VULNERABLE NEWCOMERS

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A Pathways to
Prosperity Project

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Literature Search and Annotated Bibliography

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RESEARCH TOPIC

In this project we investigate how the concept of vulnerability is used when discussing newcomers to Canada. Although many researchers use the term vulnerable when discussing newcomers to Canada, very few directly address what exactly this means, though this term is often used in describing the needs of newcomers and the supports that they require. Thus, we explore how the term vulnerability is utilized in the Canadian literature, the specific groups of newcomers to which it is referring, the outcomes that are seen as reflective of vulnerability, and the needs considered to be important in this regard. As a first step in examining these issues, we have undertaken an extensive search for literature on this topic in order to prepare an annotated bibliography.

SEARCH STRATEGY

In the preparation stage, we decided on years to be covered, potential search terms, locations useful for gathering such information, and how to decipher what materials were relevant or not. As a first step, we decided to limit ourselves to materials from 2010 to early 2021.

Terms Used

Our searches maintained three key terms: *immigr**, *vulnerab**, and *Canada*. To ensure that we found as much information as possible, we alternated various additional terms in combination with these, such as terms that refer to outcomes including *economic*, *social*, *housing*, *health*, and *violence/abuse*, and terms that refer to specific groups including *visible minority*, *women*, *LGBTQ+*, *youth*, and *seniors*.

Search Engines

To further this search, we used both academic library resources (i.e., Western Libraries and Google Scholar) and a general search through Google for any grey literature. This was done to ensure we reached as many outlets as possible to cover a substantial amount of ground in this field of research. We input the same terms into each location to bring up all potential outcomes and make certain we did not miss any important information.

SELECTION OF RELEVANT MATERIALS

The final step was to define what output was relevant versus not relevant for our purposes. Because we are interested in immigrant outcomes in the Canadian context, any studies focused in other countries were put into the "Not Relevant" section of the document, with the exception of 4 articles that were retained because of their detailed discussion of the term vulnerability. By retaining the non-relevant articles in a separate file, should we find use for it, we have access to the information and have ensured we have investigated all components. Further, we needed to ensure that the source dealt with migrant vulnerability in one way or another (e.g., physical or mental health, violence, economic outcomes, social outcomes). In situations where the source had potential but did not explicitly discuss vulnerability, it was included in the "Not Relevant" section. Overall, we wanted to ensure that what we included as relevant referred, in some way, to vulnerabilities amongst migrants, what causes them, and what can be done to combat them.

RESULTS

The result of our search is a document including 74 studies (plus the 4 non-Canadian considered particularly relevant), classified based on their definitions of vulnerability, the group experiencing said vulnerability, the area it occurs in, what is said to cause it, what exacerbates it,

recommended solutions, the type of research, and the location of study. Preliminary results for the Canadian sources are shown in the table below.

Migrant groups said to experience vulnerability	Number of articles
Refugees/Refugee Claimants	22
Women	18
Immigrants (broadly)	15
Recent Immigrants	9
Intersectional Identities (e.g., refugee women, visible minority women)	9
Migrant Workers	6
Youth	6
Visible minorities	5
Precarious Status Migrants	5
Seniors	5
Newcomers (broadly)	4
Children	3
LGBTQ+	3
Undocumented Migrants	2
Migrants	1
International Students	1

Areas of vulnerability	Number of articles
Health (physical, mental, disabilities)	29
Social	25
Economic (employment/poverty)	22
Violence/Abuse	13
Access to Services	10
Housing/Homelessness	9
Family Issues	6
Legal Issues	4
Food Security	1
Exploitation	1