, and Boyce (2010) discuss that youth who grow up in disadvantaged conditions, both materially and structurally, depict rising mental health problems. These rising mental health problems are formed as youth have fewer protective factors that alleviate psychological difficulties such as stress (Elgar et al., 2010). The study focuses on specific circumstances and environmental conditions which shape and influence youth development (Elgar et al., 2010). These circumstances and environmental conditions not only affect those youth native to Canada, but also those who have immigrated. As discussed previously, social inclusion has the ability to mitigate these negative effects on health (Raphael, 2009; O’Hara, 2006). As these youth are subjected to new social and economic environments in Canada, this shows the need to understand how social inclusion is being enhanced for this subpopulation.

Journeying to a host country can have very different experiences for youth compared to their adult counterparts (Salehi, 2010). Uprooting and displacement create social boundaries and profound experiences of disconnections in relationships (Cajax & Berman, 2010). Thus, newcomer youth may face isolation as they are without the social
supports they had in their homeland and are left without the ties, such as family and friendships that assist with social inclusion (Simich et al., 2005). These experiences affect newcomer youth social inclusion when they begin their lives and continue on through the life-course within the host country (Salehi, 2010). Fostering environments of social inclusion may provide experiences for successful integration into Canada for youth populations.

Research has begun to explore social inclusion and newcomer youth with a particular focus on challenges faced, such as discrimination and belonging, as well as service needs, such as information and emotional support programs. Quirke (2011) examines the experiences of settlement and information practices among Afghan newcomers in Toronto, Canada. Seven youth describe the challenges they face when seeking information as newcomers. This study on social inclusion of newcomers identifies challenges with integration and settlement, enhancing an understanding of services that are lacking for newcomer youth. Caxaj and Berman (2010) explored newcomer youths’ gendered, racialized, and class-based experiences of inclusion and exclusion that ultimately influenced their sense of belonging in their country of resettlement. Participants explained that their experiences of belonging are influenced by exclusion and inclusion within relationships. These relationships were then related to racial, gendered, and economic realities faced by those who participated in the study (Caxaj & Berman, 2010). Correa-Velez et al. (2010) studied the psychosocial factors associated with wellbeing among newcomer youth in Australia as they attempted to identify the psychosocial factors that assisted 97 refugee youth to make a ‘good start’ in their new society. Their findings suggest that experiences of social inclusion have a significant impact on wellbeing over the first three years of settlement and that factors that best predict wellbeing are those that promote a sense of belonging in Australian society (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). These studies show the importance of studying social inclusion for newcomer youth, as their experiences clearly describe difficulties faced in integration and the ability of social inclusion to assist with the process.

Although these studies are beginning to examine newcomer youth and social inclusion, economic integration of adults continues to dominate the current focus of immigrant
research (Anisef & Killbride, 2003). In addition, current research does little to examine how settlement services are assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth. This shows a void within research to consider the needs of newcomer youth with regards to social inclusion (Berman, 2009; Khanlou & Crawford, 2006). Furthermore, these studies do not cover a multi-dimensional view of social inclusion for newcomer youth. In using a multi-dimensional examination, research can understand whether newcomer youth are fully included within society (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Salooje, 2003). Thus, research needs to begin to examine the social, cultural, political, and economic areas that contribute to social inclusion of newcomer youth, as this will provide a multi-dimensional examination of social inclusion.

2.7 Conclusion

While the literature surrounding the topic of social inclusion is broad, only those theories and trends most relevant to understanding its significance toward newcomer populations, specifically newcomer youth, were discussed in this review. In the field overall, social inclusion is correlated with positive health (i.e., better physical wellbeing, increased happiness, and self-esteem) and exclusion is related to poor health (i.e. increased depression, substance abuse, and delinquency), showing the importance of social inclusion for marginalized populations.

Within this body of research, the lack of focus on youth in general is quite apparent. It is further limited when considering immigrant youth in particular, considering their continuous population growth in Canada. The exclusion of this rapidly growing group highlights a significant gap in knowledge relating to both service provision and the role of settlement services in assisting newcomer youth to become socially included in Canada.

With social inclusion being outlined as a policy of the Federal Government, and settlement services being a branch of the Government focusing on assisting with newcomer integration, the objectives of this qualitative study are to explore how settlement services are assisting newcomer youth in becoming socially included in the
Peel Region, Ontario, Canada. It will highlight the economic, as well as social, cultural, and political experiences of integrating into Canadian society, adding to the literature on the experiences of being uprooted and displaced, and examining the extent to which settlement services are assisting with the integration process for newcomer youth.
Chapter 3  
Research Methods

3.1 Introduction

This research utilizes focus group interviews to explore the role of settlement services in eliminating barriers to social inclusion for newcomer youth within the Peel Region, Ontario, Canada. As there is relatively little research focusing on immigrant youth in Canada, and virtually no literature considering the role of settlement services in shaping social inclusion among immigrant populations, this study was an exploratory one.

3.2 Research Approach

In light of the absence of literature on settlement services, newcomer youth, and social inclusion, this exploratory research adopts the definition of social inclusion identified by the Laidlaw Foundation. Specifically, this research will focus on one part of the process outlined, known as soft social inclusion; the process of integrating excluded populations into existing society (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2003). Soft social inclusion is used to examine settlement services and their abilities to eliminate barriers to social exclusion for youth in the Peel Region, Ontario.

In regards to an analytical framework examining the multi-dimensionality of social inclusion, Fangen (2010) provides a study examining five aspects of social exclusion and social inclusion. Fangen’s (2010) study is important to understanding the many processes that contribute to social inclusion. The study highlights that all social inclusion processes should be analyzed together in order to better understand how social inclusion affects immigrant youth.

Within the study, the first social arena discusses educational exclusion, and includes grades, length of education, and drop-out rates, as well as the exclusive factors that affect these three categories. The second arena discusses labour market exclusion, which examines the barriers to accessing employment, such as experience, networks,
qualifications, and self-confidence. The third arena, spatial exclusion, focuses on local community environment and the barriers that may produce social inclusion within broader society. This includes unsatisfactory community facilities, poor public transportation and concentrations of similar populations. The fourth arena is relational exclusion, which discusses social interaction with peer groups and language communication. The final arena discusses socio-political exclusion. Socio-political exclusion examined structural factors that restricted immigrants to integrate, such as politics of the nation-state, citizenship, and the welfare system.

The study provides a better way to understand immigrant youth experiences with social inclusion, providing an analysis beyond the borders of education and the labour market (Fangen, 2010). This research touches upon all dimensions of social inclusion for newcomer youth, which provides a clear investigation of whether newcomer youth are socially included.

Within this research, Fangen’s (2010) analytical framework that identifies five social arenas (educational, labour market, spatial, relational, and socio-political) where barriers to social inclusion can occur will be adopted. First, relational inclusion will be presented through a discussion of the role of settlement services in assisting newcomer youth in creating new friendships and sustaining positive relationships with families. Second, labour market inclusion will examine how settlement services are assisting with employment skills and networking in order to assist with labour market inclusion. Spatial inclusion will examine newcomer youth experiences of creating social ties with their local neighbourhood as well as wider society through settlement services. Educational exclusion will examine the availability of homework assistance and continuing educational workshops at settlement services. Finally, socio-political inclusion will examine newcomer youth experiences with volunteering and decision-making through settlement services.
3.3 Research Setting and Research Partnership

This research was conducted in the cities of Mississauga and Brampton located in the Region of Peel, Ontario, Canada. The Peel Region is located twenty kilometers west of Toronto and is one of twenty-five municipalities that constitute the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) (Mississauga, 2012). The Region of Peel has the second largest population in Ontario, consisting of two cities, Mississauga and Brampton, and the town of Caledon. Mississauga occupies the southernmost portion of the Peel Region, holding a population of 713,443. Brampton, a smaller city with a population of 523,911, lies at the center of the Peel Region municipality. The largest in area, the town of Caledon is home to a rural population close to 59,400 (Peel Region, 2011).

With a population of close to 1,297,000, this region holds the youngest residents in the GTA, with the median age being 36.9 years and 19.7 percent of the population aged 0 to 14 (Peel Region, 2011). Furthermore, the Peel Region has the lowest proportion of seniors in all of the GTA, representing 10.5 percent of the population (Peel Region, 2011).

The Peel Region has become one of the largest reception centers for immigrants to Canada with immigrants accounting for 49 percent of the population in 2006 (Wayland, 2006, Statistics Canada, 2009). Mississauga holds the largest population of immigrants, at 52 percent, while Brampton holds 48 percent and Caledon holds 21 percent (Statistics Canada, 2009). In addition, the growth of the recent immigrant population in the Peel Region, those that arrived in Canada during the five years preceding the 2006 census, outpaced the growth rate of host country population (Statistics Canada, 2009). With the continuous increase of recent immigrants to the Peel Region, these high rates result in a growing need for social and economic resources to enhance their experience of social inclusion in the Peel Region (Di Base & Bauder, 2005; Kazemipur & Halli, 2000). Thus, the Peel Region is an important area for researching newcomers and their access to settlement resources.
3.3.1 Research Partnership

This research was part of a larger multi-phased research project, which focused on assessing the role of settlement services within the Peel Region. Phase One of this multi-phase research project is focused on the challenges settlement service organizations face in organizing and delivering settlement services to newcomers in the Region. The goal of Phase 2 is to assess newcomer experiences and perceptions of settlement services. Phase 2 is broken into two separate initiatives, one focused on assessing adult newcomers and the other with newcomer youth, the latter of which form the basis of this thesis. In examining the settlement experiences of newcomer youth, the research was guided by two research questions: 1) what are the current experiences of newcomer youth who use the settlement services? and 2) how are settlement services contributing to social inclusion?

Research was conducted with a community partner, the Newcomer Centre of Peel (NCP). Beginning two decades ago, NCP started as an English language provider and childcare service. With their human service foundation, their programs have expanded to provide diverse settlement and integration services, including education, housing, document translation, and training in Canadian business culture. Along with acquiring vital English language skills, life skills such as banking and application assistance are offered in many languages by settlement counselors in order to effectively assist their clients (Newcomer Centre of Peel, 2011). As organizations such as the NCP continue to expand their client base, the importance of evaluating programs and services offered by such organizations is necessary to understand how they are effectively assisting with social inclusion, a goal outlined within the Multiculturalism Act.

As part of the research, NCP served the role as a gatekeeper providing access to newcomer populations in the Peel Region. A gatekeeper is an individual or group who provides an outside source with contact to organizations or populations that may be difficult to access (Sheppard, MacDonald & Welbourne, 2007; Rubin & Babbie, 2001). This role is normally ascribed to professionals or service providers that have an ongoing connection within an organization or population (Sheppard, MacDonald & Welbourne,
NCP acted as a gatekeeper to assist with contacting additional settlement services for the study, as they were closely connected with numerous other settlement organizations in the cities of Mississauga and Brampton.

3.4 Research Design

Qualitative research has become widely used within the social sciences since the 1970s (Limb & Dwyer, 2001) as it seeks to contribute to a better understanding of social realities and draw attention to the processes, patterns and structural features surrounding populations (Flick, van Kardorff & Steinke, 2004). Qualitative research has been a preferred method among research with marginalized populations, such as immigrants (Winchester, 2005; Letherby, 2003; Parr, 2001; Katz, 1994). In case of this research, qualitative methods were purposefully selected because they offer important insight into personal, in-depth, and detailed experiences and perceptions of newcomer youth regarding settlement services and their ability to assist with social inclusion. This method allows this marginalized group to have their voices heard and lived-experiences shared (Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Patton, 2002).

For the purpose of this research, focus group interviews were selected as the most effective means of understanding the link between settlement services and their assistance with social inclusion for newcomer youth. Focus groups are best described as planned discussions designed to obtain perceptions on an area of interest in a safe environment (Parker and Tritter, 2006; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000; Kitzinger 1995). Focus groups generally emphasize participation, supportive environments, discussion, and interaction between all members within the group (Krueger & Casey, 2009). In regards to newcomer youth populations being studied in this research, focus groups have proved useful in accessing hard-to-reach groups such as ethnic minorities (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Barbour, 2005; Wilkins Winslow, Honein & Elzubeir, 2002; Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999). In addition, focus groups involve selecting participants that have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic being discussed, such as being a newcomer to Canada, as people are more likely to feel comfortable talking with those that are similar to them, either in characteristic ways or experiences (Fossey,
Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002). For example, in Gany, Herrera, Avallone & Changrani’s (2006) research conducted with five immigrant communities in New York City, focus groups created feelings of comfort to share their attitudes and beliefs about health, cancer, screening, and treatment.

In the context of this research, focus groups provided a larger amount of participants within the time period of data collection than in-depth interviews would have provided, but still offered an intimate and secure space to allow for a thorough discussion of settlement services (Morgan, 1996; Asanin & Wilson, 2008). In addition, the focus groups offered a greater diversity of individuals to examine perceptions of experiences and opinions on settlement services, which is beneficial when studying areas that consist of diverse cultural and ethnic populations, such as the Peel Region (Limb & Dwyer, 2001; Esterberg, 2002; Asanin & Wilson, 2008).

For the interview format, a semi-structured design was chosen. This design combines formal, structural interview techniques with less formal, unstructured techniques (Esterberg, 2002; DeVault, 1999). In the semi-structured interview, a pre-set list of questions and topics were chosen before the facilitation of the focus groups, to ensure consistency in questions being asked across all focus groups (Neumark-Sztainer and Perry, 1999). However, the order in which the topics were discussed within focus groups was dependent on the flow of the discussion between the participants (Esterberg, 2002). The benefits of using a semi-structured interview format were that it allowed for a flexible, open exchange between all members within the focus group, enhancing discussions on complex and private topics that arose (i.e., parental controls and belonging) (Neumark-Sztainer & Perry, 1999; Dunn, 2005). In addition, prompts were used for each question in order to open up the discussion into broader topics.

For the focus group interview design, the interview questions were divided into constructs (See Appendix). That is, subjective ideas or theories that were based on the research questions described above. The first question discussed the use of services within the Peel Region. Discussion in this area focused on service attendance, including frequency and duration with the programs, and awareness of services. The second round
of questions addressed the experiences of newcomer youth who attended settlement services with a specific focus on likes, dislikes, and suggestions for improvement. Finally, the interview addresses the effectiveness of settlement services in improving social inclusion in areas such as social connections, employment experiences, and belonging within Canada.

3.5 Participants and Data Collection

Data was collected from March to June, 2012, through four focus groups of newcomer youth in the cities of Mississauga and Brampton. In order to recruit participants for the focus groups, a purposeful sampling strategy was used. With purposeful sampling, I was able to select participants who had knowledge concerning being a newcomer within the Peel Region and accessing settlement services in the area.

Conducting research in partnership with existing organizations affiliated with desired participants is a strategy that aids in overcoming recruitment difficulties (Macdougall and Fudge, 2001; Esterberg, 2002; Valentine, 2005). These difficulties can arise in cases where there is no existing relationship between researcher and participants, when higher numbers of participants are needed for data collection, and when topic sensitivity may be evident (Macdougall and Fudge, 2001). All of these difficulties would have hindered data collection for this research, given that I had no prior communication with newcomer youth in the Peel Region and the time frame for this research hindered my ability to form close relationships with participants.

Using existing contacts provided by NCP during Phase 1, as well as past research collaborations between the University of Toronto Mississauga and settlement services in the area, these contacts were utilized in order to gain access to potential settlement service organizations for focus group facilitation. After initial contact with each settlement service, enquiries were made for gatekeepers within each organization.

Program leaders were chosen as gatekeepers to assist with newcomer youth sampling and recruitment. The program leaders were employed by the various organizations to focus
primarily on youth settlement programs. All program leaders were post-secondary educated individuals who specialized in understanding and working with youth. They were of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, an important requirement set out by the organizations in order to provide appropriate language communication and guidance for the diversity of youth that attended settlement programs.

Program leaders provided insight into organizing a diverse study group in terms of background and age. In addition, they had the ability to form close ties with the youth in order to enhance interest in the study. To reduce group and individual-level vulnerability of the participants, settlement organizations assisted in contacting potential participants and organizing the focus groups, as there was a higher likelihood for an established rapport with participants and access to a comfortable, on-site space that could be used during the focus group.

In addition to recruitment, program leaders suggested that the focus groups be held within the youth programs during afterschool hours, as the large group of recruited participants was already comfortable with meeting in this environment at that time. This assisted facilitation of the focus groups, as the inclusion of friends and acquaintances provided a naturalistic context that enhanced group interaction (Wilkins Winslow et al., 2000; Wilson, 1997; Morgan, 1996).

The use of posters designed to attract this age cohort was an aid offered to gatekeepers in the recruitment process and were placed within settlement services a week prior to focus group sessions. This allowed sufficient time for those interested in partaking in the study to organize their availability. Gatekeepers were given several dates for possible focus group implementation. These potential dates were given two weeks in advance in order to increase the likelihood of obtaining a date that would work for participants within the data collection timeline. Once a date was chosen, this two-week window offered sufficient time for these gatekeepers to advertise and recruit participants. In the end, a total of 44 participants were recruited through the assistance of gatekeepers at 4 sites.
The focus group sessions were organized for newcomer youth that had an affiliation to one or more community-based settlement services and had used, or were presently using, services offered. In addition, these youth were identified and recruited from the participating settlement and newcomer centres in the Region of Peel.

To participate in the research, newcomer youth had to be between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four and had to have been settled in Canada for no more than 3 years. Limiting the number of years spent within Canada did not limit my ability to recruit participants, as settlement services used in the recruitment phase provided services to those that had been in the country for less than three years, based on funding guidelines for programs. The age cohort used was based in accordance with Statistics Canada’s defined age category of youth (15-24 years of age) (Statistics Canada, 2009; UNESCO, 2011). However, our definition of youth was adjusted to sixteen, as opposed to fifteen, in accordance with ethical guidelines regarding parental consent at the University of Toronto. Age became an obstacle within research collection, as I had to instruct youth under the age of sixteen that I was unable to interview them at the present time, as parental consent was needed.

A total of 4 focus groups were held, 3 in Mississauga and 1 in Brampton. Focus groups lasted between 45 and 75 minutes. A group-administered questionnaire was used at the end of each session to inquire about demographic characteristics and questions such as activities that group participants were engaged in through family, friends, or academics. A majority of the participants were females, between the ages of 16-17, and were predominantly from India, although there were sixteen countries of origin in total. Most of the participants arrived under the Family or Sponsorship Program and many had been living in Canada for 3-5 years. A full overview of the participants is available in Table 3.1.
Table 3.1: Socio-demographic Profile of Youth Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent of Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Birth</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How long have you lived in Canada</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-6 months</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-12 months</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What program did you arrive under?</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic/Skilled Worker program</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Sponsorship Program</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>72.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Residency (Student Visa, Temporary Worker Program)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the focus groups, I attempted to build rapport with the participants by introducing myself to the group, explaining my role as a graduate student, and my personal interests that coincide with the study. Youth were informed of the study in general terms, as well as the importance of signed consent, audio-recording, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time within the focus groups. All participants were given a letter of information on UTM geography department letterhead and a form indicating their willingness to participate (See Appendix). In addition, they were notified of the importance of confidentiality within the study, as no information would be released that would disclose their personal identity, and that audiotapes and transcripts would only be used by myself, and would be stored in a secure, locked cabinet. However, I also highlighted that my ability to ensure confidentiality was limited, as repetition of information outside of the group may occur by other members of the focus group.

For focus group implementation, a facilitator was used. The facilitator was a post-doctoral researcher in the Department of Geography at the University of Toronto Mississauga with extensive experience conducting research with newcomers in the Peel Region. As an ice-breaker, the facilitator initially asked members of the group to go around the circle and introduce themselves, including their age, the country that they migrated from, and how they heard about the settlement program from which they were recruited. This technique was used in order to make the group feel acquainted and comfortable with each other, as well as to encourage speaking in front of the group, so as to prepare them for discussing interview questions. However, as many of the participants had already known each other, these icebreakers were a better resource for the researchers to acquaint themselves with the focus group participants so that they were comfortable in answering the questions asked.

During the focus groups, program leaders were present. Their presence may have impacted participants’ responses, as participants may have felt pressure to depict services in a positive light or worried about repercussions stemming from their responses. However, given that youth participants described their close relationship with program leaders, I do not believe that this was the case. The presence of program leaders during the focus groups was crucial for data collection, as language barriers were present
between participants, the facilitator and myself. Thus, program leaders assisted newcomer youth with understanding the interview questions.

Throughout the focus groups, I was able to input my thoughts into the conversations as they were developing. I believe that because I was willing to share my own experiences, they felt comfortable enough to share their honest experiences of migrating to Canada and their perceptions of services. Note taking was ongoing throughout the data collection process. I recorded my thoughts in a journal, as well as interesting topics that emerged and any body language that may be missed through audio-recordings. This journal allowed me to look back after the focus groups and add details to the transcripts, as well as for me to critically reflect on the discussion and be conscious of my positionality through the data collection.

In research involving multiple participants, it is common for data saturation to occur. I believe I reached data saturation, as no new information was being attained within focus groups (MacDougall and Fudge, 2001). If new information had continued to emerge within discussions, I would have continued to arrange an increased number of focus groups through a snowballing effect, with contact information or site inquiries attained through discussions with gatekeepers, or through my own site observations and recruitment phases.

All participants were given an honorarium for their time and openness in sharing experiences as newcomer youth in the Region of Peel. A gift card totaling fifteen dollars was given to each participant and pizza was provided at the end of the session.

3.6 Data Analysis

Audio recordings of the focus groups were transcribed verbatim with the use of an audio system and my personal laptop. Once the transcripts of the interviews were completed, each interview was listened to an additional time in order to familiarize myself once again with the data that I had previously transcribed (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The focus group transcripts were coded using NVivo 7, a computer-assisted qualitative data
analysis software (CAQDAS) (Peace & van Hoven, 2005). CAQDAS have become a widely-used tool in the analyses of qualitative data because of the ease of use of the programs and ability to organize and code large data sets (Peace & van Hoven, 2005).

Open coding was the primary analysis done within all of the transcripts. Open coding involved identifying relevant themes and concepts in the data, and dividing the data into categories or nodes, a term describing the NVivo software (Peace & van Hoven, 2005). Examples of categories or nodes used in this research include ‘friendships’, where any perceptions or experiences from settlement services that youth noted as assisting with friendships were placed and ‘skills’, which discussed experiences and perceptions where youth learned new practices or knowledge from settlement services. This aided in extracting the frequency and distribution of certain themes, before looking at the meaning of the material.

After the initial open coding analysis was done, a more analytic analysis was developed. In particular, axial coding, which involves the creation of sub-categories for relevant themes that have emerged, taking into account the extensiveness, intensity, and specificity of comments made within, as well as across, all groups was undertaken (Morgan, 1996; Crang, 2005; Cope, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For example, for the category of relational inclusion used within the final results, this category was broken down into sub-categories based on how settlement services are assisting with friendships and parental relationships. This axial coding analysis was based on the research questions and probes that were developed prior to the focus groups. Using these as references, I began to take into consideration recurring discussions or themes within all focus groups. As many of the initial codes became too general, they broke down through the process, and the axial coding assisted me in creating new codes for a more specific analysis of the similarities, relationships, or conceptual links within the data (Crang, 2005; Cope, 2005).

Although CAQDAS was used as an aid in the analysis, it was merely a tool for this process. It is important to note my personal analysis at all coding stages, as coding and extracting themes from the data is an interpretive process that is least likely to be
misrepresented when it is conducted by the researcher present within the interview process (Dunn, 2005).

3.7 Assessing Rigour

An important part of qualitative research is the systematic and rigorous approach used within the design and implementation of the study (Fossey et al., 2002). This includes methods used for data collection, analysis, and interpretation of findings (Fossey, et al., 2002). In order to ensure rigour, I adopted a set of guidelines outlined by Baxter and Eyles (1997) to reflect upon the research process of this thesis.

Baxter and Eyles (1997) propose a criterion in which social geographers can evaluate their qualitative research. Baxter and Eyles (1997) discuss interview analysis where they outline criteria used to assess the trustworthiness of qualitative research (credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability) that have been adapted from criterion used within positivist geography (Fossey et al., 2002; Baxter & Eyles, 1997).

The first criteria, credibility, assesses whether the results are a valid representation of the group being studied. In this study, credibility is maintained with the use of a purposeful sampling strategy outlined by Patton (2002). With this sampling strategy, I have ensured that those with multiple realities have their voice heard about their access to and experiences with settlement services, as well as their lived-experience with social inclusion. In addition, using focus groups allowed newcomer youth to discuss freely and easily amongst themselves and share their experiences with others around them. Furthermore, credibility of the results was confirmed when no new information was discussed within focus groups.

The second criterion is transferability, which considers whether results are generalizable to other similar research situations. In order to achieve this, I thoroughly revealed the process and strategies used to attain data in order to allow for others to replicate the process for other populations outside of this specific research situation. In addition, my study provides a thick description of context-bound experiences of newcomer youth. As
this continues to be a reality in our world today, my data becomes transferable to future research in this area.

Dependability is the third criteria of ensuring rigour in qualitative research, and refers to whether results are reliable and consistent. Consistency was maintained throughout the research process (i.e., one interviewer used for all interviews and the use of audio recordings), which contributes to this research being dependable. In addition, as I transcribed and coded, the process of interpreting the results was kept consistent to show multiple realities within the final data.

The final criterion for evaluating rigour in qualitative research is confirmability. This criteria discusses the objectivity of the researcher, such as how their bias, motivations, and own interests could impact the research. Throughout the research process, I was consciously aware of my influences as a data collector and interpreter, keeping descriptions trails with journal writing throughout my data collection and analysis. Being a Canadian-born, white woman, I was placed in a position of privilege in relation to the minority immigrant youths interviewed within this research. However, I believe that my age assisted me throughout the data collection process. My status as a young graduate student seemed to place me in a position where I was ‘level’ to the participants, as opposed to being an older professional or interviewing older, more successful, individuals. In addition, being someone who struggled with ‘fitting in’ to my social and physical environment because of continuous movement throughout Ontario (living in three different cities within the last year), I acted with compassion, empathy and had genuine interest in their experiences and perceptions that they were willing to share with me (England, 1994). The interview process was a reciprocal one, where I shared some of my own experiences, which I felt put both the participant and myself on more equal groups during the interview (Letherby, 2003). When starting the interview process, information received from the collaborative partner, NCP, on place of origin and services accessed by members of the focus group assisted in preparation for the meeting.
Chapter 4
Results

4.1 Introduction

With the goal of this thesis being to examine the role of settlement services in reducing barriers to social inclusion for newcomer youth, this chapter presents the results of the four focus group interviews conducted with newcomer youth living in the Peel Region, Ontario. The purpose of the focus groups were to 1) better understand the current experiences of newcomer youth who use settlement services and 2) examine how settlement services are reducing barriers and increasing social inclusion for youth.

In order to address these goals, the chapter is divided in three sections. In the first section, an examination of the general perceptions of newcomer youth regarding the use of settlement services is provided. This section provides an understanding of the experiences and beliefs of newcomer youth in the Peel Region with regard to youth programs. In section two, the five arenas of social inclusion adopted in this research are presented. Specifically, relational inclusion examines the experiences of newcomer youth with respect to their peer groups and their family. The labour market is identified as influencing newcomer youth’s experiences of attaining skills training for employment as well as networking abilities obtained. Spatial inclusion discusses the experiences of newcomer youth with creating a relationship with their local neighbourhood as well as wider society. Educational inclusion discusses studying and homework assistance, as well as information provision about attaining higher education. Finally, socio-political inclusion examines newcomer youth experiences with volunteering and decision-making. The third section provides a summary of key findings.

4.2 Services Used within the Peel Region

Prior to discussing youth experiences and beliefs towards settlement service programs, it is imperative to provide a description of settlement services where focus groups were facilitated. In regards to settlement assistance, all organizations had similar programs for
immigrant populations, including information, counseling, and services. Information includes education and training, housing searches, healthcare assistance, and credential evaluation. Counseling consists of help with forms and immigration matters, trauma support, and career counseling. Services offered by the settlement services include translation, interpretation, document notarization, and one-on-one or group session workshops. They also provide advise on how to transition into Canadian culture, basic computing skills, and information on diverse cultures. All of these services are offered in many languages including, but not limited to, Arabic, Chinese, French, Hindi, Punjabi, and Spanish.

Two of the three focus groups held in Mississauga were done at youth settlement services within organizations. However, Settlement Service 1 is a neighbourhood organization where the immigrant and non-immigrant populations in the surrounding area are eligible to use services offered, while Settlement Service 2 is an organization that focuses on assisting newcomers in the Peel Region in achieving settlement. Youth settlement programs at these organizations are directed at newcomers between the ages of 13-24 and run from 2:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. The purpose of these programs is to assist youth to increase their social network in the community, improving their knowledge of the English language, and becoming familiar with youth culture and the norms of interacting in Canadian society. In addition, these programs provide mentoring with Canadian youth, help with homework, and provide information on universities and colleges.

The third focus group in Mississauga was held within a Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, which provides basic training to newcomers who do not speak either of Canada's official languages. This LINC program is run in partnership with a newcomer settlement service organization that specializes in English language instruction and is free of charge, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. In addition to the LINC class, childcare was also provided, which is common for these programs (Wang & Truelove, 2003). To be eligible for the program individuals must be a landed immigrant or refugee. This LINC program was located in a community
centre close to the partner organization’s location in Mississauga and ran from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for full-time learners, as well as part-time from 5:45 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.

The fourth focus group conducted in Brampton is one of many programs created in partnership with school boards and settlement services in the area. This program is part of the Settlement Workers in Schools program (SWIS) and took place during afterschool hours from Monday to Friday in a high school classroom. The program is directed towards newcomers of high school ages, 14-18. The program’s main focus was to organize workshops relevant to the newcomer population attending the program and provide a positive environment for interaction between cultures.

In regards to specific youth programs and workshops available for youth, Table 4.1 provides a full overview of the most common workshops and programs for each settlement service program. Workshops include, but are not limited to, orientations, employment, counseling, and volunteering programs. Workshops and programs described refer to those mentioned by participants.
### Table 4.1: Settlement Service Youth Programs/Workshops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlement Service</th>
<th>Workshops/Programs</th>
<th>Workshop Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settlement Service 1</td>
<td>Orientation and Information Workshops</td>
<td>- Cross-cultural communication and awareness (What is Canadian culture?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Learn to communicate across cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>- Coping with racism and discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Coping with anxiety, depression, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>- Assist youth that need assistance in the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Volunteer opportunities within the community (YMCA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Workshops</td>
<td>- Career opportunities (Banker/Policeman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Assistance with choosing a career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement Service 2</td>
<td>Community Connections Workshop</td>
<td>- Foster engagement in local community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Connect with local community and job market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Health and Wellness (sports and cooking programs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>- Assistance with trauma or employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-op and Volunteering</td>
<td>- Community service referrals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Homework assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look for Employment Workshop</td>
<td>- Gain real life work experience in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Gain a sense of responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Become a mentor for other newcomers their age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement Service 3</td>
<td>Guidance</td>
<td>- Create and manage personal relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employment Workshops</td>
<td>- Personal and social issues (bullying and family).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Find and attain employment (summer/part time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Cover letter and resume help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Skills and career development (e.g. CPR).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education Assistance</td>
<td>- Homework club.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Post-secondary education (pamphlets, forms, tour campuses).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life-skills Workshop</td>
<td>- Cooking and nutrition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Banking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement Service 4</td>
<td>Youth Opportunities Workshop</td>
<td>- Public speaking and negotiating skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Service Program</td>
<td>- Address relevant issues in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Skills training (interviews).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Resume preparation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Job search support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Interest Workshops</td>
<td>- Organize workshops relevant to present group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Promote interactions between cultures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Settlement and Adaptation Workshop</td>
<td>- Money management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Canadian workplace culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Cooking and nutrition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the variety of settlement services that focus groups were held in, it is important to examine who is using specific services. Nine of the forty-four youth are part of the high school program, twenty-seven are attending the youth programs located within settlement services and eight are part of LINC. When participants were asked how long they had been attending the programs, answers varied from a few months to approximately three
years. However, over half of the participants have been attending programs for approximately six months.

Participants in all of the focus groups used additional programs and services within the Peel Region. These programs and services included summer camps, tutoring assistance, afterschool sports teams and clubs, and language proficiency classes. Although only 9 youth surveyed were within LINC, all of the participants were instructed to be part of the language proficiency classes within schools and other institutions. All focus group locations offered these language classes, but 8 youth also attended classes through religious affiliations or their own cultural group. These examples show that these youth are connected in terms of services and activities within their community and are familiar with accessing services in the Peel Region.

All of the youth interviewed described their own experiences and perceptions regarding their use of settlement services. The majority of participants indicated that they became aware of settlement services through friends and immediate family members. Other ways that newcomer youth found out about settlement services were through advertisements and media, such as online websites for programs, as well as promotional brochures handed out in schools. In regards to finding out online, it is important to note that 17 of the youth found out about settlement services by chance, while searching for volunteer hours. In Ontario, secondary school students are required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of unpaid community involvement to graduate (Ministry of Education, 2012). When researching about volunteer opportunities, participants’ online searches indirectly led them to settlement program websites. Thus, the school system is a way to bring newcomer youth in to the youth settlement programs.

Twelve of the youth heard about settlement services through other community centers or services they had gone to previous. In addition, employees who worked within settlement services performed out-reach initiatives such as school visits or orientations and handing information to parents that attended programs offered by settlement services. It is important to highlight the ways that youth found out about programs, as it highlights the different ways in which settlement services are being promoted within the Peel Region.
4.2.1 Reasons for Attending Youth Programs

In regards to attending a program, family and friend requests to join a program were the leading reasons youth attended. Promotion done by those who worked in settlement services was another reason why several youth in all groups began to attend services. For example, the youth that attended the program in the high school did so through the encouragement of program leaders, as they discussed the benefits of attending and encouraged them to attend.

The next most common reason for deciding to attend the program was to learn English (27 respondents). These newcomer youth described their need to improve their language skills in order to communicate with others, which they stated was important for their social and academic future in Canada. For example, one participant from Settlement Service 3 described her reasoning for attending the program:

“I need to improve my English to get in to college”.

Incentives assisted with their decision to attend settlement services, as youth gain something from attending the program such as a tangible item or skill. For example, volunteering, as noted previously, seemed to be an opportunity that the youth took advantage of, as 25 were gaining community hours at the services. In addition to using volunteer hours towards high school graduation requirements, the youth saw this opportunity as an experience that they could place on their resume when seeking employment. Other incentives outlined by youth in all settlement services included increasing their high school grades with after school homework and studying support and learning CPR.

Having friends already in the program and meeting people of similar age seemed to be other deciding factors for newcomer youth to attended settlement services. In addition, all newcomer youth mentioned the importance of a cost-free program in influencing their decision to attend. They emphasized that free youth services gave them the opportunity to see if they enjoyed a program and if settlement services would be beneficial to them.
All youth continuously discussed the positive experiences they had while attending settlement services. One positive comment that was discussed within focus groups was that the program was not just about learning and studying, but was mixed with fun elements as well. When asked to discuss some of these fun elements, the participants in all the focus groups discussed the trips, such as travelling to downtown Toronto, camping, attending festivals, and going to see a movie.

Participants also perceived the program atmosphere as being like a “family”, as all the participants believed they could relate to one another. Youth emphasized the program leaders as a strong reason why they continue to come to the programs, because it was important for youth to feel comfortable when asking for assistance or when simply hanging out at the services. When asked if they would continue coming to the program if a different leader was brought in, many replied that they would be less likely to come. Newcomer youth described the leaders as being helpful and understanding when assisting with homework or discussing cultural issues. Youth from Settlement Service 2 described how the leaders were a lot of fun, would participate in activities with the youth, and treated them with respect as young adults. This continuous positive experience ensures that youth return to settlement services, which is evident when analyzing how long the youth have been coming to the programs, as noted previously.

When asked what they did not like about programs offered by settlement services, youth unanimously explained that they had no negative comments to make about existing programs.

4.3 Aspects of Social Inclusion Assisted by Settlement Services

Studying the multi-dimensional aspect of social inclusion will provide a clear understanding of how settlement services assist with newcomer youth social inclusion (Fangen, 2010). This section is further divided in order to examine five arenas of social inclusion, which are discussed in order of significance to the research participants. The first arena focuses on relational inclusion, including friendships and family relationships.
The second section considers labour market inclusion through skills training and labour market networking. The third section discusses spatial inclusion, referring to connections to wider society. The fourth arena touches upon educational inclusion and explains educational assistance. The final arena in this section discusses socio-political inclusion in terms of volunteering and decision-making.

4.3.1 Relational Inclusion

Relations describe the ways in which people are connected (Brown, Hinkle, Ely, Fox-Cardamone, Maras & Taylor, 1992; Folgheraiter, 2004). Within the context of this research, relational inclusion will be presented through discussing the abilities of settlement services to assist newcomer youth in creating new friendships and sustaining positive relationships with families.

4.3.1.1 Friendships

Social relationships are important for communicating information, improving self-esteem, providing practical and emotional assistance, and moderating the impact of stressors (Simich et al., 2005). Many youth migrating to a new country leave behind important relationships with family members and friends (Caxaj & Berman, 2010). The loss of these social relationships has been noted to lead to experiences of disconnect within wider society (Berman, Alvernaz Mulcahy, Forchuk, Edmunds, Haldenby, & Lopez, 2009), thereby posing a challenge to social inclusion. As Khanlou & Crawford (2006) describe in their investigation on the self-esteem of female newcomer youth in Toronto, Ontario, the major issue that contributed to feeling alienated was the loss of friendships and the lack of new ones formed. Thus, the ability of settlement services to create friendships becomes an important topic when discussing newcomer youth.

When asked if settlement services offered a way to create friendships in a new country, a majority of the youth felt they did. However, it is interesting to note that these same participants shared they were not expecting to make friends through the settlement programs, as most of them had already created friends at school. For example, a
A participant from Settlement Service 1 described their belief about making new friends through the program:

“My first day that I came [to the program], I did not feel like I would continue coming. I [already]…knew a lot of people [and] hung around with people from school”.

When asked if they had made new friendships at the program, this participant had responded that they had and that this was a reason they continued to attend. Other youth also indicated that the services created an environment that allowed them to interact with individuals. Thus, settlement services are offering assistance in making connections even when youth are not directly seeking services to build these social relationships. As discussed previously, these new social relationships assist with social inclusion in Canadian society as they fill the void of friendships left behind during immigration and provide self-esteem and help to moderate the impact of stressors (Simich et al., 2005).

When asking youth what they enjoyed about the program, several youth commented on the program environment. In each focus group, youth described the space as having a “home” or “family” atmosphere based on its intimate space. Participant 1 at Settlement Service 2 noted the benefits of the room size:

“[The program space] is very small scale, so we get to socialize so much more, with more people…that is a good thing”.

Participants indicated that smaller room sizes allowed them to have frequent contact with other youth, enhancing their likelihood of interaction, leading to more social relationships with those around them. In addition, all participants from the Brampton focus group agreed the program’s environment was “comfortable” and gave them the chance to open up with others their age.

Having connections with others were discussed in all connected focus groups. When responding to questions of how participants came to know each other, there was general agreement that games and activities facilitated by program leaders helped youth to learn names and share small personal details with the rest of the group:
“…when we do events, we have to know the names [of each participant, so] we have an icebreaker before every game. [These help us] to know each others names and to [help us learn] about people” (Settlement Service 2).

Games appear to act as initial introductions for those who are new, may be quieter, or less comfortable within the programs. The participants within all the focus groups agreed that these programs helped them to feel included, as they could relate to each other through the facilitation of these activities.

In addition to this, participants explained that when newcomers come to the program for the first time, the leaders within the program promoted members of the group to introduce themselves and assist the new member in joining activities.

“Newcomers come in from time to time and we go introduce ourselves, we bring them in [to the activity that we are doing]; like Wii dance or Rockband [and] we just push them to start interacting with us [and] we…[become] friends” (Settlement Service 1).

The youth believed this process encouraged interactions between different ethnic and cultural members of the group. As interactions with a wide variety of individual is important for social inclusion, settlement services are contributing to this process (Martinovic, Van Tubergen & Mass, 2011; Kanas & Van Tubergen, 2009). Youth agree that settlement services are promoting activities for youth to build a large network of friends and have the ability to interact with a diverse group of people.

During the focus groups, participants were asked if it was more important to make friends within their own culture, or to meet peers that were from other backgrounds. This question was asked in order to understand if restraints were placed around the types of relationships that newcomer youth created in Canada. All youth described the importance of making friends with those outside of their cultural group, including Canadian-born and those from other countries:

“I have friends from every culture and…it is better because you get to interact with people from different cultures [and] you learn more [about their way of life]” (Settlement Service 4).
Well if [they are] from the same background and the same culture, it is easier for us to make connections, but it does not matter because we make friends with everyone…basically [our goal is to] just make friends, that is the only rule everyone has; to make friends… (Settlement Service 1)

Even though participants believe friendships are created easily between those of the same background based on qualities they share, they explain that a line is never drawn between whom they should and should not become friends with. Again, as connections formed outside ones own culture are integral to social inclusion within Canadian society (Martinovic et al., 2011; Kanas & Van Tuburgen, 2009), their ability to acknowledge the importance of creating diverse relationships shows progress in becoming socially included.

Moreover, participants emphasized that if they had not attended the program, they would have been less likely to form connections made outside their own cultural and ethnic background, as there is less motivation to form these connections:

…Before I came [to the youth program] I would just go straight home and watch television and just [wait] for my sister and brother to come home [from school so that I could socialize with them]. Now I have the opportunity to go and hang out with other people [I would not have normally had the chance to socialize with]. (Settlement Service 2)

This participant, along with a majority of the youth from all focus groups, stated that settlement services promote a way to branch out and meet different people instead of staying home with family. Therefore, settlement services are providing a space where friendships outside of one’s own cultural group, integral for social inclusion, can be formed.

4.3.1.2 Family Relationships

Family involvement within immigrant youths’ lives can be a source of comfort or stress, as family members may hold different values and expectations regarding what is acceptable within a new society (Anisef, 2005; Khanlou & Crawford, 2006; Sharir, 2002; Hyman & Beiser, 2000; Salehi, 2010). This can produce intergenerational conflict within the family, as youth are faced with new opportunities outside of their home environment that may conflict with parental values. This conflict may contribute to negative
experiences of integration for newcomer youth and influence their long-term adjustment within the new society (Hagelskamp, Suarez-Orozco, & Hughes, 2010; Deaux, 2006). However, parental involvement has also been noted as an essential element when addressing the needs of newcomer youth, as they become a protective factor for youth that have limited social relationships after immigration (Salehi, 2010). Thus, while it is important for youth to maintain relationships with their family in order to create positive long-term experiences, they also require tools to combat difficulties regarding family values and expectations about social relationships. The focus groups reveal that settlement services can assist in addressing these difficulties.

As children move into adolescent years, parents adjust their supervisory practices to allow children to mature and gain independence (Dishion & McMahon, 1998; Borawski, Ievers-Landis, Lovegreen, & Trapl, 2003; Lister, 2000). However, research has suggested that open-lines of communication and knowledge of youths’ whereabouts are important in reducing high-risk behaviours (Borawski et al., 2003; Li, Feigelman & Stanton, 2000). Thus, for parents there is a need to create these open lines of communication and knowledge in order to adjust supervisory practices, as once these lines are created, parents can feel comfortable that their youth are making appropriate decisions.

Twenty-one youth mentioned they had parents who attended programs offered by settlement services. These youth agreed that pre-existing connections between parents and settlement services created open-lines of communication, knowledge, and supervision. They believed that personal time spent within the program allowed parents to see the settlement service as a trusted resource where they knew exactly where their child was and that they were being properly supervised:

They know you are at a safe place…[and] you are [not] going to the street [where it is] dangerous. [At the youth program,] you have an adult who cares about you and worries about you just like your parents would, [so our parents] know that when we go places [or meet people] we [will be okay]. (Settlement Service 1)

These open lines were created not only between parent and youth, but also between parents and leaders of settlement service programs:
“They don’t worry because they know [the leaders]. They have a connection [with them] and that’s good [for us]” (Settlement Service 4).

One participant describes their parents being familiar with names of the leaders running the youth program in a settlement service:

“…[parents] know who you are [with]. [Parents state] “You are with [one leader] or [another leader]” (Settlement Service 2).

Since these youth were attending services that their parents were familiar with, having spent time within the facility themselves, these open lines of communication and knowledge were produced. As a result of this familiarity with settlement services, many youth within the focus groups felt that parents were comfortable with them making new friends and travelling to new places to gain new cultural experiences. These experiences and friendships allowed youth to enhance their social inclusion within wider society.

Many youth also stated that settlement services created an environment where parents and children could come together and build upon their relationship within Canada. Throughout all focus groups, youth explained this by indicating that the services offered them opportunities to bring their parents to the program and become familiar with the service:

“[Our parents] do not worry because… [they] came with [us] to the program” (Settlement Service 1).

Many youth agreed that this experience with the program allowed open discussions about activities that were going on in the program, which fostered better communication between youth and their parents. This positive experience provided through settlement services assists with integration of newcomer youth in Canada, as family involvement is an integral part to long-term adjustment for youth.

When discussing the ability to make friends, many youth agreed that settlement services increased the likelihood of their parents being comfortable with friendships the youth created outside of their cultural background:

“It is all about trust. If they trust you, then it is [alright]” (Settlement Service 1).
“I have good friends [from here] and if they know I am here, [they trust me]…that is important” (Settlement Service 2).

Participants explained how their ability to demonstrate that their friends were connected to the settlement service made their parents feel that the relationship that youth had created was acceptable and did not undermine the values of the family, as settlement services were a trusted resource. If parents believed that the youth were still holding true to their own cultural or ethnic background, all youth agreed that they had more freedom to experience other ways of living, including different cultures.

When asked about going out with school friends or other friends not affiliated with a program, all participants agreed that it would be harder to socialize with them:

Sometimes [I try to go] outside [my house with new friends that I meet. My parents start to ask question such as] ‘Who are they?’ [or] ‘What kind of friends do you have?’ They want to know [who they are first]…If I tell them they are from [Mississauga Focus Group 1, they] say ‘Ya, it is okay [to go out with your friends]’… (Settlement Service 1)

This participant is describing their experience with balancing their home and social life and suggested that their parents were comfortable with friendships that were formed through settlement services. These experiences illustrate that settlement services are assisting with social inclusion because they are seen as a trusted resource by parents, which aid youth in their abilities to make their own friendships.

4.3.2 Labour Market Inclusion

Employment in the labour market has been linked to improved social inclusion for newcomers (Evans & Repper, 2000; Leach, Butterworth, Strazdins, Rodgers, Broom & Olesen, 2010). In addition to the financial benefits of labour market participation, employment provides a sense of purpose and belonging, a place for social interaction, status within society, and recognition of efforts and achievements (Evans & Repper, 2000). While youth who took part in this research have not been introduced in to the labour market, as their age, experience in Canada, or education levels had not permitted this, it is important to examine ways that settlement services provide skills, which will be important contributions for employment when youth become of age to enter the job
market. In regards to this research, labour market inclusion will address how settlement services provide skills training and networking for future labour market participation. These are crucial for future productivity and income earning opportunities of newcomer youth, which will improve their social inclusion in Canada (Khan, Kiani, Ashraf & Husnain, 2009).

Research has shown that immigrants with higher levels of skill training generally integrate more easily into the labour market (Krahn, Derwing, Mulder & Wilkinson, 2000). Skill training contributes significantly to promoting mobility of workers and offers increased career choices (Krahn et al., 2000). Thus, as skills in the workforce are significant determinants of economic success, and economic success leads to enhanced social inclusion, this highlights the need to understand how settlement services are assisting with skills training in order to enhance social inclusion for newcomer youth (Evans & Repper, 2000; Leach et al., 2010; Lister, 2000).

When asked about the types of skill building activities settlement services offered, all youth discussed the diverse educational programs offered and how they were assisting them in attaining certifications and expertise:

“Yes, they have… job searches, CPR, and workshops on how to make a resume and cover letter…[and] how to get a job” (Settlement Service 2).

“…we talk about different [subjects related to employment], like banking, resumes, and jobs…It is really quite helpful!” (Settlement Service 4).

These quotes demonstrate the types of employment-related services that are offered by the settlement services for newcomer youth. Learning mandatory Canadian workplace skills such as CPR (Canadian Red Cross, 2012) and resume creation will assist with integration into the labour market, as youth believed that these skills helped to build experiences for future employment. As noted previously, employment is important for social inclusion, as it has a significant effect on a person's physical, mental and social health and provides not only economic returns, but also a sense of identity and purpose, social contacts and opportunities for personal growth (PHAC, 2010). Therefore, with these employment skills being offered by settlement services, newcomer youth who
attend the programs are assisted with social inclusion into Canadian society.

In addition to workshops and resume assistance, when asked if the youth received assistance with interviews, other youth at Mississauga Focus Group 1 responded:

“Yes…they ask you questions [that you would normally find in an interview] to help you prepare”. (Settlement Service 1).

Many youth participants discuss how leaders within the groups practiced interview questions with them in order to help them with the interview process. These same participants stated that the programs and certifications assisted with their skill building:

“[the programs and certifications are] amazing because, yesterday [for example], we had our resume workshop on how to make a resume perfectly” (Settlement Service 3).

When asked if they thought the workshops were useful, many stated that they would be useful when seeking future employment:

“What really attracts someone to come back [to the settlement service] are [all of the different] workshops that give you the experience when you are looking for a job” (Settlement Service 1).

These descriptions provided by the participants show that settlement services are assisting them in becoming socially included within the labour market by providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to be successful in the job field. Being successful in the labour market will improve newcomers’ socio-economic circumstances and their physical and mental well-being (Leach et al., 2010).

Research indicates that during the immigrant integration process network building is a desire of newcomer populations (Caidi & Allard, 2005; Mwarigha, 2002). Networking is a communication process, which encourages the sharing of knowledge across social connections (Swan, Newell, Scarbrough & Hislop, 1999). Networking provides newcomers with a diverse social connection that has been noted as integral for social inclusion (Warschauer, 2004). Thus, understanding if settlement services are increasing networking opportunities for newcomer youth is important, as these opportunities will assist with social inclusion.
When discussing labour market benefits of settlement service program, youth at all focus groups discussed how the programs offered opportunities to connect with members of the workforce in the local community. One participant explains this type of networking:

“…yesterday…we had a job fair. A lot of people from banks or [other careers backgrounds, such as a] police officer, [came to the program] and we [were able to] give them our resume” (Settlement Service 1).

All were in agreement that they benefitted from this networking opportunity because it allowed them to discuss career aspirations with those in the field, and learn other careers that they were not familiar with. One participant described how a workshop with a counterfeit money analyst was a new and interesting employment opportunity presented to them through the settlement service:

“Last year we had [a man come in who worked with] counterfeit [money] and talked to us [about his career]…[It was] really different” (Settlement Service 1).

Finding out about new employment opportunities may allow the youth to become more socially included within the labour market, as they are aware of the opportunities that are out there for them. In addition, they are building social connections with a diverse age demographic, as opposed to just youth their age. Creating diverse social connections is stated as beneficial for the integration of immigrants into the labour market (Martinovic et al., 2011; Kanas & Van Tubergen, 2009). With the labour market being an important area for social inclusion, settlement services are assisting with the process by offering these networking opportunities.

4.3.3 Spatial Inclusion

In this thesis, the term ‘spatial inclusion’ is used to refer to how settlement services assist in forming connections beyond local neighborhoods where youth settle. Immigrants traditionally settle in ethnic enclaves, as they are prone to congregate in areas where they share as much in common with their neighbours as possible such as social status and ethnic background (Kobayashi & Peake, 2000; Warr, 2005). As Peach (1996) suggests, spatial concentrations of those from similar backgrounds assists with maintaining cultural values and strengthening social networks, as well as creating a population size where ethnic shops and religious institutions can be created and maintained. This shows that
segregation may be a choice of those who are faced with entering host society, for understandable reasons such as social adjustment. However, in some instances, local neighbourhoods with high levels of cohesion, such as ethnic enclaves, can lead to fragmented allegiances to the broader community (Hiebert, 2000; Peach, 1996). Ethnic segregation in specific areas can result in the social isolation of populations and limited opportunities for interaction with other communities (Cattell, 2001; Warr, 2005).

Some scholars believe that integration of spatially marginalized populations can occur through an increase in time spent within host society, as shown by the three generational model of segregation and assimilation (Halbwachs, 1932; Hawley, 1944; Peach, 1996). However, as Peach (1996) debates, “time by itself accomplishes nothing, if positive interaction between groups is not taking place” (p. 394). Therefore, if newcomer youth are given the opportunity to experience and understand populations outside of the area in which they live, this may increase their social inclusion within Canada and assist with integration into wider society. Thus, it is important to examine how settlement services are creating positive experiences and perceptions regarding wider society.

When asked if it was important to stay close to people from their own cultural and ethnic background, those at Settlement Service 3 believed that it was important to be within a community that consisted of people from a familiar background. For example, participant 8 states:

“[It is important for me to live here] because I feel like I am [still] in India”.

All participants agreed that it was important to live in a community that consisted of people from familiar backgrounds:

“[You need to live close to your own background because] you still need to stay connected to your culture so you do not forget it” (Settlement Service 1).

It is clear from this quote that participants believe living in close proximity to members from their own culture sustains connections with those of similar background. In addition, another example given by a participant at Settlement Service 4 states that their ability to live in an area close to others from their own background was a safety net when they were faced with social issues such as bullying:
“[When I am at school,] we have a group around here and we are all...from the same culture, and that way [we are not alone and we can stand up for each other]...no one tries to bully us [because we] do not stick out” (Settlement Service 4).

Having the ability to be connected with those that are similar to them allowed many participants to have a sense of security or comfort within multi-ethnic settings such as school. With belonging to a social group being an important aspect to social inclusion (Caxaj & Berman, 2010), this geographic fragmentation causes those living in areas dominated by similar backgrounds to limit their connections to specific cultures or ethnicities, thus hindering full integration in to Canadian society (Warr, 2005; Cattell, 2001).

However, in relation to this notion of belonging within Canadian society, many participants emphasized their desire to learn about ethnic and cultural backgrounds outside of the area in which they live:

“[It is important to learn about people from other cultures, including Canadian culture,] because we should know what is going on around us...we should [learn to] communicate with others and [understand] them” (Settlement Service 4).

Thus, many youth feel that they should make connections outside of their local communities, which are dominated by their own culture. When asked, 38 agreed that settlement services fostered this drive to make these connections. In addition, these youth were in agreement that without settlement services they never would have had the opportunities to make friends from and learn about other cultures. As one participant explains:

If we had continued to go somewhere [with our family members], we would have already known those people, so there is a benefit to coming [to the program] and [learning about the importance of] making new friends other than your cultural friends. (Settlement Service 3)

When asked how the settlement services encouraged them to make connections and learn about other cultures, many discussed that the leaders would ask members of the group to speak English when talking with other youth and leaders at the program:

“[Our leader] encourages us to speak English [when we are within the program] because we are here [in Canada] to learn” (Settlement Service 3).
Youth believed that this allowed everyone to communicate and get to know each other within the group. In Canada, speaking one of the official languages is the leading determinant of integration for newcomers (Dudley, 2007; Thomas, 1992). English language encouragement shows that settlement services are assisting with newcomer youth social inclusion, as learning this language will foster communication with those outside of their local community, building connections needed to become fully integrated in Canada.

In addition to this encouragement, youth participants also indicated that leaders assisted them in understanding the importance of learning one of Canada’s official languages.

“[I need to practice English because] I need to improve my language [skills] right away [in order] to start a new life and new future [here in Canada]…” (Settlement Service 2).

This statement depicts that those attending settlement services value learning the English language. This becomes another way that settlement services are assisting newcomer youth to become socially included within wider Canadian communities outside of the area in which they live.

When asked which settlement service sessions were the most beneficial to participants, many of the participants in the focus groups placed value on program sessions that assisted them in understanding cultures in Canada. This question was asked in order to examine which sessions were perceived as the most influential to youth. Knowing this information helps identify sessions that can be promoted for new or existing settlement services in the Peel Region. These programs included holiday traditions, cyber bullying, driving, and etiquette when attending celebrations. The program leader at Settlement Service 3 described what a typical session at a settlement service would consist of:

…valentines day is coming soon, so we are going to do a valentines day [themed session. So, we ask ourselves] ‘what do Canadian’s do on valentines day?’ [We have also discussed] Thanksgiving, Halloween, [and] Christmas…we cover all the cultural topics [that the youth decide are important], especially if there is a festival

---

1 During focus group facilitation, settlement service leaders offered assistance to participants when language barriers prevented youth from explaining their experiences and perceptions regarding settlement services. Participants would communicate with leaders in their primary language and leaders would translate what participants were describing. Thus, quotes provided by leaders are in accordance with newcomer youth opinions.
or a special day [given in honor of that occasion]…[and then] we talk about [questions that arise. In regards to other sessions], we did do a driving session…so we taught [the youth] how to read the book, how to get the lessons…[and even] found them a website they can go on and practice [what they have learned].

Participants within this focus group explained that because of these sessions, they were able to learn about different cultures:

Because Canada is more multicultural than our country,…[when] I moved to Canada, I hardly knew [any of the culture], but now, [after coming to the program,] I have learned about different groups, and [my experience] is totally different. (Settlement Service 3)

All participants indicated that youth programs offered them a place where they could express their views on their own and other members’ religions and cultures:

[The leaders] are more friendly [than other adults within our community, so]…we are comfortable with [them] and can share [personal thoughts] with them. [The program allows us to] learn about different cultures and we get to share our cultures with each other. (Settlement Service 2)

Thus settlement services provide a place within the community where youth can discuss their opinions and experiences with regard to cultures and religions. This is contributing to social inclusion for newcomer youth because they are gaining knowledge about different ethnicities and cultures outside of the local neighbourhoods in which they live. This knowledge will help them to build awareness of those in the broader community. This awareness and understanding towards others is an important part of social inclusion (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2002).

Research discusses the importance for newcomers to live in an environment where they share characteristics in common with one another, as this provides them with a social net during the transition to a host society where family and friendships are left behind (Caxaj & Berman, 2010; Warr, 2005). However, for full integration into host-society, inter-ethnic and inter-cultural relationships are integral for social inclusion (Martinovic et al., 2011). Youth agreed that coming to the program helped them begin learn about different cultures outside of their local communities, so that they had the ability to communicate and begin to understand those outside of their ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Thus,
settlement services are assisting newcomer youth to become socially included in wider Canadian society.

4.3.4 Educational Inclusion

As described previously, access to the labour market fosters social inclusion (Evans & Repper, 2000; Krahn et al., 2000; Lister, 2000). Education is integral to participation in the labour force, as higher education and training allows individuals to become qualified for jobs available (Evans & Repper, 2000; Krahn et al., 2000; Lister, 2000). Thus, low levels of educational achievement remain the greatest barrier to employment and socioeconomic advancement (Reitz, 2007). However, with regard to newcomers, those who are highly skilled face huge barriers to employment in their field of training, as their education attained in their home country may have provided them with credentials that the Canadian job market fails to recognize. Thus, for newcomer youth it is essential that they gain an education and skill set to facilitate their later entry into the labour market. Settlement services in the Peel Region provide assistance for youth in order to be successful within the Ontario Secondary School system and post-secondary education.

Within all discussions, a topic that arose consistently was education. Youth stated that once they were successful in high school, they felt a sense of belonging within Canada. “I think it [took me] about half a year [to feel as if I belonged in Canada]...once ...my grades from second semester increased” (Settlement Service 1).

This educational achievement, produced through increased marks within courses, was highlighted by all newcomer youth. In addition, all youth believe that settlement services provided them with assistance towards increasing their educational achievement. Participants described homework clubs as assistance offered by youth programs during specific hours after school. For example, one member described that when you have difficulties with education, program leaders assisted in finding solutions to specific problems:

There is times to do [your homework] and they help us. I know that some of the [youth] were having difficulties…with math, or other subjects. [When] one girl…told the leader that she was having a lot of trouble with physics, they
[helped her by asking] myself and [another member of the group] to help tutor her so that she could understand the classes. (Settlement Service 2)

This educational assistance is helping youth to become socially included in society, not simply through helping to achieve a high school diploma, but also by helping youth to be successful within the classroom. Youth believed that they belonged within Canada when they felt equal to those youth from other backgrounds and host-society and this happened after their grades and understanding improved.

When asked about the times in which the youth attended settlement service programs, many participants responded that they came to the program after school until the homework and studying time had passed. Youth agreed that these services provide a space where youth that may be struggling with academics in a new country can ask for assistance from older members within the group or program leaders where language or learning barriers may be limited. Thus, this assistance with high school work was beneficial as many came to the programs for the sole purpose of the homework and studying club. This assistance, again, will help to foster social inclusion.

In addition to providing assistance with studying or homework, many youth also described other educational assistance accessed through the program. Specifically, settlement services provide youth with information on Colleges and Universities, including degrees or programs offered, as well as trips to post-secondary campuses

[If you ask about Universities in the area, the leaders at the services] give you the information, they find pamphlets [that tell you] about the University [you are interested in], [as well as provided us with course] books that give you information… (Settlement Service 2)

“They keep us informed a lot [about our future educational choices]…if you ask for some information they [will] help you…” (Settlement Service 3).

Youth believe that settlement services are making them more familiar with the Canadian University and College systems. This will help youth to understand what is available for them when it comes to opportunities with post-secondary education and assist them to make choices about receiving credentials that will be recognized by the Canadian job market. Attaining post-secondary credentials in Canada will be important for them to
become socially included. In addition, the leader from Settlement Service 3 described the
type of post-secondary educational assistance that was offered through settlement service
programs:

[The youth in the program] were all interested [in going to see a College
Campus], so I took them to Humber College and they all [received] booklets and
information...[After going to Humber College,] for most of them, all they had to
do was go and apply [to the program that they were interested in pursuing]. So, I
sat with them and went over what they should go in to and apply for, because I
know them [well enough that] they would tell me what they like to do. I would
[offer them guidance such as] ‘maybe you should do [this program]’...advising
them as to what courses to take. I also took them to the [University of Toronto
Mississauga Campus] to have them look over there...

This example shows the lengths that settlement services take in order to assist with
educational inclusion for newcomer youth.

4.3.5 Socio-political Inclusion

Value is placed on the importance of civic participation as an integral part of an
individual’s social and economic development (Shortall, 2004). As newcomer youth
attempt to integrate, social and economic developments are key for their overall social
inclusion (Omidvar & Richmond, 2003; Salooje, 2002). However, when newcomers
enter into a host society, participation within civic aspects of community life, including
voting, volunteering, and other duties or activities are often limited. This may be caused
by spatial patterns, as many newcomers initially live in cultural and religious enclaves.
Segregation may cause isolation from host society, leading to less civic participation
(Hogan & Owen, 2000). In addition, family involvement for newcomer youth may also
be a reason for limited civic participation, as family members may hold different values
and expectations regarding what is acceptable within Canada (Anisef, 2005; Khanlou &
Crawford, 2006; Sharir, 2002; Hyman & Beiser, 2000; Salehi, 2010). Given this, it
becomes integral for newcomer youth to access a way to increase their civic participation
outside of their home and neighbourhood. Settlement services can assist newcomers to
participate civically within Canadian society. Within the context of this research, socio-
political inclusion will focus on informal engagement. Informal engagement is
appropriate with regard to this study, as newcomer youth do not have the right to vote in
Canada, given their age and lack of citizenship. Furthermore, informal engagement will be discussed in relation to volunteering and decision-making.

4.3.5.1 Volunteering

The civic practice of volunteering provides immediate benefits to immigrant youth in their integration process, as it can assist with resume building and producing networks that may create future employment opportunities (Handy & Greenspan, 2009; Jones, 2000). In addition, activities that reach out to the community give opportunities for newcomer youth to form connections outside of their own ethnic background (Handy & Greenspan, 2009). Thus, it is important to understand if settlement services enhance experiences of social inclusion for newcomer youth through volunteering opportunities.

As stated previously, volunteer opportunities were offered through each of the settlement service youth programs. These volunteer opportunities consisted of mentoring programs where youth assisted new members to become acquainted with the program or to assist members who were struggling with specific issues, such as language barriers. Twenty-nine participants took advantage of these opportunities and found that it was a positive experience for them:

“…[the volunteer program] was different from where I [had] volunteered before. I thought that this was more of the kind of [program I would be interested in], so I [believed] that I needed to stay” (Settlement Service 2).

“I came [to the program] a second time in two weeks and it was good…because we got to hang out and help other people…our age…and now I keep coming back to do my volunteer work” (Settlement Service 1).

In addition, several participants also stated that the settlement services did help them to find community service hours elsewhere:

“…if I am looking for places around here that may need volunteer help, they will help me [by keeping me informed about positions that arise]” (Settlement Service 1).
This participant describes the use of settlement services as a connection for other volunteer positions within the community. Youth agreed that this ability to form community ties is important for being successful in Canada. Community ties are closely linked to social inclusion by providing opportunities for advancement in the labour market and income earnings, as well as social support during difficult times. The ability of settlement services to assist in the creation of these social ties through volunteering depicts that settlement services are assisting with the social inclusion process of newcomer youth.

4.3.5.1 Decision-Making

Participating in local level decision-making processes is one way for citizens to express their democratic rights and influence decisions that affect their welfare (Boehm, 2007). For newcomer youth, this can provide them with an active way to create a desired environment for themselves as they integrate into Canada (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004; Dzur & Olson, 2004). Yet, youth decision-making may be hindered as family members may hold different values and expectations regarding what is acceptable (Anisef, 2005; Khanlou & Crawford, 2006; Sharir, 2002; Hyman & Beiser, 2000; Salehi, 2010). However, settlement services can assist in creating decision-making opportunities for newcomer youth outside of the family environment and will be the focus of this section.

Within all of the focus groups, when discussing the activities they participated in at the settlement service, the youth described that they made the decisions on the activities they played:

“So for eight hours, they take us to gym [that the settlement service has] rent[ed] and we can play any games that we want.” (Settlement Service 2).

The youth described the importance of this, as they felt they were in charge of daily programming. In addition, a voting system was described by all focus groups as a way to choose activities:

“We can choose what movies…they post it on a website…[and we] vote [on the choices] of movies if we like one [compared to the other movie option]” (Settlement Service 2).
In addition, the program leader also discussed how topics within LINC were chosen:

“What we do at the beginning is give them a whole range of topics and we kind of vote which topics they would like to cover throughout the semester.”

(Settlement Service 3 leader).

These quotes demonstrate how the youth were able to choose the topics that were discussed within the educational seminars, such as food and nutrition or housing, as well as the leisure activities, like sports or movies. These choices were often made democratically, by voting on several activities outlined by the leaders. Youth described that this ability to choose as part of a collective gave them the feeling that were they part of the program. This decision-making was important for youth because they felt they were treated with respect and that their opinion on programming was important. Thus, settlement services granting youth the opportunities to vote on activities that directly affect them assists with their social inclusion, as they feel empowered within the environment around them.

As discussed previously, parents were highly influential in youths’ decision to enter the programs offered by settlement services. When asked about benefits of the program, many youth stated that coming to the service helped them, as they developed decision-making power when choices arose between home life and social life. In addition, when asked whether their parents pressured them in continuing with the program, many at the Mississauga Focus Group 2 explained that their parents encouraged it, but that they had the final say in whether to come:

“My mom told me that she does not care [and that] it is my choice [to come to the program]” (Settlement Service 4).

“My parents encouraged me to come here at first, and now if I have all my homework [finished], I get to chose when to come and when not to come” (Settlement Service 1).

In addition to this decision-making, parents saw settlement services as a trusted resource in which youth gained the ability to chose when they attended programs. Youth believed that they gained the chance to build a sense of autonomy in relation to how they spend
their free time and when they socialize with friends. This decision-making provides youth with the ability to govern their social values as they integrate into Canadian society (Weber, Kopelman & Messik, 2004). Therefore, settlement services are assisting with inclusion into Canadian society.

4.4 Summary

This chapter presented the results of 4 focus groups of newcomer youth in the Peel Region, Ontario. The discussion of experiences and perceptions with settlement services was used to identify reasons for attending settlement services in the area and determine how youth found out about the programs. This discussion set the context for understanding the overall feelings on settlement service youth programs.

Results of the 4 focus groups revealed that settlement services are assisting newcomer youth in becoming socially included within Canadian society. In regards to relational inclusion, youth were in agreement that settlement services promoted activities to build a large network of friends and have the ability to interact with a diverse group of people, which increased their interaction in the host-country and important for social inclusion (Simich et al., 2005). In addition, they also believed that settlement services fostered positive child-parent relationships, integral for long-term adjustment and social inclusion for youth (Anisef, 2005; Khanlou & Crawford, 2006; Sharir, 2002; Hyman & Beiser, 2000; Salehi, 2010).

In discussing labour market inclusion, youth are in agreement that settlement services are offering skills training that enhance their social inclusion (Evans & Repper, 2000; Leach et al., 2010; Lister, 2000). Moreover, there is general agreement that networking opportunities within the community are being offered by settlement services, which are important for assisting with social inclusion.

With spatial inclusion, newcomer youth believed that settlement services were creating friendships outside of their own neighbourhoods, which are highly populated with their own ethnic or cultural background. This belonging within a diverse group of individuals
is integral for full social inclusion (Caxaj & Berman, 2010). In addition, all youth discussed that speaking the English language was encouraged by settlement services and was linked to assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth.

Youth described that settlement services assisted with homework and studying in order to be successful within the Canadian secondary school system. As those who are highly skilled face barriers to employment based on Canada failing to recognize educational credentials, gaining an education in Canada will assist with becoming socially included, as credentials will be recognized. Also, youth agreed that settlement services promoted post-secondary educational attainment, which will also assist newcomer youth to become socially included.

Finally, socio-political inclusion is being assisted by settlement services, as youth acknowledged that programs were increasing their community ties through volunteering, as well as creating decision-making opportunities, such as voting. In addition, they provide decision-making for youth in regards to attending the service, as parents saw settlement services as a trusted resource in which youth could gained the ability to chose when they attended, which will affect their overall well being and social inclusion (Weber, Kopelman & Messik, 2004).

With these results in mind, there are important theoretical implications and policy recommendations that will benefit newcomer youth in suburban areas such as the Peel Region. These will be discussed at length in the final chapter.
Chapter 5
Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusions

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The objectives of this research were to 1) examine the current experiences of newcomer youth who use settlement services and 2) understand how settlement services are contributing to social inclusion. Using focus group interviews with 44 newcomer youth living in Mississauga and Brampton, this research revealed the many arenas through which settlement services are assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth. These arenas, adopted from Fangen’s (2010) work include relational inclusion, labour market inclusion, spatial inclusion, educational inclusion, and socio-political inclusion.

Moreover, the participants’ discussion of settlement services largely focused on expressing their positive feelings of settlement service youth programs each attended.

Overall, all of the participants in this study agreed that settlement services assist them in making friends and improve parental relationships, help with training and labour market networking, and enhance connections to the larger community. In addition, all newcomer youth were in agreement that settlement services provide educational assistance for the Ontario school system, volunteering, and ways to increase their decision-making.

Majority of the participants also suggested that these experiences were not always expected when initially joining settlement services, but that if they had not joined youth programs, they would not have had access to this assistance. Thus, there is a definite positive link between settlement services and their assistance for newcomer youth.

This study also aimed to determine if settlement services are assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth in the Peel Region. All participants believed that settlement services were assisting them to become socially included within the social, cultural, political, and economic domains of Canadian society. In particular, opportunities such as skills training and new friendships were linked to social inclusion, as they provide opportunities to integrate into the economic and social fabric of Canada. Moreover, homework assistance and workshops helped youth become more successful
within the Canadian school system, leading to feelings of belonging within the classroom and wider society. This educational inclusion is important for integration, as credentials will assist with future employment. Additionally, settlement services are seen as a trusted resource by parents. This correlates into youth gaining independence to interact with those from different backgrounds, gain decision-making abilities, and foster positive social relationships with their parents. These factors lead to social, cultural, political, and economic inclusion for youth, which are integral for long-term adjustment. Clearly, social inclusion is being assisted for newcomer youth who attend settlement services.

In discussing how settlement services have assisted newcomer youth with social inclusion, I believe that settlement services address relational and spatial arenas of social inclusion most effectively. Settlement services provide an area away from youths’ local communities where newcomer youth can form diverse ethnic and cultural friendships, while still remaining a part of their ethnic neighbourhoods. Newcomer youth believed that making friends was an important part of belonging within the Peel Region and settlement services assisted them to increase their level of comfort and open up with diverse groups of individuals their age. The settlement services also provided access for newcomer youth to experience new cultures and learn about other ethnic populations. As stated, youth believed they would be less likely to learn about other backgrounds if they stayed surrounded by their own ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

5.2 Limitations and Areas for Further Research

Prior to discussing the major implications of the research findings, there are a few limitations to be discussed. First, the participants in this research were all connected to settlement services and programs offered (e.g. youth programs or LINC). These connections to settlement services are designed to simplify integration in to Canadian society for newcomer youth. Although this is a well-connected group, they still face many difficulties with regards to social inclusion in Canada, including bullying and language barriers. These difficulties may be even greater for those immigrants who are disconnected from settlement services in the Peel Region. This research was not able to include those individuals who did not have connections to organizations or formal groups
within the Peel Region. This represents an important area of future research, as they will provide insight on difficulties facing integration for those who have not had a chance to access settlement services due to physical isolation (i.e. geographic location) or social isolation (i.e. minimal involvement in community).

A second limitation and area for further research revolves around the diversity of the immigrant youth population within this research. Gender has been noted as relevant to social inclusion research. For example, inequalities in abilities to moderate stress and depression have been noted by several studies (Ptacek, Smith & Dodge, 1994; Piccinelli & Wilkinson, 2000; Pinquart & Sorensen, 2006). However, the research was not designed to address gender differences in social inclusion of newcomer youth and their experiences with settlement services. Future research that examines the gendered experiences of immigrant youth with settlement services is necessary to better understand the gender differences in social inclusion.

Additionally, the diversity of the newcomer youth population in Canada is evident by examining recent migrant trends, as Canada admits a wide socioeconomic population of immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2009). As newcomers migrate to Canada for a number of different reasons, their journeys, experiences, and outcomes are unique (Salehi, 2010). As majority of newcomer youth in this study migrated under the family or sponsorship program, this research does not offer insight into the experiences of newcomers who immigrate under different programs, such as refugee youth. Future research on social inclusion and newcomer youth should compare diverse populations who immigrate to Canada. This will gain more insight into the ability of settlement services to foster social inclusion with other newcomer youth populations. A final and highly relevant aspect of diversity among the newcomer youth population is their length of time in Canada. The population in this study did vary with respect to length of residence in the country from 3 months to 3 years. However, these immigrant youth are still considered to be relatively recent having lived in the country from less than five years (Lochhead, 2003). Since the process of integration may last for long periods of time, this speaks to the importance of longitudinal studies to explore the social inclusion impact that settlement services have on newcomer youth over the life-course. While these limitations are important to note,
the results of this research are nonetheless significant in terms of their theoretical and policy contributions.

5.3 Theoretical Contributions

The results of this research identify major theoretical and policy contributions that relate to a better understanding of the ways in which settlement service are assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth. The first contribution of this research is broadening of the definition of social inclusion. This research has demonstrated that social inclusion is a multi-dimensional concept that encompasses not solely economic, but also social, cultural, political, and spatial discussions (Fangen, 2010). While the former is undoubtedly discussed within research (Boyd, 2002; Preston & Giles, 1995; Pendakur & Pendakur, 1998, Picot & Hou, 2003; Ornstein, 2000), the latter domains of social inclusion touched upon within this research, lie outside the current definitions of social inclusion. Yet, these results show that these arenas become important when discussing specific ways that settlement services are assisting newcomer youth to become socially included.

Additionally, the fluidity of movement between all arenas was evident for newcomer youth participants, showing that these topics are not mutually exclusive and should all be examined. For example, within the relational inclusion discussion, participants discussed the importance of meeting new friends. However, settlement services not only assisted in creating friendships, but also to create friendships outside of one’s own cultural group. Moreover, more often than not, this meant that friends were being created outside of their local neighbourhoods, as these youth lived in neighbourhoods often dominated by their own ethnic group. In addition, educational assistance provided by settlement services assisted with educational inclusion, by helping youth with their academic achievement in high school, as well as labour market inclusion, as higher education and increased skills that will assist youth with future employment. Thus, these arenas of social inclusion are interrelated, where settlement services are assisting with all.
As these arenas of social inclusion are interrelated, it is necessary to study them as connected rather than as individual aspects of social inclusion. In addition, various definitions provided in regards to social inclusion, offered within Chapter 2, illustrate the need for a holistic, multi-dimensional view of social inclusion that encompasses all marginalized populations, as well as discusses both the barriers to inclusion and the larger processes that contributing to social exclusion of populations. I believe that Fangen’s (2010) five arenas and the Laidlaw Foundation’s definition of social inclusion provide a way to extend the definition of social inclusion to encompass all marginalized groups in Canada, as illustrated in this study by its use in examining settlement services and their assistance with social inclusion for newcomer youth in the Peel Region.

5.3.1 Insights into the Multiculturalism Act and Settlement Services

The results of this research provide important insight into the relationships between settlement services and their contribution to Canada’s policy on social inclusion, Canada’s Multiculturalism Act (CMA). As discussed in Chapter 2, the effectiveness of Canadian policy, such as CMA, in promoting integration is an issue of debate (Salooje, 2003). Many suggest that the CMA promotes minority rights which detract from building a common ground and that the policy has not led to increased tolerance, but to increased fragmentation within Canada (Salooje, 2003; Kymlicka & Norman, 2000; Bibby, 1999). However, with social inclusion being outlined as a policy of the Canadian Government, and settlement services being a branch of the government that is assisting with social inclusion for newcomer youth, I believe that the guidelines set out by the Canadian Multiculturalism Act are being successfully met, as settlement services are promoting “the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the eliminations of any barrier to that participation” (Caidi & Allard, 2005, p. 311; Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988, p. 3). The role of settlement services is not only significant for understanding the success of the Multiculturalism Act but also has implications for understanding the determinants of health.
The findings of this study may provide additional insight into a recent phenomenon known as population health (Rapheal, 2009; O’Hara, 2006), which has received much attention in Canada. Population health refers to the observation that marginalized populations are at risk of experiencing detrimental health effects due to socioeconomic status within society (Raphael, 2009; O’Hara, 2006). What is of particular concern to researchers is a subsequent decline of health conditions of immigrants after arrival in Canada (Asanin & Wilson, 2009; McDonald & Kennedy, 2004; Ali, 2002; Dunn & Dyck, 2000). For example, immigrant populations have noted a decline in health to a level below host-country populations (Asanin & Wilson, 2008; Newbold & Danforth, 2003). Based on these trends, much research has focused on understanding the causes of this phenomenon. A predominant explanation for this health effect is that the acculturation process acts as a major contributor to the observed decline in immigrant health (Asanin & Wilson, 2008; Salant & Lauderdale, 2003; Hyman, 2001; Elliott & Gillie, 1998). However, social inclusion within the social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of society has been noted as a way to combat the effects of deteriorating health (O’Hara, 2006). The findings from this research with newcomer youth suggest that settlement services provide a way to assist newcomer youth populations with social inclusion. Additional research on the relationship between settlement services and social inclusion would provide valuable insight into the determinants of newcomer youth health as they integrate into suburban areas.

5.4 Policy Recommendations

5.4.1 Current Government Initiatives

As research has focused on program and service needs of newcomers during settlement and integration, the Canadian government has taken steps to improve circumstances for newcomers in recent years. For example, the provincial government has introduced a number of programs to assist newcomer youth with integration into Ontario. One such program entitled Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) was created by Citizenship and Immigration Canada. YOP provides out-of-school immigrants and newcomer youth with leadership, mentorship, and community activities to help build meaningful community
engagement (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012b). Within the Peel Region, many settlement service organizations have received $40,000.00 in funding from this program.

However, the federal government continues to make cuts from settlement services and community organizations, threatening the success of these programs and their future presence in Ontario. As newcomer youth in the Peel Region believe settlement services are important for assisting with social inclusion within Canada, there is a definite need for these programs to continue successfully. In addition, these initiatives regarding newcomer youth are fairly new and we have yet to see the total impact of these settlement services in assisting with social inclusion for youth. Continuous funding of these programs will allow for a better understanding of their success.

5.4.2 Role of Community Agencies

Settlement services have succeeded in providing accessible and convenient services for newcomer populations (Wayland, 2006; Di Base & Bauder, 2005; Wallace & Frisken, 2003). However, policy and funding challenges from both provincial and federal governments continue to persist (Wallace & Frisken, 2003). As the federal government provides program mandates, and the provincial governments develop programs, it becomes difficult for settlement services within municipalities to implement programs, as there is a ‘lack of fit’ between the needs of newcomers and available programming (Wallace & Frisken, 2003). The major challenge becomes meeting the needs of marginalized groups but having no control over policies that create disadvantage (Wallace & Frisken, 2003). This challenge becomes even more difficult, as the federal government is far removed from the experiences, issues and concerns of newcomer populations, which leads to implementing inappropriate policy changes.

In Chapter 4, a description of various settlement service programs was provided. The outline provides an overview of the organizations’ original program mandates for settlement programs in the Peel Region, as programs focus on services for adult newcomer populations. While a wide array of services are provided, it is clear that youth
settlement programs are not a primary focus for resources and funding within organizations. However, as demonstrated in this thesis, youth settlement programs are integral for assisting with a multitude of social inclusion aspects (e.g. relational, educational, spatial) and are assisting newcomer youth in becoming integrated within Canadian society. As youth populations continue to increase in Canada, a fundamental recommendation is for settlement service organizations to place greater emphasis on youth programs. The ability of newcomer youth to gain the capacities to integrate is integral for Canada’s social and economic future, as they will soon make up much of the adult population.

As aspects of settlement service programs have not been discussed in regards to newcomer youth and the availability of resources for this cohort, the participants in this study provide important information for settlement services and governments alike. All of the participants felt that the programs and services offered by settlement services were beneficial to them because it allowed them to get closer to their goals of integration within Canada (i.e. having a friends from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, graduating university or college, and attaining employment in Canada). These programs, even though they differ between age limits, hours of operation, and location, provided similar services for newcomer youth in the Peel Region. However, there were suggestions for how settlement service programs could better assist newcomer youth in integration.

Specifically, this research yielded a number of recommendations aimed at improving social inclusion for newcomer youth in the Peel Region. For instance, much of the reported needs of participants were for increased recreation and leisure activities within settlement service programs. These ranged from baseball and soccer, where a team atmosphere was highlighted, to swimming lessons and theatre workshops, where skills were gained.

In addition, youth discussed their interest in youth services being open on weekends, as they are presently provided with minimal time during the week to participate within youth programs given their other priorities such as homework or sports. Youth believed
that this opportunity would allow them to enjoy the program more than they already are and experience more opportunities that are offered by the services.

Another recommendation by many youth was the need for more youth to become aware of youth programs. As discussed in Chapter 3, promotion for settlement services has been a large driving force for youth to attend the program and youth believed that more advertising is needed. Moreover, all youth believed that they should be included within this promotion through small functions held in the community. They believe that sharing their experiences about attending settlement services will allow other newcomer youth to see the benefits of joining.

These additional recommendations provide a suitable starting point from which to improve the already successful settlement service youth programs in the Peel Region. Although newcomer youth perceptions of settlement services are already positive, I believe it is important to acknowledge the recommendations placed by current users of settlement service programs, as these newcomer youth experience the program first-hand and understand the needs of themselves and their peer group. These recommendations will attempt to ensure that newcomer youth continue to be assisted with the social inclusion process in the Peel Region, Ontario.

Although youth settlement programs have been shown to be successful in assisting with social inclusion among youth living in the Peel Region, increased government funding cuts from settlement services and community organizations raise questions about the continued success of these programs in Ontario communities. Therefore, to ensure the continued implementation of these programs, collaborations from local groups, organizations, and stakeholders is needed. To continue youth service programs, future collaborations need to include post-secondary schools, religious and cultural institutions, community centres, and sports clubs. It is important to note that Ontario post-secondary schools have partnered with settlement service organizations under The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program. As of 2010, SWIS has been active in eleven Ontario regions, including the Peel Region. With youth programs being Federally funded, the Federal Government needs to remain committed to these initiatives so that
programs such as SWIS can continue. If the Canadian Government continues to cut funding, these programs will cease to exist in Ontario communities and the social inclusion of youth will suffer as a result. However, with increased stakeholders, funding for youth programs will diversify and youth will become exposed to more opportunities in their local communities, increasing their engagement and integration. In addition, diverse stakeholders will provide those who do not have access to settlement services the means to become socially included through other programs. Furthermore, diverse programs that focus on social inclusion initiatives for newcomer youth will allow those youth to continue their integration process once they leave settlement service programs or if programs become unavailable.
References


Canadian Institute of Health Research. (2002). *Charting the course: Canadian Population Health Initiative – A Pan-Canadian consultation on population and public health priorities*. Ottawa: Canadian Institute for Health Research.


Problems. United Kingdom: Jessica Kingsley Publishers Ltd.


Kilbride, K., & Anisef, P. (2001). To Build on Hope: Overcoming the Challenges Facing Newcomer Youth at Risk in Ontario. The Ontario Administration of Settlement and Integration Services. Available Online: 


Debates. London: Arnold.


Toronto: City of Toronto. Retrieved from:


## Appendices

### Appendix 1

**Focus Group Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Prompts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of services</td>
<td>How did you hear about this service? Have you heard of others?</td>
<td>Flyer/newspaper, friends, parents, community member, school/teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why did you decide to use this service over others?</td>
<td>Individual decision, family decision, peer pressure, lack of incentives, time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of services</td>
<td>What makes it easy to use this services? Difficult?</td>
<td>Location, people, cost, time, incentives, stigma, parental pressure, peer pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(facilitators &amp; barriers)</td>
<td>Do you think these services influence your health? How so?</td>
<td>Improve, decline, knowledge, connection, stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions</td>
<td>If you could make a brand new program that was perfect for newcomer youth, what would it include?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Inclusion</td>
<td>Do you feel comfortable living in Canada? Why is that? If yes, how long did this take?</td>
<td>Sense of community, identity, length of time, ‘Canadian’ behaviours, material success, inclusion, contributing to society, civic life (voting, blood donation, charity work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is it important for you to be connected to your cultural community? Why is that?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is it important for you to be connected to the Canadian community? Why is that?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What makes these connections easy? Difficult?</td>
<td>Connection, stigma, time, interest, pressure, proximity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Have/would settlement services influence these connections? How so?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is there anything else you would like to tell us about newcomer services or living in Canada?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2
Information Letter

SOCIAL INCLUSION AMONG NEWCOMERS IN THE REGION OF PEEL:
LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR YOUTH

DATE

Dear Participant:

You have been identified as someone who may be interested in participating in a research study on the experiences with settlement services by newcomer youth in the Region of Peel. The research is being conducted by Professor Kathi Wilson (Department of Geography, University of Toronto Mississauga), Jennifer Asanin Dean (Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Geography, University of Toronto), Cassandra Thomas (Masters of Arts student, Department of Geography, University of Toronto) and Effat Ghassemi, Executive Director for the Newcomer Centre of Peel.

We are requesting your cooperation as a voluntary participant in this research. The project has received the support of [enter name of settlement service organization] and is funded by CERIS – The Ontario Metropolis Centre. If you agree to participate, we will ask you to participate in a 45 minute to 1 hour focus group interview session. During the focus group session you will be asked about your experiences with and opinions on the settlement services and programs in your area, as well as benefits or challenges to accessing these services, and their connection to feeling welcome and integrated into your local community as a recent newcomer to the Region of Peel. You will be under no obligation to answer any specific questions and all of your responses will be kept completely confidential.

Although this research may not benefit you directly, the findings will be used by the Newcomer Centre for Peel and potentially [enter name of settlement service organization] to better understand the determinants of successful social inclusion of newcomers. You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your level of participation in this study (e.g., if you choose not to participate or decide to withdraw at any point in the study) will not affect your ability to participate in any services or programs provided by [enter name of settlement service organization].

If you are interested in participating, we ask that you complete the enclosed consent form on Page 2. If you are under 16 years of age, please have your parents read the letter of information for parents, and if they consent to your participation in this research, please have them complete the parental consent form and return your consent form. Please return your completed forms in the envelope provided to [enter name of contact at settlement service organization]. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact us or the Ethics Office at the University of Toronto 12 Queen's Park Crescent West, 3rd Floor, Toronto, ON M5S 1S8 Phone: 416-946-3273.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kathi Wilson</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Department of Geography</td>
<td>University of Toronto Mississauga</td>
<td>905-828-3864</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kathi.wilson@utoronto.ca">kathi.wilson@utoronto.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Asanin Dean</td>
<td>Postdoctoral Fellow and Lecturer</td>
<td>Department of Geography</td>
<td>University of Toronto Mississauga</td>
<td>905-569-4384</td>
<td><a href="mailto:j.asanin@utoronto.ca">j.asanin@utoronto.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassandra Thomas</td>
<td>Masters of Arts Graduate Student</td>
<td>Department of Geography</td>
<td>University of Toronto Mississauga</td>
<td>905-306-0577</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cass.thomas@mail.utoronto.ca">cass.thomas@mail.utoronto.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effact Ghassemi</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Newcomer Centre of Peel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:eghassemi@ncpeel.ca">eghassemi@ncpeel.ca</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3
Informed Consent Form

[UTM LOGO]

CONSENT FORM: Participation in Focus Groups

I understand that participation in this research project is limited to youth who currently use services at [enter name of settlement service organization]. I understand that I will participate in a focus group interview session that will ask for my experiences and views on the services I currently use and my opinions about the benefits of these services as well as the challenges to accessing them or other services at the [enter name of settlement service organization]. The focus group will include other members in my age range who use services at [enter name of settlement service organization]. The focus group session will last around one hour. I understand that with my permission the focus group interview session will be audio-recorded and later transcribed. I am aware that the audiotapes and transcripts will be used only by the researchers and their research assistants, and that no other person will have access to them. The audiotapes and transcripts will not have my name or any other identifying information on them. A research code number will be used instead. The completed focus group transcriptions, audiotapes and other research data will be stored in a secure, locked cabinet. No information will be released or printed that would disclose any personal identity and all such research data will be destroyed after five years after the date of the last publication. During focus group interview sessions, all participants will be reminded that the information shared during the session is confidential, and is not to be repeated to those outside of the group. However, there is a limit to the researcher’s ability to ensure confidentiality for information shared during these sessions.

I understand that my parents have consented to my participation in this study but that I am under no obligation to agree to participate. Any questions I have asked about the study have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been assured that no information will be released or printed that would disclose my personal identity. Any risks or benefits that might arise out of my participation have also been explained to my satisfaction. I understand that my decision either to participate or not to participate will be kept completely confidential. There are, however, certain limits to the confidentiality of the information collected within group settings (because, for example, other people may hear what I say). All participants are asked that they refrain from discussing what they hear outside of the focus group setting. I further understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time without explanation.

I understand that, although this research will not benefit me directly, by participating in this study I will be contributing to the understanding of service and program needs of newcomers in the Region of Peel. I understand that the findings of this study will be shared with our community partner, Newcomer Centre of Peel.

I understand what this study involves and agree to participate. I have been given a copy of this consent form.
I, __________________________ (please print name), agree to take part in a qualitative study examining perceptions of settlement services and programs available at [enter name of settlement service organization] or other centres I have accessed in the Region of Peel.

____________________________
Signature                      Date
Appendix 4
Socio-demographic Survey

Gender: (circle) Male     Female       Age: ____________

Country of Birth: ________________________________

How long have you lived in Canada? ________________________________

Who did you move to Canada with? ________________________________

What program did you arrive under?

_____ Economic/Skilled Worker Program
_____ Family/Sponsorship Program
_____ Temporary Residency (Student Visa, Temporary Worker Program)
_____ Refugee Program
_____ Other

How do you spend your time outside of school hours? (Check all that apply):

___ At home with family
___ Taking part in organized extracurricular activities (Ex. sports teams, clubs)
___ Playing informal sports with some friends
___ Hanging out with friends at my/their house
___ On the computer chatting with friends
___ Playing video/computer games or watching tv
___ Working a part-time job
___ Reading, listening to music in my own
___ Doing school work on my own
___ With friends doing homework
___ Hanging out with friends in a city space (Ex. mall, recreation centre)
___ Other: (please specify)__________________________________________

Which local services do you use most often in your community? How long does it take you to get there?

Service: ____________________ Time: __________ By: car   bike   foot   bus
Service: ____________________ Time: __________ By: car   bike   foot   bus
Service: ____________________ Time: __________ By: car   bike   foot   bus
Service: ____________________ Time: __________ By: car   bike   foot   bus

For how long have you been coming to this service? ________________________________

Which programs do you participate in here? ________________________________

What local services for youth would you like to see more of?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________