A LITERATURE REVIEW OF CANADIAN IMMIGRATION, CRIME PERPETRATION, VICTIMISATION, WELLBEING

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Mount Royal University is located on the traditional territories of the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta, which includes the Siksika, the Piikani, the Kainai, the Tsuut'ina, the Iyarhe Nakoda, and Métis Region 3. We are situated on land where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, the traditional Blackfoot name of this place is "Mohkinstsis" which we now call the City of Calgary.

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Abstract

Over the past several decades, many people and journals have engaged in the debate surrounding immigration and its effect on criminality. This research summarises and makes accessible the Canadian scientific consensus on Canadian immigration and crime, factors affecting changes in crime, such as the well-being of immigrants and refugees, as well as their victimisation. This research is a secondary literature review which also contains theoretical application of the Critical Race Theory. This theory is most compatible with the issues discussed as well as to provide further qualitative depth to the literature reviewed. Conclusions and further public policy recommendations towards a more equitable society are made based on the result of the literature review.

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Glossary

Different technical terms are used in the literature and in theoretical paradigms. It is important they are provided here to assist the reader with clarity.

G7 - the international Group of Seven is a political forum consisting of Canada, Germany, France, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The objective of the group is the discussion of the most relevant international issues and the possible solutions for these issues (Boyko, 2021).

Immigrant - "persons who are, or who have ever been, landed immigrants or permanent residents. Such persons have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalisation are included in this category" (Statistics Canada, 2021, n.p.). Although it has been found that in the American context that there are differences in rates of offending and perceived legitimacy of authority between first- and second-generation immigrants, it is outside the scope of this study to attempt to examine these differences in the Canadian context (Piquero et al., 2016).

Intersectionality - framework which is used to describe the overlap of social identities and how they are affected by systems of oppression. Originally coined by Kimberle W. Crenshaw (1989) in her work *Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics*, it was an effort to distinguish the intersectional experience from "the sum of racism and sexism" against black women (p.140).

Non-immigrant - "persons who are citizens by birth in Canada" (Statistics Canada, 2021, n.p.). Unless mentioned otherwise, this study considers only those who were not born in Canada.

Offending / perpetration - defined as committing an offence within the *Canadian Criminal Code.* As such, offenders are those convicted of a crime and perpetrators are those who are accused of having committed a criminal offence.

Refugee - "people who have fled their countries of origin because of fear of persecution. They are not able to return home. They have seen or experienced many horrors" (Government of Canada, 2019).

Victimisation - being the target of a criminal act found within the *Canadian Criminal Code.* The kinds of Criminal Code offences are highlighted and discussed in the context of each source examined.

Well-being – mental and physical well-being can be attained when the following conditions and resources of health are met: peace, shelter, education, food, income, a stable ecosystem, sustainable resources, social justice, and equity (World Health Organisation, 1986). As it is challenging to seek out a study that would successfully examine all the dimensions of this definition of 'well-being', they are all discussed separately and appropriately for each study.

Methodology

This is an exploratory study that includes qualitative and quantitative data collection methods through a review of academic and grey literature. These methods include a comprehensive literature review and a statistical analysis of perpetration and victimisation in studies. The objective of this study is to understand how immigration and immigrants' wellness impacts criminality in Canada and to determine whether some groups are more criminalised or victimised than others.

The influence of immigration on perpetration and victimisation of immigrants is also considered. The purpose of this project was not only to contribute an understanding of the connection between immigration and criminality but also to focus on the wellness component of immigrants. To attempt to understand the immigrants' criminality, the Critical Race Theory will be considered. The main research question for this study is: "How does immigration and immigrants' wellness impact criminality in Canada?"

Secondary Data Literature Review

Literature review was chosen as the primary method of data collection because it closely aligns with the general purpose of a literature review, which is to "synthesize theory, themes, and trends by evaluating the findings in connection with a research problem and questions" (Kennedy, 2007, n.p.). The type of literature review used is integrative review, which "synthesizes representative literature on a topic in an integrated way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated" (Kennedy, 2007, n.p.). This type of review was chosen because it would allow for both a thorough review of the available data as well as the integration of a theoretical perspective on the topic. It is said that "writing a literature review that is integrative, definitive, and provocative is the result of the author combining several elements

in the review: critical analysis of existing literature, synthesis of new knowledge about the topic, discussion of the conceptual reasoning used to integrate the concepts and ideas found in the literature, the implications of the review for further research on the topic, and what the review suggests about future directions for the topic" (Torraco, 2016, pp. 404-428). As such, this method is perfect for collecting, examining, and reflecting on the literature.

Although the method chosen works well for the purposes of the paper, there are some downsides. Due to the nature of this paper's methodology, it is not possible to obtain any new information in a way that a primary data research project is able to gather. New, unanswered questions are produced because of this research with the hope that it will serve as inspiration for future feasible solutions to the problems discussed. As stated by Daintith et al. (2000), "the outcome of any serious research can only be to make two questions grow where only one grew before" (p. 484).

Physical and digital academic sources were accessed through the Mount Royal University library, Statistics Canada publications, the National Library of Medicine, and Google Scholar. The key terms used to find relevant information were immigration, refugee, victimisation, perpetration, crime, criminality, well-being, and health outcomes.

Literature Review

Perpetration

The subject of immigration and criminality is one that has received wide attention in Canada, and considerable shifts in immigration policy and general attitudes towards immigrants have happened in the past twenty years (Huot et al., 2015). International research has shown that when compared to other G7 countries, Canadian citizens are the least likely to believe that

immigrants cause an increase in crime rates (Simon & Sikich, 2007). Although it can be said that in general, Canadians' beliefs are accurate with regards to the objective reality of this issue, there is still a need to establish an accurate understanding of immigrants' effect on crime rates.

In a longitudinal study that employs fixed effects linear regression models (estimates effects of constant intrinsic characteristics on the outcome) to analyse the changes in immigration and crime rates during a 35-year period, Jung (2020) found that there was no relationship between immigration and increased crime. On the contrary, certain urban areas experienced lower crime rates in times of increased immigration numbers. Using data from the Canadian Census, the National Household Survey, and the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Jung (2020) found that there was a negative relationship between immigration and crime within Canadian cities in the 1976-2011 period. Meaning, not only did cities with increased immigration have a decrease in crime rates, but cities with decreased immigration had an increase in crime rates. One suggestion that Jung (2020) presents as an explanation for this trend is the 'pro-social' values that immigrants bring into the new communities. These values can be a result of having to give up life in their previous country and focus on hard work to attain success for themselves and their families.

A study conducted by Dinovitzer et al. (2009) focused on the individual-level mechanisms that can explain how Toronto area immigrant youth refrain from criminality. By replicating a survey design applied in 1976 to 1999 secondary school students, the researchers found that in 2006, immigrant youth in Canada were less likely to engage in illegalities than those youth who are born in Canada (Dinovitzer et al., 2009). The researchers also found that:

"During [the] period when non-European immigration to Canada increased dramatically, commitment to education has markedly increased in these schools. There is compelling

evidence in these data that with investment in education comes a sense of commitment

and a resulting stake in conformity that makes these youth averse to the risk of losing

their cumulative investments through illegal involvement" (p.372).

Their findings can be compared to those stated by Jung (2020), in that immigrant families and

youth can embody cultural values that decrease the likelihood of criminality. Although

Dinovitzer et al. (2009) broadly refer to them as 'dispositions' as opposed to 'values', the

explanations can be said to hold certain similarities.

Another study that was conducted about immigration and crime focused on comparing

first-generation youth (those who immigrated after 12 years of age) and what they call one-and-

a-half generation youth (immigrated before 12 years of age). Hagan et al. (2008) found that,

regardless of racial background, both first generation youth and one-and-a-half generation youth

are much less likely to engage in criminality than Canadian-born youth of immigrant parents or

Canadian-born youth of Canadian-born parents. Additionally, it was discovered that there was no

significant difference in criminality between second generation youth and Canadian-born youth.

Although the authors state that they do not favour the consideration of immigration as a pure

cost-benefit analysis in terms of crime rates, they write that "if any such ledger is drawn up, it is

clear that when it comes to crime, immigration is favourable for receiving states" (Hagan et al.,

2008, p. 106).

Even though the general relationship between criminality and immigration is clear, it

must be acknowledged that this trend is different when it comes to organised crime. In a study

completed by Gordon (2000), it was revealed that although incarcerated immigrant gang

members in the province of British Columbia were in the minority (32% of the total incarcerated

gang members), they were still overrepresented when compared to the non-immigrant population

(only 22% of the total BC population are immigrants). As the study also highlighted, those who are immigrants appear to be more likely to be part of organised crime associations rather than loosely formed street gangs. Most of them were also members of Vietnamese or Chinese origin. When questioned about why they felt inclined to join organised crime groups it was revealed that often there was a "social and cultural bond which attracted individuals to organisations and that addressed their sense of ethnic and cultural marginality in a predominantly Euro-Canadian environment" (Gordon, 2000, p. 50). These same organised crime members stated that upon arriving in Canada they found little to no legitimate opportunities for employment and few settlement-related support. Combined with lacking English reading and writing skills, it is possible to understand why these immigrants felt that lucrative organised crime opportunities (some of which were stated to generate as much as $30,000 per month) fulfilled their needs. On the other hand, street gang members were predominantly born in Canada (over 60%) but still overrepresented with regards to being racialized (over 85%). This sample included people with comparatively lower education levels in individuals of Hispanic, Iranian, Chinese, and Vietnamese origins (Gordon, 2000). Similarly, to organised crime members, most street gang members felt marginalised. However, the prime motivation for this group was to escape from stressful and unpleasant home family conditions. Factors such as abusive parents, poverty, single parenthood, and general neglect were described. Regarding the subject of immigrant youth gangs, Wortley and Tanner (2006) wrote:

> A great deal of public concern has been recently expressed over the concept of the "immigrant youth gang." The idea is that youth gang activity in Canada may be increasing because of recent immigration from certain "gang-prone" nations. In other

words, serious youth gang activity is being imported from other countries into Canada.

(p.29)

Interestingly, the authors state that current research on Toronto youth gangs does not support the idea that involvement in crime can be influenced by immigration from "gang-prone nations" (Wortley, Tanner, 2006). Canadian born youth is more likely to engage with criminal activities in general than immigrant youth (Wortley, Tanner, 2006). A more accurate observation would be that youth with lower socio-economic status and racialized groups are at a higher risk of engaging with gang activity. Reciprocating this trend is a study done by Van Ngo et al., (2015),

Our analysis showed that gang-involved youth had experienced multiple, severe and prolonged personal and interpersonal challenges in all facets of their lives and that gradual disintegration of their relationships with family, school and community had resulted in the unravelling of self-concept, ethnic identity, sense of belonging and sense of citizenship and progressively propelled them towards membership in high-risk social cliques and criminal gangs. (p.63)

Some respondents of the study done by Van Ngo et al., (2015) were Somali Canadian and Lebanese Canadian. Although the study results did not address the experiences of these groups specifically, the results apply to them also. Future research needs to focus on the unique experiences of these groups as it is an understudied topic.

Stemming from these studies is the idea that immigration policy should not attempt to target groups of immigrants which it unfoundedly assumes to be inherently more likely to partake in gang activity. To prosper, the needs and challenges of marginalised immigrants need to be understood and approached with care. This topic is expanded on in the 'Critical Race Theory' portion of this paper.

I could not find literature about Canadian law enforcement and policy aimed at immigrants with the purpose of crime reduction. However, the question of efficacy of such programs was raised by researchers from the United States of America. Koper et al., (2013) conducted a broad study of law enforcement policy involving checking the immigration status of the U.S. citizens and found that it did not affect "most forms of crime" save for "aggravated assault", which declined uniformly and even in geographical areas where such policy was not implemented. Although it is not possible to say with certainty that the same result would be discovered had the same policy and research occurred within the Canadian context, "if we continue to focus our time and resources on legal crackdowns on immigrants rather than on social policies that build on their strengths, then we should not be surprised if results are less than optimal" (Lee, 2013, p.282).

Victimisation

As per Harris and Gruenwald (2019), victimisation of immigrants has been found to be overall less covered in media than criminality of immigrants (pp. 452-470). Although their study examined news media outlets from the United States exclusively, research of media coverage in Canada shows trends that are not too different. An older study done by Greenberg and Hier (2001) revealed that many Canadian media during the mid 90's was mostly concerned with reporting the interconnections between immigration, crime and victimisation from the lens of a certain political perspective (in this case, right-wing). As the authors write:

> [The media] portrayal encompassed three particular features: first, the migrants' arrivals would prompt a sharp increase in both international and domestic organised crime; second, they would bring with them infectious diseases that would harm "legitimate" citizens; and third, Canada was only a stopover to the migrants' ultimate destination of

the United States, a point of special concern for advocates of economic free trade (p.

580).

Although reports on victimisation were still made, they were outweighed by the reports about the

potential crime and danger that immigrants may 'bring' from their countries of origin. As this

section explains, victimisation of immigrants is a complex subject, and thorough analysis is

required to understand its reality in Canada.

The 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' Safety (Victimisation) revealed

that Canadian immigrants in general experience less self-reported victimisation than Canadian-

born citizens, 39 incidents per 1,000 population against 86 per 1,000 population (Ibrahim, 2018).

It is worthy to note that the GSS is published cyclically every five years, and that the survey of

Canadians' safety is not always included. There is also a more pronounced historical decline in

self-reported victimisation of immigrants than non-immigrants between from 2004 to 2014

(-43% to -26%). The survey did report, however, that on average the immigrants' victimisation is

more likely to be gang related. This is an understudied connection that should be explored

further.

A study done by Saunders et al. (2020) attempts to establish how one's immigration and

refugee status affects one's chances of becoming a victim to a violent injury. In this cohort-based

study, health and administrative databases of Ontario were analysed for instances of violent

injuries requiring acute care or causing death. Aside from the victimisation component, the study

found that more immigrants lived in the lowest neighbourhood income quintile (30.5% vs

18.2%). Additionally, 17.9% of all immigrants were refugees and the results showed that rates of

violent injury of non-immigrants were the highest, while those of refugee immigrants were

slightly lower, and those of non-refugee immigrants were more than twice as low. In terms of

variables that are associated with higher violent victimisation, this study did not reciprocate general trends in Canada's violent victimisation. Statistically it can be said that women and under 18 years of age are associated with higher rates of victimisation (Cotter, 2021). However, Cotter's (2021) study established that violent victimisation tends to be higher in those immigrants who are male. Additionally, there were differences in rates of assault by the country of origin of the immigrant. The lowest rates of assault were found among those who immigrated from the largest 'intake' countries: Pakistan, India, China, Sri Lanka, the United States, and Philippines. Consistent with the trend in perpetration, immigrants from Somalia were also found to have the highest rate of violent victimisation.

Saunders et al. (2020) attempts to explain these results by highlighting that most immigrants in the non-refugee category are those that come from family and economic classes and in which variables such as language skills, socioeconomic status, and forced migration are different from those who are in the refugee category. The authors of the research also believe that the reason why refugees had a higher rate of victimisation than non-refugees is because even though they have more overall negative experiences, "other factors, such as family cohesion, hope, opportunity, settlement supports, and living in urban centres with high-density immigrant communities" reduce their victimisation and increase health outcomes (Saunders et al, 2020, p.10).

As part of The Somali Youth Research Initiative (Muna et al., 2018), a report was published to examine the unique issues facing the Somali-Canadian community and families. Consistent with findings from the study of Saunders et al. (2020), the findings from the Somali Youth Research Initiative written by Muna et al. (2018) state that Somali-Canadians represented 16% of all homicide victims in Toronto in the year 2014, despite making up roughly 1% of the

total Toronto population. Although the report did not differentiate between first generation and second-generation immigrants in its statistical component, there are important findings pertaining to immigrants. As Muna et al. (2018) wrote:

> Psychosocial trauma and poor social integration contributed immensely to the immigration experience of Somali families. In recent years, second-generation Somali youth have grown to negotiate these issues differently, and yet what remains is an almost identical scenario to the first generation where Somali youth have continued to be viewed as vulnerable, with limited educational opportunities, and compromised access to the labour market (p.16).

Another key finding identified in the report is how the history of immigration of Somali-Canadians made them face the challenges such as they are facing today. Even though roughly three decades have passed since the first wave of Somali immigrants arrived to Canada, they continue to face socio-economic challenges such as being forced to settle in government-subsidised housing which in turn compromises their access to the labour market. These are all important factors that contribute to the systemic problems that increase victimisation rates of Somali-Canadian immigrants, decrease their quality of life, and perpetuate outcomes that limit their life opportunity.

Because it is outside of the scope of this paper to examine issues that pertain to second and third generation immigrants it is difficult to examine topics which do not separate generations of immigrants. Nonetheless, anti-Asian sentiment and victimisation during the period of Covid-19 epidemic need to be highlighted as issues which possibly impacted first generation Asian-Canadian immigrants as well. A qualitative method thematic analysis conducted by MacNab (2021) finds that xenophobia and anti-Asian influence have never stopped existing, but

simply re-emerged with renewed motivation during Covid-19. As MacNab argues, entrenched colonial anti-Asian racism is still present in Canadian society, although in a different form. Nowadays, the hate-motivation for anti-Asian assault is spread digitally, via various racist memes and false news articles (MacNab, 2021). The result of this is the clear increase in police-reported hate crimes motivated by race or ethnicity in the years 2019-2021. The indexes of hate motivated victimisation increased from 67 to 305 and from 81 to 164 for 'East and Southeast Asian' and 'South Asian' categories respectively (Statistics Canada, 2023). It is currently not possible to determine what percentage of those victims are first generation immigrants to Canada, and studying this issue further would illuminate the problems facing Asian Canadian immigrants in a clearer manner.

Well-being

Many immigrants and refugees come to Canada eager to build new life for themselves, to contribute to the country, as well as to enjoy the many benefits it offers. A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2020) report on refugees in Canada identified that refugees, on average: are less unemployed than Canadian-born (6% vs 8%), earn slightly less income than all Canadians, are mostly employed in high-skilled jobs (51%, doctors, architects, software engineers), are engaging in entrepreneurship more (14% vs 12%), are less likely to own homes than Canadian-born (65% vs 79%), report a high sense of belonging compared to Canadian-born (95% vs 91%) and engage in higher undergraduate university education more than Canadian-born (25% vs 18.5%). As with all statistics, they only show the objective truth, and it is up to the researchers to make inferences based on these objective truths. In this case, the numbers indicate that refugees are no less ambitious and entrepreneurial than Canadian-born people (as evidenced

by higher education attainment and business ownership) but that a certain percentage of them may be facing unique challenges due to which they are overrepresented in select few perpetration statistics (as seen in the 'perpetration' section). Because well-being is a necessary part of the overarching conversation regarding immigrants' lives in Canada it needs to be thoroughly considered.

One of the largest reports on immigrant well-being in Canada was prepared by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The two authors of this report, Robert & Gilkinson (2012), focused on the gap that exists between the known level of freshly arrived immigrants and those who have had the opportunity to live in Canada for a few years. The authors utilised the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada (LSIC) to measure all aspects of well-being: emotional help and stress levels, socio-demographic and socio-economic variables, and general physical health and psycho-social variables. As a result of this study, it was found that roughly 29% of all immigrants reported having emotional problems and that a slight increase was found in stress levels in the four years that the immigrants were polled. The study also suggests that biological sex, category of immigration, region of origin, socioeconomic position, and personal evaluation of the immigration process were the most decisive factors in one's mental and emotional well-being. Female immigrants were more likely to report experiencing emotional problems than males (Robert & Gilkinson, 2012). Consistent with findings in the other sections of this paper, the authors of the report also found that refugees are the most vulnerable category of immigration. They were found to be significantly more likely to report experiencing emotional problems and high levels of stress. Additionally, those from South and Central America, from Asia and Pacific as well as those from the lowest income quartile were more likely to experience high levels of stress in their daily life. These findings seem to replicate the general trends seen in

other sections. Even though it is difficult to establish concrete connections due to the difference in how the studies are formulated and their sample population, the intersectionality in the experiences of immigrants is elaborated on in the 'Critical Race Theory' section.

Immigration is a significant and unusual change in the lives of many, specifically those who are people of colour in Canada. Racialized immigrants represent 19.1%, and despite making up a considerable part of the Canadian society, they still face racism and discrimination (Este, 2018). A study done by Agyekum et al. (2020) underscores that it is beneficial to facilitate immigrants with a choice to retain their connection to communities from their original country of immigration. Agyekum et al. (2020) also identified the key factors that help in the visible minority immigrant integration and improve wellbeing, those being: employment, housing, education, health, and language interpretation. This is consistent with the previously mentioned study regarding Somali immigrants (Muna et al., 2018), which highlighted many of the same factors as being important to disturbing the cycle of victimisation and violence. Taking into consideration the entirety of the studies discussed in this section, it becomes clear that to attempt the solution of problems connected to perpetration, victimisation, or well-being, one would have to effectively consider all the individual issues as parts of a larger systemic problem.

Critical Race Theory

Encyclopaedia Britannica defines critical race theory (also known as CRT) as an "intellectual and social movement and loosely organized framework of legal analysis based on the premise that race is not a natural, biologically grounded feature of physically distinct subgroups of human beings but a socially constructed (culturally invented) category that is used to oppress and exploit people of colour" (Duignan, 2023. n.p.). At its core, CRT is a theoretical framework that uses a critical lens to examine the social construct of race and its consequences. There are also a few 'themes' or 'tenets' that are thought to be part of CRT, and the one that is most relevant to this paper is intersectionality. Although intersectionality is a separate concept that originates from black feminist academia (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993), it is understood to be part of CRT and will be treated as such by this paper. In many ways, CRT focuses on the American context and the experiences of racialized people in the USA. While the Canadian context is undeniably different, the theory itself is generally applicable to many different contexts. As described by Crenshaw (1989), intersectionality is not a concept that is intended to only be used for a specific race, class, or gender problem in one specific location. Thus, intersectionality can be used to analyse the experiences of racialized immigrants in Canada as well.

How are the concepts of racism and intersectionality understood by CRT and how can they be applied to the immigrants who are the focus of this paper? Although there is not a single definitive description, there is a set of clear academic approaches and understandings that describes what racism is understood to be:

[It] is an understanding that "race" is socially constructed and that "racial difference" is invented, perpetuated, and reinforced by society. In this approach, racism is understood to

be complex, subtle, and flexible; it manifests differently in different contexts, and

minoritized groups are subject to a range of different (and changing) stereotypes

(Gillborn, 2015, p.278)

Some authors, such as Hayes (2013), claim that the point of CRT is to vilify the general population of 'white people' and to enforce the belief that one holds inherently racist ideas because of the whiteness of one's skin. Upon investigating some of the most cited CRT works (Gillborn, 2015, Delgado & Stefancic, 1993) it becomes clear that not only is this representation of CRT not accurate, it also misinterprets the point of "intersectionality" as a key element of CRT, regarding it as 'too personal' and placing too much importance on individual experiences (Cabrera, 2018). On the contrary, intersectionality has two key elements: an empirical basis to understand the social elements that affect people's experiences, and the activist component, which aims to form coalitions between different groups and make a step towards changing the status quo of racism (Gillborn, 2015).

It is important to consider Canada's history of racism against immigrants through the lens of CRT. The movement of non-British or French immigrants onto the land of Indigenous peoples began towards the end of the 19th century, when it was determined by the newly elected minister of the interior, Clifford Sifton, that many more settlers were needed for cheap labour and to produce agricultural products on the land of forcefully displaced First Nations and Métis people (Troper, 2013). According to the immigration policy of that time there existed a list of 'ideal settlers' that were listed in a descending preference: British, American, French, Belgian, Dutch, Scandinavian, Swiss, Finnish, Russian, Austro-Hungarians, Germans, Ukrainians, Poles, Italians, South Slavs, Greeks, Syrians, Jews, Asians, Roma people, and Black people (Troper, 2013).

According to the colonial government, those that were listed towards the end were considered 'less desirable, less likely to assimilate'.

It is, of course, intentional that those people who are non-white were listed towards the end of the 'ideal settler' list. It is also worth noting that colonial Canada of that time seemed to have a flexible practice of racism when it came to immigrants. For example, Sir John Alexander Macdonald (the first prime minister of Canada) espoused the following with regards to Ukrainian and Eastern European immigrants in Manitoba:

> He did not wish to have a mongrel breed in this part of Canada. He wanted good men of the same race as ourselves. He would add to the next franchise act, an education clause cutting out anyone who cannot sign his name and read in English (Melnycky, 1970).

Indeed, it seems that immigrants of certain nationalities and ethnicities that appear white were not considered to be such by the government of Canada, unless they could sign their name in English. Considering this from the perspective of CRT, it is possible to say that the leaders of colonial Canada invented a racial difference for newcomers to the country and reinforced it through their policy practice for the purpose of societal control and economic benefit, which continued for almost century. It is also possible that they wanted to invent a factor of social 'otherness' to ensure that they can extract the most benefit from these immigrants while not giving them any political or social autonomy in return.

Another more specific measure was the targeting of Asian immigrants between 1885 and 1946 (Chan, 2016). The Chinese head tax was a racist policy taxing Chinese immigrants after no more labour was needed (Chan, 2016). The head tax was the first official policy to exclude an immigrant based on their ethnic background. Between 1885 and 1923 Chinese people were the only immigrants who had to pay a head tax of $50 (later going up to $100 and then up to $500)

to come to Canada. During the period when the tax was in effect, roughly 82,000 Chinese people paid a sum of about $23 million dollars to the Canadian government. The primary reason for the introduction of this tax was to discourage immigration from non-European countries to Canada. Canada's then Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald promoted a policy that would allow the Chinese immigrants to come for the purpose of cheaper construction labour for the Canadian Pacific Railway, but later would advocate for the head tax to prevent a 'yellow peril' from degrading Canada's 'social fabric' (Troper, 2013). These discriminatory practices were some of the strongest that resulted in hardships for immigrants.

Another discriminatory operation of the Canadian government against immigrants was the forcible confinement and internment of immigrants and naturalised immigrants during the two World Wars. Around 8,500 people from various countries who were considered enemies of Canada, were interned during the First World War, and some 24,000 were interned during the Second World War (Roy, 2020). It was reasoned that citizens of enemy nations should either be interned as collaborators or return and fight for their home countries. At that time the Canadian government authorised the arrest and detention of 'enemy aliens' if they were believed to be engaging in espionage or assisting the enemy (Germany, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria during the First World War, and Japan, Germany, and Italy during the Second World War). The majority of 5,954 'Austro-Hungarian' men out of 8,579 interned were Ukrainian people who only had Austro-Hungarian documentation due to their homeland being occupied by the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the time. The internees had their property confiscated and were often made to work on large labour projects such as construction, logging, and mining operations for a salary that was half of the "regular" citizen's salary (Roy, 2020). During the Second World War, Germans, Italians, and Jews were all interned either as enemy

aliens or prisoners of war (regardless of whether they were actual prisoners of war). Of note is also the internment of Japanese Canadians. 21,000 Japanese Canadians (most of whom were Canadian born) were divided by sex and housed in livestock barns. Furthermore, 12,000 Japanese Canadians were moved to abandoned mining towns in British Columbia, their property confiscated and sold by the Canadian government. 4,000 of these internees were deported because the Second World War ended. The Canadian government made strong efforts to limit the freedoms and immigration of those it deemed too "other".

With respect to the modern Canadian immigration policy, much has changed, especially since Canada's official adoption of the Multiculturalism Policy in 1971 (Berry, 2013). However, considering the empirical evidence that exists regarding the issues facing immigrant groups like the Somali Canadians, there is much work to be done. Racialized and financially disadvantaged refugees who come to Canada are facing a different objective reality than those who come to this country equipped to deal with major life changes and economic challenges. It is a reality in which they see themselves subjected to discrimination and disadvantage because of the interconnected nature of their identities. The groups are willing to speak and share their experiences, but there must be tangible effort and cooperation from those who represent the provinces of this country and from the federal government.

Recognizing the immigrant's unique status when it comes to victimisation and perpetration of crime in the modern context is crucial. Looking at these issues from the perspective of CRT, it is possible that the racialized immigrants' victimisation and worse levels of mental health could be interconnected and influenced by xenophobia and racism. Although general encounters with xenophobia were not measured as a variable in the literature reviewed, it would be a worthy endeavour to investigate the intersection of these social variables. In terms of

perpetration, it was also mentioned that the immigrants that do engage in perpetration of crime more than non-immigrants tend to be racialized and disadvantaged immigrants (Muna 2018), who are forced to turn to crime to make up for lack of legitimate employment. As Adams (2000) writes:

> Beyond the formalities of passports and citizenship documents, at what point does an immigrant become a product of his new country? We warmly embrace as our own successful athletes and entrepreneurs who arrive in Canada as adolescents or adults. Should we also take more responsibility for those who don't work out so well, even if they neglect to get their citizenship? (p.38)

Statistics

Considering the importance of empirical evidence to the literature reviewed in this paper as well as to the concept of CRT, it is necessary to review the statistics in greater detail.

Perpetration

Reviewing the most recent data I could find with regards to public attitudes towards immigration and crime, Canadians, on average, tend to hold more favourable views of immigrants than residents of other G7 countries (see Figure 1) (Japan, United States, and France not pictured). In 2003, about 46% of the survey respondents either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed" that immigrants increase crime in the country, compared to the 27% that either 'agreed' 'or strongly agreed'. A few important observations need to be made on this statistic. Firstly, it seems that the public attitude of Canadians of that time was at odds with the prevailing negative and socially conservative media attitude towards immigrants (Greenberg & Hier, 2001). Secondly, connecting this statistic with the one outlining increases in hate-motivated violent crimes against racialized Canadians (MacNab, 2021) raises questions on how relevant this statistic is in the modern context. As such, new quantitative studies need to be conducted into public attitudes regarding immigrants and general and racialized immigrants specifically.

Figure 1

Opinions about Whether Immigrants Increase Crime (in percent)

Table 4. OPINIONS ABOUT WHETHER IMMIGRANTS INCREASE CRIME (IN PERCENT)

Country	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total (N)
Australia						
1995	10	22	26	31	12	100 (2,276)
2003	11	24	29	29	7	100 (2,098)
Canada						
1995	5	16	24	38	17	100 (1,417)
2003	8	19	27	36	10	100 (1,163)
West Germany						
1995	20	36	22	18	5	100 (1,120)
2003	17	45	21	13	4	100 (786)
East Germany						
1995	28	40	18	12	3	100 (564)
2003	23	44	18	12	3	100 (406)
Great Britain						
1995	8	19	35	32	7	100 (958)
2003	14	26	33	25	3	100 (834)

Note. From *Public Attitudes toward Immigrants and Immigration Policies across Seven Nations* [Figure], by Simon & Sikich, 2007.

The next figure comes from the longitudinal study done by Jung (2020). Jung examines the relationships between immigration and perpetration of criminality (for violent and property crimes), on a macro level in the context of what she refers to as CMA's (Census Metropolitan Areas) for the periods of 1976-2011. The specific CMAs included in the study are: Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, and Toronto. Following the result of Jung's study, a general relationship was established: as the immigration index decreased, the violent crime rate increased

(see Figure 2). Although this is a general statistic that tells us about the general relationship

between immigration and crime perpetration in Canada, it is nonetheless a complex figure that

includes some invisible factors within it. As Jung (2020) states, there is a proportion of the

immigrant population that consists of "recent immigrants [which] was positively associated with

the violent crime rate" (p. 85). It was established earlier in this paper that there are certain

populations of immigrants who are induced to partake in organised criminal activities by the

adverse conditions they are facing. A key learning that needs to be derived from Jung's study is

that we cannot let these groups of immigrants be 'lost' in the generalised statistics. On the

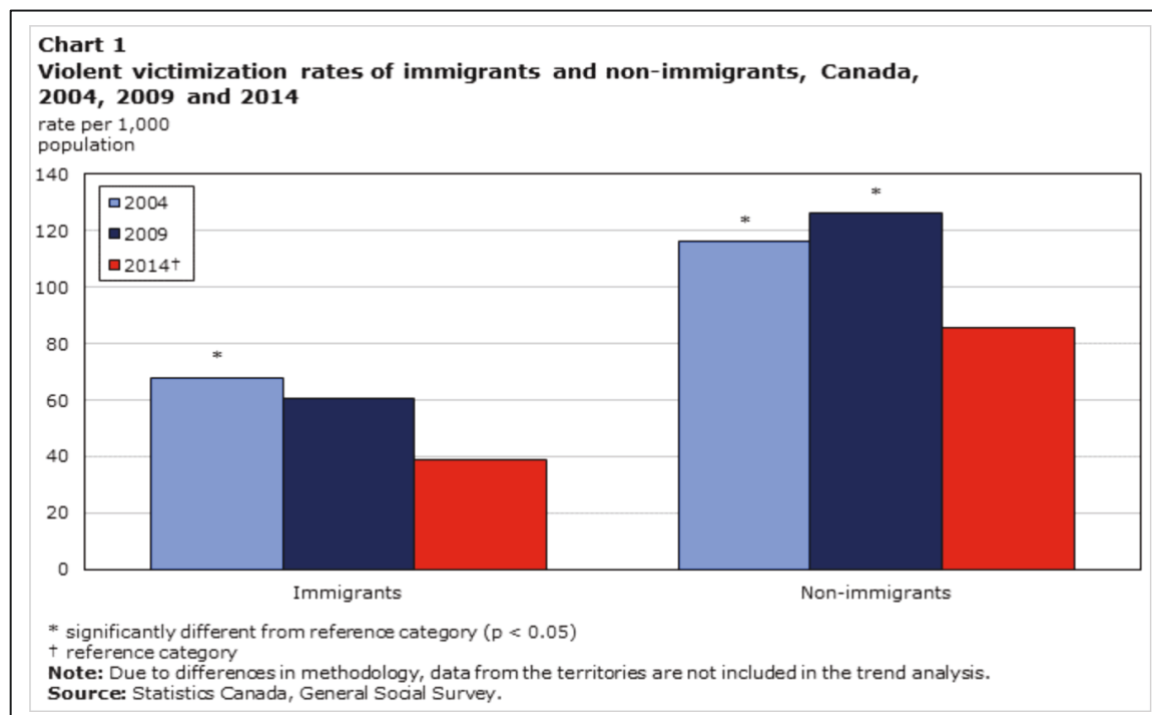contrary, we need to dedicate more effort to their unique circumstances.

Figure 2

Note. Figure 2 has been removed due to copyright restrictions. It was a graph showing the

negative relationship between the violent crime rate and the immigration index in Regina

between the years of 1976 and 2011. Original source: Jung, M. (2008) Immigration and Crime in

Canadian Cities: A 35-Year Study. Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice,

62(1): 71–97.

Victimisation

One of the most important statistics regarding victimisation of immigrants in this context

would have to come from the General Social Survey. As can be seen in Figure 3, the result of the

GSS replicates the general trend highlighted throughout this paper. However, there are some

differences in how factors such as sex and age affect victimisation of immigrants and non-

immigrants, which is not reflected in any general statistic. As was found in 2014, immigrant men

and women experienced victimisation at rates that were very similar, which is not the same as non-immigrant men and women (among whom women were more likely to be violently victimised than men) (Ibrahim, 2018). Age turned out to be the most distinguishing factor in violent victimisation, with both immigrant and non-immigrant Canadians of 15-24 years of age experiencing the most incidents of victimisation per 1,000 people. Another important factor is whether these violent crimes were motivated by hate. As was found by Ibrahim (2018), in 76% of violent incidents the victim did not believe that the attack was motivated by hate. It is crucial to repeat this study the following years, as it is likely that statistics have changed. Figure 4 provides a more nuanced consideration of immigration of racialized immigrants.

Figure 3

Violent victimization rates of immigrants and non-immigrants

Chart 1
Violent victimization rates of immigrants and non-immigrants, Canada, 2004, 2009 and 2014
rate per 1,000 population

* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)
† reference category
Note: Due to differences in methodology, data from the territories are not included in the trend analysis.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey.

Note. From *Violent victimization, discrimination and perceptions of safety: An immigrant perspective, Canada, 2014* [Figure], by Ibrahim, 2018. Reproduced and distributed on an "as is" basis with the permission of Statistics Canada.

The investigative report into homicide rates and victimisation published by YouthLeaps (as cited in Muna, 2018) reveals that there are certain overrepresentations that go unnoticed by larger surveys such as the GSS (Figure 4). As the report suggests, there is an overarching lack of ethno-racial datasets when it comes to analysing specific groups for victimisation. Figure 4 represents statistical proof that immigrant youth from some ethnic groups are dying at unprecedented rates (16% of total homicide victims vs 1% of total youth population). Although this finding is not at odds with the general statistics regarding victimisation of immigrants, its importance needs to be elevated as a serious point of concern.
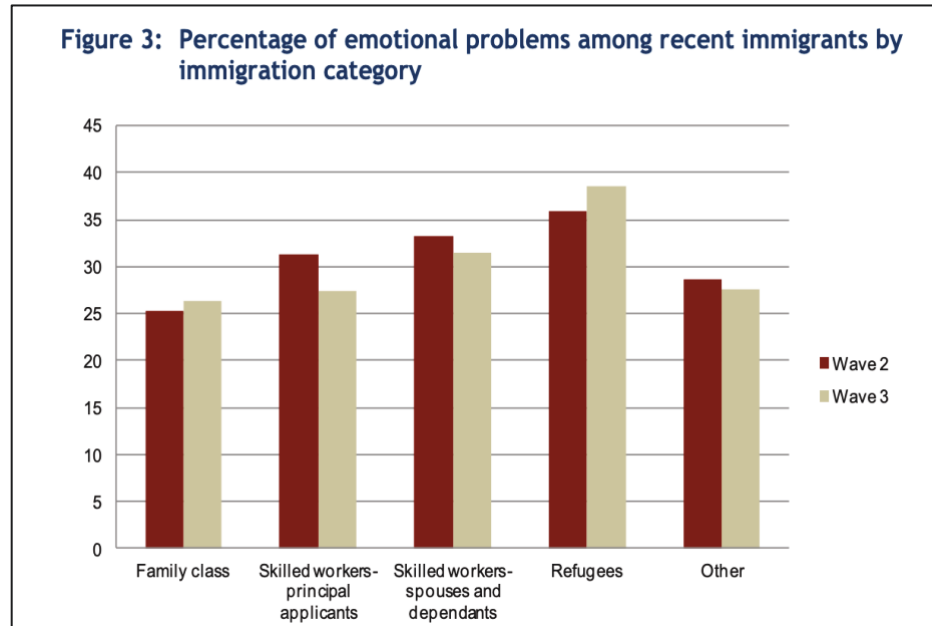
Figure 4

Note. Figure 4 has been removed due to copyright restrictions. It was a graph showing the

overrepresentation of Somali homicides in Toronto. Original source: Muna, A., Abdiasis, I.,

Siham, R., Liban, A. (2018) Another Day, Another Janzah: An Investigation into Violence,

Homicide and Somali-Canadian Youth in Ontario, YouthLeaps, 21.

Well-being

In comparison with other variables mentioned above, I could only find a few studies and

reports that would assist a more well-rounded picture of immigrants and their well-being. Of

note is the report prepared by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (Robert & Gilkinson,

2012). The report split immigrants into 'Waves' which were assigned to them based on how

much time has gone by since their landing, first wave being six months, second wave being two

years and lastly the third wave being 4 years after landing. Overall, the report concluded that

depending on the immigration category, country of origin, and gender, the immigrants perceive

the process of settlement differently. It can be seen in Figure 5 that as time progresses, Family

class and Refugee class immigrants see an increase in the percentage of emotional problems,

which is different from other categories. It is difficult to make conclusions on a very limited

collection of data, however, it can be said with certainty that there are factors in play which have

not been discovered and observed yet. Future research should focus on examining the mental,

physical, and social well-being of immigrants of all classes. Specifically, the reasons for

differences in changes need to be explained.

Figure 5

Percentage of emotional problems among recent immigrants by immigration category

Figure 3: Percentage of emotional problems among recent immigrants by immigration category

Note. From *Mental health and well-being of recent immigrants in Canada: Evidence from the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Canada* [Figure], by Robert & Gilkinson, 2012.

Conclusion and Recommendations

To answer the research question, "how does immigration and immigrants' wellness impact criminality in Canada?", a review of literature found that immigration has an overall reductive effect on crime rates, depending on the type of crime and the region. The immigrants' wellness depended on many socio-economic and immigration related factors and it was also found that low levels of wellness may be a stimulating factor in perpetration of crime. The rates of victimisation were found to be generally much lower for immigrants than for non-immigrants. The application of the Critical Race Theory also supports the history of discrimination and intersectional issues that exist in modern Canadian society.

It is crucial to take the many lessons that can be learned from Canada's past treatment of immigrants and listen to those who are currently struggling in a system that does not support a healthy immigration process or a healthy integration into the multicultural Canadian society. As demonstrated, immigrants are eager to develop and educate themselves, to innovate and engage in their local communities. Examining the historical and social context of immigration with a Critical Race Theory lens made it possible to see the systemic downfalls of the historical immigration process. One of the most important policy recommendations that can be made right now is that Canada needs to combat the systemic racism present in the immigration process. It will become possible to improve the integration process and help the vulnerable immigrant population build their new future. Based on the results of this paper, there are a few general observations that need to be considered for policy recommendations:

- Policies impacting settlement and adaptation. As evidenced by the findings, a certain percentage of immigrants are having difficulties with English reading and writing skills, which in turn impacts their job prospects and social well-being. This lack of opportunity

translates into involvement with organised crime groups. All immigrants' unique skills and backgrounds need to be considered as far as education and assistance upon arrival. A start to this kind of possibly would most likely include better access to language learning and professional career seeking assistance.

- Immigrants' mental health well-being was highlighted as an area of concern in this paper. As such, it would be beneficial to the immigration process to facilitate culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health support resources. Involving other members of the immigrants' community should be considered as an option as it is known that there exists an increased level of trust between members of specific communities.

- The Canadian government should consider investing more resources into incentivising immigrant-related research. As it stands, research into immigrants' perpetration of crime, victimisation, and well-being is very limited. Specifically, there seems to be next to no information about racialized groups of immigrants. This data needs to be expanded dramatically if we are to tackle issues related to specific struggles of these groups.

- Although it cannot be said with certainty, the literature reviewed in this paper points to the fact that racialized immigrants are more likely to be targeted for hate-related crime than those immigrants who are not racialized. Because of this, public policy should focus not only on determining the source of hate crimes against racialized immigrants but also methods of combating this hate.

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