



ALBERTA
FILIPINO
LEADERS
CONFERENCE

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YOUTH INTEGRATION AND YOUNG ADULT INTEGRATION

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YOUTH

**INTEGRATION &
YOUNG ADULT
INTEGRATION**

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University education as a process of self-discovery: Processes
that facilitated the completion of university by young,
second-generation Filipino men in Calgary (Master's thesis).
University of Calgary, Alberta.

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1. CONTEXTUAL STATISTICS

In Canada, 22.3% of the population identify as a visible minority. The three provinces with the largest visible minority populations are respectively British Columbia (30.3%), Ontario (29.3%), and Alberta (23.5%). In the Alberta context, there is an increasing proportion of youth^[1] who identify as a member of a visible minority group 124,820 (25.3%). The three largest visible minority groups for youth in Alberta are South Asians (27,365), Filipino (22,745), and Chinese (21,640), which respectively represent 5.5, 4.6, and 4.4 percent of the total population.

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Alberta's youth population is quite diverse ethnically and linguistically. Of the 3,978,145 Albertans who reported their ethnic origin, a total of 175,130 (4.4%) reported Filipino ethnic origins. Among youth population (aged 15 to 24) in Alberta who reported an ethnic origin 494,045, a total of 24,435 (4.9%) reported Filipino ethnic origins. From a gendered perspective, 11,795 (48.2%) of Alberta's Filipino youth are female and 12,640 (51.7%) are male. In Alberta, the most common non-English mother tongue reported in the 2016 census is Tagalog; this is also true for the most common home language after English. Of the Filipino youth who spoke Tagalog as a mother tongue, 96.9% were comprised of first generation Filipinos, while only 3.2% were second generation.

Overall, youth in Alberta who identify as visible minorities have lower labour market participant rates (54.5) as compared to non-visible minorities (68.1). Of the identified visible minority groups, Filipino youth have the highest labour participation rate (59.8), the highest employment rate (53.4). Filipino youth also have the lowest unemployment rate (10.7) among the visible minority groups, and it is worth noting that the unemployment rate is also lower than that of non-visible minorities (15.5).

Of the Filipino immigrant population in Alberta, approximately 16,980 (13.7%) are immigrant youth. The distribution of immigrant youth to Alberta by admission category are comprised of economic immigrants (67.1%), family sponsorship (15.0%), refugees (16.8%), and other (1.0%). However, for Filipino youth who immigrate to Alberta, the overwhelming majority are economic immigrants (90.3%). This is followed by family sponsorship (9.5%), refugees (0.1%) and other (0.1%).

[1] For this section on contextual statistics, the age of youth is limited to 15 to 24 years old to be consistent with the data categorized and reported by Statistics Canada.

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BACKGROUND

CONTEXT

**ALTHOUGH FILIPINOS ARE AMONG THE MOST
HIGHLY EDUCATED AND SKILLED IMMIGRANTS**

arriving in Canada, many experience an array of barriers that impact their successful integration into Canadian society (Sato, 2017). While, Filipinos are perceived to be “model-minorities” (Lee, 1968, as cited in Collymore, 2012), many Filipino immigrants are underemployed in Canada and face multiple systemic employment barriers such as lack of recognition of foreign credentials, institutionalized deskilling and discrimination in the labour market (Kelly, 2006, 2014), as well as gendered and patterned immigration through avenues such as the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program and the Live-in-Caregiver Program (LCP) that detrimentally impact the Filipino community and their families.

KEY ISSUES

Backgrounder Context

Existing studies on Filipino youth highlight how forms of exclusion experienced by first-generation Filipinos in Canadian society affect their Filipino children who internalize these experiences as their own (Pratt, 2010). Sato (2017) asserts that understanding how first-generation Filipinos are received in the host country also provides insights into potential socioeconomic, cultural, and family factors that may contribute to the less-than expected higher educational outcomes of their children.

Most importantly, Sato's (2017) research notes how Filipino parents have the highest educational levels among recent immigrants, yet their second-generation children do not attain university degrees in the patterns that would be expected.

IDENTITY AND BELONGING

A history of colonization in the Philippines has shaped current practices in contemporary society. For example, Kelly et al. (2014) argue that colonialism has left a legacy that valorizes Western culture, the English language and whiteness. Parents typically encourage their children to prioritize learning English rather than their parents' Filipino dialect. While this is intended to support children and youth with integration into Canadian society, it has implications for identity and belonging for young Filipino-Canadians.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Filipino immigrants have one of the highest rates of university degrees among those arriving in Canada, yet Filipino youth have one of the lowest rates of university graduation, especially those who arrived in Canada during childhood (1.5 generation). As a result, the children of Filipino immigrants experience downward educational mobility as they are more likely to be less educated than their parents. While there are a variety of reasons why Filipino youth are not accessing higher education, research suggests that the settlement and integration experience of Filipino parents in Canadian society may influence their children's decision to go to university. As well, once Filipino youth are in university, they often feel like they do not belong in academic settings, as there are very few Filipino scholars and role models. Further, the education system is easier to navigate for students from white, middle-class backgrounds, and consequently many Filipino youth struggle to adapt and succeed within these institutions.

Kelly (2014) noted that there are three sets of factors that shape youth educational and employment trajectories in the Filipino community:

1. Immigrant's parents' educational and professional qualifications are not being recognized
 - Financial hardship shapes family life
2. Networks and information
 - Social networks are key in shaping educational and employment choices
3. Role models in the Filipino community

- 
- Youth mental health

- Second generation issues; loss of culture, language

- Youth support, informal

- Disengaged youth, “whitewashed,” out of touch with culture

- Family issues that affect youth
 - Family disintegration
 - Family reunification
 - Intergenerational relationships
 - Domestic violence
 - Separation, divorce, custody arrangements
 - Conflicts in Filipino style parenting and Canadian kids

4 | POLICIES IMPACTING THE SECTOR

·Policies regarding deprofessionalization and lack of recognition of international credentials that are discriminatory towards first generation Filipino immigrants (and other immigrant populations) have important implications for the next generation, who is mostly made up of youth. Federal policies dealing with immigration and provincial policies dealing with accreditation need to be addressed.

Equitable access to education for racialized students: Provincial governments should integrate anti-racist curriculums that take into account race-based ways of knowing (epistemologies) as a way of being more inclusive. Children from immigrant backgrounds may lack knowledge about Canadian institutions such as education, which unfairly disadvantages their ability to succeed in these institutions. Students are often streamed into ELL classes, despite being fluent in English because they were born outside of Canada or have an accent. Stereotypes about Filipinos in low-paying jobs and concentrated in certain jobs (e.g., manual labour, domestic work, etc.) further contributes to Filipino youth being encouraged to apply for trades and/or vocational schools rather than higher education. Policies need to be implemented that address these systemic barriers that prevent Filipino youth from accessing higher education.



- **Lack of representation within curriculum**
- **Limited representation of Filipino leaders in government**
- **Immigration policies that separate children and youth from their parents for extended periods of time**
 - **Limited family support before, during, and after migration**

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RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR POLICIES &
PROGRAMS

COMMUNITY

- There is a need for diasporic dialogue to foster an environment that supports immigrant and Canadian-born Filipino youth feel a sense of belonging both within the Filipino community and the Canadian mainstream. In particular, there needs to be opportunities for Filipino-Canadian youth to communicate and share their experiences with the elder generations, and propose youth-led strategies and solutions to address feelings of marginalization and exclusion in order to promote and foster a stronger sense of belonging.
- Filipino-Canadian youth are quite diverse. There are differences among Filipino-Canadian youth divided along gender, migration status, class, geographic location, language, education, etc. These different experiences need to be explored and understood in order to build solidarity and a collective voice.
- Current Filipino leaders should provide more formal mentorship opportunities to emerging Filipino youth leaders in order to build their capacity and prepare them to become future leaders in the Filipino community and broader mainstream society.

PROGRAM

- There is a need for intergenerational programs that specifically address the unique concerns affecting Filipino youth
- There is a need for more language and cultural programs for Filipino youth, as well as other programs specifically tailored to Filipino youth in Alberta

POLICY

Municipal

Creating opportunities for civic engagement of youth from ethnoculturally diverse backgrounds, especially those underrepresented such as Filipino youth

Provincial

- Education
- Mental health
- Professional accreditation

Federal

- Immigration policies
- Reunification

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Sato, C. L. (2017). University education as a process of self-discovery: Processes that facilitated the completion of university by young, second-generation Filipino men in Calgary (Master's thesis). University of Calgary, Alberta

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