Fact Sheet:

Immigrant Women, Social Networks and Religion
Catherine Holtmann
Graduate Student Grant, 2012-2013

Project Description and goals:

My doctoral research was an exploration of the lives of Muslim and Christian immigrant women in the Maritimes and the strengths and vulnerabilities they bring to the settlement process. It was a mixed methods study which compared that differences that ethnicity, religion and time make in terms of women’s utilization of formal and informal social support networks after arrival. The provinces of New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are currently experiencing an unprecedented wave of migration and this was the only study of immigrant women in the region that considers the role of religion in the settlement process. The study also contributed to contemporary debates as to whether or not women who experienced multiple structures of oppression are at greater risk for domestic violence in the Canadian context.

Methodology:

Descriptive characteristics of the sample participants:
- 31 Muslim women from 15 countries;
- 55 Christian women from 13 countries;
- Average length of time after arrival in Canada was about 4 years; and
- 19 workers from 16 agencies or organizations that work with women.

Five conference papers with the preliminary results of the qualitative analysis have been accepted for presentation.

Dissemination:


Holtmann, C. (2014). “Contesting the Boundaries: Gender Roles and Immigrant Women in the Maritimes,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Sociological Association at the Congress of the Humanities and the Social Sciences, Brock University, St. Catharine’s, ON.

Holtmann, C. (2014). “Muslim Women’s Social Networks: Crossing Multiple Boundaries,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion at the Congress of the Humanities and the Social Sciences, Brock University, St. Catharine’s, ON.