The Migration of Indigenous Peoples in the Canadian Prairie Context: Exploring Policy and Program Implications to Support Urban Movers

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The migration pattern of Indigenous persons from reserves, rural and remote communities into a Canadian urban center is examined by focusing on the factors that contributed to the decision to move, the service utilization patterns upon arrival in an urban centre and the subsequent decision to remain in the city. The movement of Indigenous persons into urban settings led to unique outcomes, including a significant number remaining unable to find or secure independent housing or the appropriate services necessary to support a successful transition to urban living. Our research indicates that more attention is needed to understand Canadian Indigenous mobility, with an emphasis on assessing the circular patterns that often result in persons moving to urban centers and back to home communities. Recognizing the distinctiveness of this pattern of migration is critical to developing more effective policies for this group.

Keywords: *Indigenous, Winnipeg, aboriginals, residential mobility, homelessness, housing policy, social services.*

Over the past sixty years Canada's Indigenous population has steadily migrated from rural and reserve settings into urban areas (Newhouse and Peters, 2003). This pattern of movement is not simply defined as originating in a rural or reserve community and ending with a permanent relocation to a city. Instead, indigenous mobility consists of frequent shifts between home communities and urban areas as well as increased intra-city movement. To explain the multi-directionality of this population flow, mobility is often examined through two distinct but important perspectives. The first is the separation of Indigenous people from traditional lands and beliefs and how this "cultural disconnect" explains frequent but often less permanent moves. The second perspective is more structural, including factors such as lack of available and affordable housing; social and economic marginalization; and inadequate supports (either on reserves or in cities) that contribute to what some

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call the "residential churn" of this population (Nagler, 1973; Sorkin, 1978; Peters, 1998; Newbold, 2004).

We consider the two perspectives noted above as being equally critical to fully appreciating the mobility dynamics among Indigenous people moving to an urban setting. Thus, the main purpose of this study is to explore the patterns and frequencies of mobility among Indigenous movers to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and specifically to assess whether structural causes such as lack of housing or access to services, along with place attachment and identity, influence migration and settlement patterns. We further contend that the development of an Indigenous migration model that recognizes both high mobility and the cultural dimensions of Canada's Indigenous population should be developed. Additionally, policy options and implications are discussed with respect to supporting successful settlement patterns in cities.

Our paper begins by briefly defining Canada's Indigenous population and outlining our key objectives. This is followed by a comprehensive review of the literature relating to Indigenous mobility in Canada. This includes assessing the characteristics of Indigenous movers and the factors that push and pull people into cities and back to home communities, often in a repeating and circular pattern. Then the emphasis shifts to the experiences encountered by Indigenous families relocating to Winnipeg, Manitoba. To assess this migratory flow, we propose and examine three distinctive groups of Indigenous migrants: First Time Urban Movers, Repeat Movers to Winnipeg, and Non-reserve Movers. The paper ends with a discussion of key findings and policy implications.

DEFINING CANADA'S INDIGENOUS POPULATION: KEY DEFINITIONS, TERMS AND STUDY OBJECTIVES

Smith (2006) refers to "nested identities" of Aboriginal peoples in which community membership is multi-layered, incorporating regional concepts of homelands that are imbued with Indigenous identification of place. The idea of a homeland within national boundaries includes a spatial hierarchy between urban and rural places that produces the phenomenon of residential "churn" between communities and within urban centers (McNaughton and Rock, 2004; Memmott and Long, 2010). It is within these perspectives that one truly begins to appreciate the dynamics of this circular rural-urban migration. However, what remains lacking within this conceptualization is a comprehensive model that could better explain Indigenous migration. Paramount in such a model would be the integration of attachment to multiple rural and urban locations along with the inclusion of structural causes (such as lack of available and affordable housing, social and economic marginalization, and inadequate supports). Specifically, as a result of social and economic marginalization, Indigenous peoples are faced with especially severe housing challenges in major Canadian Prairie urban centers such as Winnipeg which contains Canada's

highest percentage of Aboriginal peoples.[1] It has been suggested that high residential mobility rates reflect the lack of adequate, affordable housing that confronts Aboriginal persons in both rural and urban places (Clatworthy, 1996; Graham and Peters, 2002; Norris et al., 2004a). While these realities must be an integral component of an Indigenous migration model, it is also imperative to consider how dual attachments to both rural and urban contexts may influence the migration experience of Canada's Indigenous peoples

According to the 2006 Census of Canada, 1,172,785 people self-identified as Aboriginal, representing 3.8 percent of the total Canadian population. Within the Aboriginal population, 53.2 percent identified as Registered Indians, 30.3 percent as Métis, 4.2 percent as Inuit and 11.4 percent were Non-Status Indians. Generally, the term Aboriginal Peoples refers to North American Indians (persons who consider themselves as part of the First Nations of Canada), Inuit (Aboriginal people who originally lived above the tree line in Canada), and Métis (persons of mixed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ancestries) (Guimond, 2003). Registered Indians are those people belonging to Indigenous groups that negotiated treaties with the Crown. While Aboriginal people are considerably more mobile than the non-Aboriginal population of Canada, it is Registered Indians, or Status First Nations people, that experience the highest rates of migration and residential mobility. The migration patterns of this group are distinguished from other Aboriginal peoples due in large part to the impact of Indian reserves established as part of the treaty agreements (Norris et al., 2004a).

Frideres and Gadacz (2001) refer to "two solitudes" in which there is frequent movement between cities and reserves by Registered Indians. Moreover, the term "churn" has been coined to describe the high mobility of Status First Nations people both within urban areas and between urban areas and reserves. The high levels of mobility of this group are largely the result of movement off-reserve to the city combined with return migration to reserves (Norris et.al., 2004b). The elevated frequency of this population movement has been interpreted to have significant negative implications for the well-being of Aboriginal people and communities (Norris and Clatworthy, 2003). However, research on the urbanization and settlement patterns of Aboriginal peoples of Canada remains poorly developed (Graham and Peters, 2002). This "churn", therefore, has been identified as an important area of research (McNaughton and Rock, 2004; Cooke and Belanger, 2006).

As migration processes affecting Canada's Aboriginal population are not well understood, the present study was undertaken as an exploratory investigation of the high mobility patterns of First Nations people and the relationship of this churn not only with structural barriers that create residential instability, but also with the cultural meanings ascribed to places that are based on the collective experiences of Indigenous peoples (Memmott and Long, 2002). Moreover, the primary aim of our research is to demonstrate both the continuing relationship to a reserve community, along with the effect of chronic housing distress that contributes to hypermobility

which in turn creates insurmountable obstacles for Aboriginal individuals attempting to establish residency in urban areas of Canada. However, current conceptual models of migration lack a comprehensive framework to create linkages between the mobility patterns of the Indigenous population, the reserve-urban hierarchy, and the impact of both place attachment and residential instability on the migration experiences of this population group. The development of a framework to better understand this dynamic is limited by the inadequacies of current data to capture the linkages of the marginalization of the First peoples of Canada and their inability to obtain shelter and their subsequent geographic movement.

To contribute to a broader understanding of the urban realties of Indigenous persons, a longitudinal survey was carried out in Winnipeg between 2002 and 2004 to develop a broader appreciation of the mobility experiences, housing circumstances and service utilization patterns of Indigenous persons moving to Winnipeg, Manitoba (Distasio and Sylvester, 2004). For the present research, data from the longitudinal survey were reanalyzed to more closely investigate and explain distinct mobility patterns, attachment to rural and urban communities, and to explore residential instability and the relationship of these dynamics on tenancy in Winnipeg. The survey methodology is described in more detail below.

The objectives of the present study are fourfold: (1) to evaluate distinctions in the socio-demographic characteristics of the three groups of Indigenous migrants to Winnipeg (First Time Urban Movers, Repeat Movers to Winnipeg, and Non-reserve Movers); (2) to examine the impact of both structural barriers and attachment to place among the migrants groups moving to an urban center and their ability to find and secure housing; (3) to inform the development of a distinctive Indigenous migration model; and (4) to determine appropriate policy and program responses that may assist Indigenous persons wanting to remain in an urban setting.

THE MIGRATION AND MOBILITY EXPERIENCES OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF CANADA

Understanding Indigenous mobility requires a historical and present day perspective to more accurately appreciate the relationship between high mobility and inadequate shelter provision (both on and off the reserve), and how this relationship may partially explain the inequalities experienced by Indigenous people and contributed to high poverty rates, unemployment and chronic homelessness. Within the historical context, European settler contact with Indigenous groups resulted in their confinement to isolated rural settlements and reserves where they were subject to extreme political and social control (Frideres et.al., 2004). As a result of this segregation, Indigenous people were excluded from mainstream social and economic shifts including urbanization, industrialization and modernization. It was only in the post-WWII period that individuals of Aboriginal ancestry began to migrate to

metropolitan centers. The continuing population flows from rural and reserve communities highlights a distinctive pattern of Indigenous mobility that links this group to what some call homelands within a modern nation-state (Taylor and Bell, 2004). In contrast, Burt (1986) notes that over half of the Native American population in the U.S. lived in cities by the early 1970s, some thirty years sooner than in Canada. Thus for Canada, the urbanization of Indigenous persons has occurred at much later stages than both the United States and Australia.

According to Newbold (2004), Indigenous mobility and its conceptualization are ultimately different from that of the general population. The Indigenous populations of first world countries (including Australia, New Zealand, the United, and Canada) share a common history of oppression, racism and discrimination that has created the context for the unique movements of Aboriginal peoples between their traditional homelands and modern metropolitan centers (Newbold, 2004). Amongst these Indigenous groups, post-war migration to urban centers has been countered by a sustained but shrinking presence in rural settlements and Indigenous lands. These distinct geographies have contributed to high levels of mobility amongst Indigenous peoples with population churn between cities and reserve and rural settlements becoming part of an ongoing pattern of movement. Specifically, a system of circular mobility involving both urban and rural contexts has been identified as a unique characteristic of Indigenous demography around the world (Taylor and Bell, 2004; Norris and Clatworthy, 2011).

In the Australian literature, circular movement is recognized as part of a strategy fulfilling multiple objectives within Indigenous communities (Taylor and Bell, 2004). This includes urban-rural circular mobility which is seen as helping maintain cultural and social networks with homeland communities and is considered to be an important component of the maintenance of identity. However, in Canada, high levels of mobility between reserves and metropolitan centers, as well as hypermobility within cities are perceived to be an indicator of the marginal position held by Indigenous peoples in Canada (Graham and Peters, 2002). In light of the multiplicity of factors including the history of invasion, discrimination, and low socioeconomic status, closer attention must be given to the relationship between high mobility rates and the inaccessibility of mainstream housing for Indigenous movers coming into urban areas.

Viewing migration simply based on economic push factors would suggest that churn between reserves and cities should be primarily attributed to work-related reasons. However, the high rates of migration and residential mobility cannot be accounted for by economic motivations alone. Alternatively, a transnational perspective on migration has been proposed to better conceptualize the movement of Aboriginal peoples in Canada (Ponting, 2005). A transnational migrant maintains familial, economic, social and cultural relationships that transcend boundaries of nation-states (Bailey, 2001). Unlike international migrants, however, rural and reserve communities are closer to home making return migration relatively easy

(Norris et al., 2004b). This approach underscores the significance of homelands within modern nation-states for Indigenous populations and supports the importance of familial and cultural ties that people maintain with home reserve communities. However, this view does not take into account mobility within cities and the social and economic conditions that create profound difficulties in securing appropriate housing.

To better address the mobility and migration patterns of Indigenous people new conceptualizations are required that explore the relationship between inadequate housing provision and the churn that occurs between reserves and cities, and particularly within metropolitan centers. Such an approach would position the hypermobility of Indigenous people in Canadian cities within the context of the postmodern metropolis and the spatial consequences of global and national restructuring. The urban landscape has been radically transformed by the dynamics of spatial mobility and the demographic hyperactivity of disadvantaged groups. According to Kearns and Smith (1994), one dimension of this process is related to ethnic change and the socio-spatial polarization that has occurred as a result of economic and social restructuring. In contrast to the new enclaves of the rich and privileged in suburbs, sometimes in the central core as well, the most deprived sectors of the population including ethnic under classes, the elderly and the homeless are relegated to declining areas of the inner city. The loss of affordable rental housing and the inflation of housing prices ultimately isolate and separate the most deprived sectors of the population from middle-class families.

INDIGENOUS URBANIZATION AND THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE RESIDENTIAL CHURN

Since the 1950s, the settlement patterns of Indigenous peoples in Canada have changed dramatically. While in 1951 only seven per cent of the Indigenous population lived in cities, by 2006, the proportion of urban Aboriginals had increased to 53 percent (Newhouse and Peters, 2003; Norris and Clatworthy, 2011). This significant shift in the distribution of the Indigenous peoples suggests that there is a newly emerging relation to space and time (Levesque, 2003). According to Norris and Clatworthy (2003), the main issue of Aboriginal mobility is not the redistribution of the population, but rather, the residential change that occurs frequently both between reserves and cities and within cities. Innovative concepts and methodologies are required to explore the spatial experiences of Indigenous people as they navigate between rural and urban settings, and to evaluate the effect of chronic housing distress on this hypermobility.

Early conceptualizations of Aboriginal urbanization perceived Indigenous culture as a barrier to successful adaptation and adjustment in urban society. Indigenous people within the city were viewed as a social problem due to high rates of poverty,

crime and alcoholism (Cooke and Belanger, 2006). Moreover, cities and Aboriginal communities have been portrayed as opposing, discontinuous and irreconcilable living environments (Frideres and Gadazc, 2001). It is only recently that notions of assimilation have been contested and replaced by a new concept of modernity that emphasizes retention of Indigenous identity and a dynamic continuity or extension of community life from the reserve to the city (Levesque, 2003; Ponting, 2005). Although this emerging pluralistic perspective emphasizes the social and cultural links that exist between urban locations and Aboriginal communities, it does not reflect the broader complexities of urbanization for Indigenous people. Specifically, addressing the extent to which housing problems are due to lack of cultural identity in cities or whether high mobility is perhaps related to attachment to reserves needs to be more fully understood.

Customized Canadian Census data on the rates of absolute net migration shows that Indigenous peoples are more mobile than the non-Aboriginal populations in Canada (Cooke and Belanger, 2006). In the twelve months prior to the 2001 Census, for example, one in five Aboriginal people moved compared to one in seven for the general Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2003). Similarly, in the period between 1991 and 1996, approximately 55 percent of the Aboriginal population changed residence within Canada while only 40 percent of the general population moved (Norris and Clatworthy, 2003). During the same time period, over 70 percent of the Aboriginal population in Canada's Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) changed residence compared to less than 50 percent of the non-Aboriginal population (Norris, Cooke and Clatworthy, 2003).

The census data also reveal that migration and mobility rates vary amongst Canada's Indigenous population. Specifically, Registered Indians living off-reserve move more frequently than their counterparts living on-reserve, and the Canadian population in general. For example, 66 percent of Registered Indians living off reserve moved between 1991 and 1996, compared to 43 percent of the overall population of Canada (Norris and Clatworthy, 2003).

It is the movement to and from reserves, and particularly between reserves and cities that distinguish Registered Indians from other Aboriginal groups (Norris et al., 2004a). For Norris, the urbanization patterns for Registered Indians is much more complex and does not reflect a simple movement from reserve to city; rather it consists of shifts back and forth from reserves to large metropolitan centers (Frideres et al., 2004). Moreover, the migration of Status First Nations is considered a reciprocal process consisting of circulation between reserves and urban areas (Graham and Peters, 2002). Since the 1960s, a pattern of migration has been recorded to both reserves and cities (Norris et al., 2004a; Ponting, 2005).

The high mobility of Indigenous people in the rural-urban hierarchy suggests that, as a point of both origin and destination, reserves represent a unique set of push and pull factors that encourage the "churn" phenomenon (Norris, Cooke and Clatworthy, 2003). Migration from the reserve is generally the result of push factors

related to high population growth and overcrowding on reserves, and the inability of the economic base to support the existing Aboriginal population (Frideres, 1998). As a result, push factors from reserves include the absence of economic development and the lack of employment and educational opportunities. In addition, migration off reserves is prompted by poor quality housing and overcrowded and substandard living conditions, as well as the inequitable distribution of housing in some reserve communities (Gerber, 1984; Yerbury, 1980). Thus, Aboriginal people are pushed off reserves in search of affordable, suitable and adequate housing (CMHC, 2002). Corresponding to the push factors of reserves, various pull factors of cities encourage migration to urban settings. These pull factors include opportunities for both employment and education, the presence of an urban Aboriginal population, as well as better access to housing (Norris and Clatworthy, 2003; Ponting, 2005). Reserves and rural communities also pull migrants back, with family and culture being important draws for Indigenous movers.

While Indigenous people move from reserves in search of better opportunities and services, new challenges are encountered in cities as racism and poverty create severe difficulties in obtaining suitable housing. One of the first problems for Aboriginal individuals when arriving in an urban centre is locating accommodation (Krotz, 1980). In comparison to the non-Aboriginal population, First peoples experience the greatest housing deficiencies as they are more likely to live in older, poor quality housing located in declining inner city neighborhoods. Krotz refers to the collection of old and deteriorating housing as the private preserve of the Aboriginal community. In Canada's largest cities many Aboriginal people live in housing that is derelict and overcrowded. The 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey revealed, for example, that in non-reserve areas 17 percent of Indigenous people were living in crowded conditions compared to only 7 percent of the total Canadian population. In addition, while 18 percent of Aboriginal people off-reserve lived in homes requiring major repairs, only 8 percent of the general Canadian population lived in similar conditions (O'Donnell and Tait, 2003; Abele, 2004).

The higher mobility rates of Status First Nations members reflect not only the initial migration from reserves to urban centers, but also subsequent high levels of residential mobility within Canada's large cities once they arrive (Norris and Clatworthy, 2003). While Status First Nations members change communities more often than the general population of Canada, they are particularly mobile in major metropolitan centers (Graham and Peters, 2002; Norris et al., 2004a). Moreover, in both large and small cities, Status First Nations members from reserves record higher rates of residential mobility compared to other Aboriginal groups. One factor explaining this difference is the connection Status First Nations members have to home Reserves and to extended families.

Although several authors have stated that the high rate of residential mobility of First Nations people in cities is directly related to the lack of quality housing (Graham and Peters, 2002; Norris et.al., 2003), there is little research to confirm

this relationship because of the inadequacies of current data. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that a pilot study on residential mobility found that Aboriginal migrants did not consider mobility to be the primary problem. Instead, they perceived the need for adequate and affordable housing the main reason for moving (CMHC, 2002). In 1991, the Aboriginal Peoples Survey became one of the largest and most comprehensive surveys of Canada's Indigenous population. The APS explored the importance of housing-related issues to residential mobility, concluding that more than half of all moves within major urban areas were made either to improve housing conditions (51 percent), or to access housing (8 percent). However, as Clatworthy (1996), notes these moves did not resolve overall housing problems as residential movers were still more likely to experience both affordability and quality challenges. In addition, many urban Aboriginals continue to experience housing discrimination (CMHC, 2003).

While housing availability represents a pull factor to cities, the lack of access to affordable housing in cities, combined with racism and social and economic marginalization, are factors that push Indigenous people back to reserves and home communities. According to Norris and Clatworthy (2003, 66), "for those able to secure housing in reserve communities, returning home to a reserve may be preferable to remaining in the city where affordable housing is often located in impoverished inner-city areas." Furthermore, pull factors related to return migration to reserves include the refuge offered by relationship with the land, as well as cultural familiarity and the stability and support provided by family and extended kinship networks that are relatively unavailable in urban areas (Norris et al., 2004a; Ponting, 2005). Therefore, while return migration is often regarded as a reflection of the inability of an Aboriginal individual to adjust and find employment within the urban context, these pull factors suggest that the reserve community offers shelter and social support networks that are not available within Canadian cities (Norris et al., 2004b).

The push-pull dynamics of reserves and cities demonstrate that housing is a major factor for high mobility rates both between reserves and cities and within urban areas. High mobility rates may have serious consequences for the stability and well-being of Aboriginal individuals and communities. It is difficult for individuals to establish social and neighborhood networks that would contribute to capacity building and a greater sense of security (CMHC, 2002). The constant movement of First Nations people also prevents effective policy development related to the provision of services and programming for urban Aboriginals (Frideres and Gadacz, 2001; Grahams and Peters, 2002). Furthermore, the process of churn limits the development of both organizational and economic foundations for the urban Aboriginal population.

Although research on the settlement patterns of the Indigenous peoples of Canada has provided greater insight into migration and residential mobility, it does not portray the complex reality of the urban experience for this population group. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (2001) identifies migration to urban

areas, residential mobility within those areas, and homelessness as important issues for Aboriginal people in Canada. Therefore, this study proposes an approach that more effectively establishes and explains the linkages existing amongst reserve-urban migration, high rates of movement within cities with inadequate housing provision. It is also anticipated that a more comprehensive understanding of these linkages will assist in the understanding of the social and cultural identity related to ties with home communities and how the creation of stable and healthy communities can enhance the well-being of Canada's urban Indigenous population.

STUDY METHODOLOGY: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES

In 2001, the Institute of Urban Studies (University of Winnipeg) was invited by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Manitoba Metis Federation to investigate the experiences of Aboriginal peoples moving to Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Aboriginal Mobility Study (AMS), designed to focus on the issues facing Indigenous peoples relocating to Winnipeg, extended from 2001 to 2005. We initially sought to examine the migration experiences of Aboriginal persons, their use of services when moving to Winnipeg, and their subsequent mobility and residential adjustment to living in an urban setting. At the time, the Aboriginal Mobility Study was thought to be one of the largest studies in Canada to focus on migration into an urban setting. A total of 1350 interviews were completed over the duration of the project.

The AMS adopted a longitudinal framework with three surveys conducted over a period extending approximately two years. The second and third surveys were conducted at six and twelve months, however the follow-up window was extended to lesson attrition rates. The surveys collected data concerning the respondent's migration history, socio-demographic characteristics, social and support networks, access to services, housing and neighborhood characteristics, as well as measurements of satisfaction related to the move to Winnipeg. The survey instruments included both closed- and open-ended questions.

Interviews were conducted by trained Aboriginal interviewers; the community networks of these interviewers were vital in identifying individuals of Aboriginal identity who had recently moved to Winnipeg. In addition, a concerted effort was made to engage both social service and community organizations to assist with recruitment. This included direct contact and site visits, as well as the placement of posters and ads in local newspapers. The recruitment effort was also supported by two community liaisons that were drawn from staff at the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Manitoba Métis Federation. This approach proved effective in establishing a broad range of connections within the community that ultimately led to a snowballing sampling technique to identify recent Aboriginal movers to Winnipeg.

Participation in the study had several conditions including: 1) self-identification as First Nation, Métis or Inuit; 2) residency in Winnipeg for less than one year; and 3) a minimum age of 18. Only one spouse per household was interviewed. Interviewees were provided with an honorarium.

A total of 525 individuals were interviewed in stage one. As half of the study participants were in temporary residential accommodation and experienced frequent mobility, some respondents only participated in the first survey. The difficulty encountered in tracking participants between surveys, highlights the challenges of maintaining contact with a highly mobile population. For the present analysis, the sample consists of 473 respondents who had completed Survey 1 (Time 1) and Survey 3 (Time 3). Table 1 presents a comparison of the characteristics of the sample with the Aboriginal populations of the city of Winnipeg, the province of Manitoba, and Canada. Overall, the sample is considered to be relatively representative of Canada's Indigenous population. Although the study sample had a slightly higher proportion of females and younger persons, this difference probably reflects a disproportionately large number of young movers (Norris and Clatworthy, 2003; Norris et al., 2004a). Table 2 provides a further demographic breakdown for the three groups, including a breakdown by income. As shown, the majority of the sample earns less than $10,000 which is significantly lower than the $20,800 poverty threshold for single persons in Canada.[2]

Table 1: Comparison of Sample with Aboriginal Population

	Winnipeg	**Manitoba**	**Canada**	**Sample**
Total Population	55,760	150,040	976,305	525
Total 15 +	37,220	95,975	652,350	-
Gender*	**% (n)**	**% (n)**	**% (n)**	**% (n)**
Male	46.7 (26,040)	48.7 (73,030)	48.8 (476,700)	45.0 (236)
Female	53.3 (29,715)	51.3 (77,015)	51.2 (499,605)	55.0 (289)
Age Categories**				
15-19	13.3 (4935)	15.0 (14,395)	14.2 (92,985)	9.0 (47)
20-24	12.5 (4670)	12.1 (11,610)	11.7 (76,085)	17.7 (93)
25-44	46.6 (17,335)	45.5 (43,710)	45.1 (294,405)	55.0 (289)
45-54	15.3 (5705)	13.9 (13,305)	14.8 (96,370)	10.5 (55)
55-64	7.4 (2770)	7.7 (7410)	8.1 (52,830)	4.8 (25)
65 and over	4.8 (1805)	5.8 (5545)	6.1 (39,675)	(15)

*Based on total Aboriginal population

**Based on Aboriginal population 15 and over.

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

	First Time Urban Movers	Repeat Movers to Winnipeg	Non Reserve Movers
Gender			
Male	40.7	42.9	50.0*
Female	59.3*	57.1	50.0
Age (years)			
Under 20	10.4	7.1	11.0
20 - 29	28.1	32.1	27.9
30 - 39	38.5***	25.5	25.3
40 - 49	14.8***	21.2	21.4
50+	8.1**	14.1	14.3
Annual Income			
No income	11.9	11.7	15.9*
Up to $10,000	53.2	61.3	56.8
$10,001 - $20,000	29.4	21.5	22.0
Over $20,000	5.5	5.5	5.3

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

As previously noted, the goal of the present study is to explore migration experiences of Indigenous movers to an urban setting using a large study sample drawn from the AMS. To examine the migration experience, we examined three groups defined by migration patterns.

- First Time Urban Movers - consists of participants whose last community of residence was their reserve and had never moved before (n = 135; 28.5 percent).
- Repeat Movers to Winnipeg - includes participants whose last community of residence was their reserve but had moved previously to Winnipeg (n = 184; 38.9 percent).
- Non-reserve Movers - represents participants whose last community of residence was not a reserve (n = 154; 32.6 percent).

Our primary hypothesis was that having a history of high migration frequency would contribute to settling in Winnipeg on a more permanent basis. We also speculated that stronger attachment to reserves and Aboriginal social networks would add to greater residential uncertainty and movement between cities and home communities. To test these hypotheses we compared the three groups described above with respect to four domains: (1) migration history and socio-demographic characteristics, (2) adjustments to life in Winnipeg as measured by changes in overall satisfaction and satisfaction with Winnipeg, (3) the impact of attachment to both the reserve and Winnipeg using measures of proximity to friends and family, expected length of stay in Winnipeg, as well as mobility outside of Winnipeg, and (4) the impact of structural barriers including measures of residential stability, housing circumstances and access to services.

MOVING TO WINNIPEG: EXPLORING MIGRATION HISTORIES AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RECENT INDIGENOUS MOVERS

One of the most striking findings from the research was that 50 percent of respondents were unable to find a place of their own and remained in temporary accommodation during the duration of the study. Effectively, half the sample remained part of the hidden homeless population, living with friends and family or in shelters despite many indicating they were trying to secure their own housing. This situation presented itself at the outset of the study when 70 percent indicated "housing services" were the most important set of supports needed immediately upon arrival in Winnipeg. This included help in finding and securing appropriate and affordable shelter as well as programs that provide subsidized rents. With only half of study participants finding their own accommodation it is not surprising that 35 percent indicated they had additional persons living with them who contributed just over $100 per month to the rent. Many stated that without this support, their home would have been unaffordable.

The increasing crowding of households became evident as the study progressed. For example, the number of additional persons living with each study participant, increased from 1.77 persons at the time of survey one to 2.82 persons by the time of the third survey. In addition, the number of households with five or more members went from 13 percent at survey one to 37.5 percent by survey three. A final measure of crowding was that of persons per bedroom which averaged 2.09 persons. Exceeding an average of two is generally considered a marker of crowding.

Despite the fact that households appeared crowded by conventional standards, only 32 percent of respondents indicated they felt their present homes were either somewhat or very crowded (this remained constant throughout the study). This surprising finding probably reflects the fact that compared to conditions on-reserve where crowding levels tend to be even higher, the situation in Winnipeg was perceived as being relatively good.

In addition to crowding, quality and location of housing remained problematic throughout the study. The majority of the sample (85 percent) remained housed within Winnipeg's inner city, an area of concentrated poverty and poor quality housing (Carter et al., 2003; Carter and Polevychok, 2004). According to the 2006 Census, Winnipeg's inner city was home to 21 percent of the Aboriginal population with some neighborhoods including William Whyte, Lord Selkirk and Dufferin ranging from 44 percent to 66.7 percent Aboriginal in Lord Selkirk.[3] With increasing concentrations of Aboriginal households in inner city neighborhoods, the debate as to whether this pattern matches theories of segregation as seen in the United States remains largely unexplored in the Canadian context (Peters 2007). With growing numbers of Aboriginal populations in poorer Winnipeg neighborhoods,

an important policy area that requires further attention is whether Aboriginals are becoming increasingly marginalized, socially and economically.

In the AMS sample, 38 percent indicated their housing quality was good with 56 percent stating it was fair and 6 percent noting it was poor. For many, on-reserve housing is likely much worse. More positively, those having trouble making rent payments decreased over the three surveys, partly due to increasing household size and householders' having others contribute to the rent. It is important to note that half the study sample resided in temporary accommodations, living with friends and family or in shelters. Furthermore, (as noted above) the high concentration of the Aboriginal population within some of the inner city's most impoverished neighborhoods likely contributes to an increasing sense of social and economic marginalization. The low income levels reported in Table 2 supports this conclusion.

Why is it that so many Aboriginal families moved to Winnipeg? To address this issue we asked respondents: "I'd like to ask you about which communities you have lived in, starting with the last five you lived in prior to arriving in Winnipeg (follow-up prompts asked for the reasons for leaving each location).

Table 3: Migration Profile

	First Time Urban Movers	Repeat Movers to Winnipeg	Non Reserve Movers
Number of Moves in Lifetime			
1	100.0	0	14.9
2-3	0	63.0	55.8
4-6	0	37.0	29.2
Average	1.0***	3.29	2.88
Reasons for Moving to Winnipeg			
Family	43.0*	37.2	37.7
Employment Opportunities	18.5***	30.1	30.5
Education Opportunities	16.3	13.1	8.6***
Housing Issues	5.9	3.3	3.3
Health	6.7	4.4	4.6
Education and Employment	5.9	4.9	1.3***
Justice/Corrections	1.5	1.1	10.6***
Socio-Political	0.7	2.7*	0.7
Addictions	0.7	2.2*	1.3
Foster Placement	0.7	1.1	1.3

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Repeat Movers to Winnipeg had the highest average number of moves but were similar to members of the other groups with respect to the reasons for moving to Winnipeg, with the majority citing family,[4] employment and education as the main

factors. In relation to family, a number mentioned a need to get away from abusive situations with one single woman noting: "My husband is abusive and I left him after he beat me (I ran away from him)." The quality of housing was also repeatedly singled out. For example, a single mother stated: "Housing in my community is unfit, poor conditions with contaminated, rusty water. Safe water [is] available in town stores which I could not access without transportation assistance which I could not always get…I don't have my own vehicle." While the number of participants moving for reasons related to "foster placement" was small, the history of interaction between Canadian Indigenous populations and the care system has been fractious with one young male saying he moved to the city because "I am an adoptee and I wanted to locate my birth family or at least find my real family history."

Among the three groups, First Time Movers were least likely to have moved for employment reasons but most likely to have moved for broader family reasons. In contrast, Non-Reserve Movers were more likely to mention issues related to justice and corrections. One woman commented that they "moved to Winnipeg to be close to my spouse who was detained in custody." Finally, Repeat Movers to Winnipeg moved most frequently. One respondent indicated that she moved from the reserve "…because education was very weak [on the reserve], also sports programs. As I got older my friends were getting into drugs, alcohol, and quitting sports, the sports programs and our education system was getting, weak, so I wanted a change. The city looked attractive, more opportunities so I moved. I was also tired of gossip, alcohol abuse, and my family moved away too, so I did".

ADJUSTING TO LIFE IN AN URBAN SETTING: WELCOME TO WINNIPEG

As noted, the migration of Indigenous persons to urban centers is complex with high levels of mobility and an increased likelihood of movement back and forth to the home community. Table 4 looks at the determinants of satisfaction and the determinants of changes in satisfaction T1 toT3. First Time Movers were significantly more likely to be very satisfied overall and with the city at T1. This finding reflects the fact that compared to conditions on the reserve, the situation in Winnipeg represented an improvement even despite high levels of crowding and the fact that 50 percent did not have their own housing. The proportion of First Time Movers who were very satisfied with Winnipeg dropped from 10.4 percent at T1 to 4.4 percent at T3. One woman stated: "I feel that I am more isolated from friends and family than in the previous area."

First Time Movers had high overall satisfaction levels at T1 but experienced a marked decline between the two periods. Repeat Movers to Winnipeg also appeared to have high levels of dissatisfaction, especially for Winnipeg (14 percent dissatis-

fied) and this too worsened over time. One man commented: "Nothing is going to change, unless the government improves services and situation of area."

It is important to note that the majority in all three groups continued to be satisfied with residential conditions. Future research needs to examine whether this satisfaction is due to even worse conditions on the reserves.

Table 4: Change in Overall Satisfaction and Satisfaction with Winnipeg

	First Time Urban Movers	Repeat Movers to Winnipeg	Non Reserve Movers
Overall Satisfaction (T1)			
Very Satisfied	12.7**	8.3	6.7
Satisfied	68.2	66.3	64.9
Unsatisfied	16.4**	22.5	25.4
Very Unsatisfied	2.7	3.0	3.0
Overall Satisfaction (T3)			
Very Satisfied	2.7	3.4*	2.2
Satisfied	68.1	61.7	67.2
Unsatisfied	25.7	28.9	25.4
Very Unsatisfied	3.5	6.0	5.2
Change in Overall Satisfaction (T1-T3)			
Increased	37.8*	39.1	44.8
Stayed the same	36.3	37.0	35.1
Decreased	25.9*	23.9	20.1
Satisfaction with Winnipeg (T1)			
Very Satisfied	10.4**	4.9	4.4
Satisfied	51.3	47.5	39.3
Unsatisfied	27.0	38.9	46.7
Very Unsatisfied	11.3	8.6	9.6
Satisfaction with Winnipeg (T3)			
Very Satisfied	4.4	4.4	1.8
Satisfied	93.4	81.6**	89.5
Unsatisfied	1.1***	12.3	8.8
Very Unsatisfied	1.1	1.8	0*
Change in Satisfaction With Winnipeg (T1-T3)			
Increased	25.2	18.5**	26.0
Stayed the same	46.7	43.5	47.4
Decreased	28.2	38.1**	26.6

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

ATTACHMENT TO PLACE: THE DESIRE TO REMAIN IN WINNIPEG

At T1, the majority of participants remained unsure as to whether they would remain in the city permanently. By T3, this had changed for all groups with over half indicating they planned to now remain on a permanent basis. The greatest increase in expected length of stay was for First Time Urban Movers (from 21 percent intending to stay permanently to 58 percent). It is interesting that this attachment to Winnipeg increased despite such obstacles as a lack of decent and affordable housing.

Attachment to place was also assessed by asking respondents whether they had left the city between the surveys. (These results are not included in Table 5). Repeat Movers to Winnipeg were the least likely to report leaving between surveys (28.3 percent), compared to 37.0 percent for Non-Reserve Movers and 40.7 percent for First Time Urban Movers. In addition, a significantly higher proportion of First Time Urban Movers (67.4 percent) respondents stayed with friends and family when first arriving in Winnipeg, compared to only 45.1 percent of Repeat Movers to Winnipeg, and 50.7 percent of Non-Reserve Movers. The latter results correspond to the fact that many First Time Urban Movers came to Winnipeg for family reasons.

Table 5: Change in Expected Length of Stay in Winnipeg

	First Time Urban Movers	Repeat Movers to Winnipeg	Non Reserve Movers
Length of Stay in Winnipeg (T1)			
Permanently	20.7	20.7	25.3
Less than 1 year	21.5	18.5*	23.4
Unsure	57.8	60.9	51.3**
Length of Stay in Winnipeg (T3)			
Permanently	58.4	56.9	55.6
Less than 1 year	5.6	5.4	4.2
Unsure	36.0	37.7	40.3
Change in Length of Stay (T1-T3)			
Increased or became sure	46.0	43.5	40.3
Stayed the same	39.3	35.3	39.6
Decreased or became unsure	14.8*	21.2	20.1

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Respondents were also asked whether they felt close to friends and family. A higher proportion of First Time Urban Movers (60.0 percent) reported feeling close to friends and family throughout the study (compared to 50.5 percent for Repeat Movers to Winnipeg and 49.4 percent for Non-Reserve Movers). For First Time

Urban Movers, family relationships were important for both providing support and for providing shelter.

These strong family networks provide the unique context for Indigenous mobility. Although many want to establish roots in Winnipeg these desires and plans are often thwarted, resulting in shifts between city and reserve. Unable to ever settle down, many are forced to find room in inner-city neighborhoods with family and friends.

STRUCTURAL BARRIERS: HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS AMONG INDIGENOUS MOVERS

To delve further into the structural obstacles to decent housing, we explored general housing circumstances and access to services (Tables 6 and 7). Residential stability included three factors: housing conditions, affordability and crowding. Non-Reserve Movers experienced some level of stability in their housing with significantly higher percentages reporting in good condition for both T1 and T3 along with the lowest level of crowding at T1. First Time Urban Movers also attained one measure of stability they were least likely to report worsening housing conditions. While crowding remained problematic, Repeat Movers to Winnipeg were least likely among the three groups to say that crowding had become worse between T1 and T3.

The open-ended comments highlighted respondents' desire to stabilize their housing situation. One man stated: "I want my own place, and I have applied for three housing projects, where I am on a waiting list. I feel that this is too long a wait." A woman made a similar point: "I can't afford my own place, as I don't have a job nor am I on social assistance, because I don't qualify, social assistance cancelled my benefits."

Some commented on the inaccessibility of decent housing with discrimination an additional obstacle. One man stated: "I can't find suitable housing in the city, and we don't know too many people or know of services and programs for help in adjusting to this city." A female respondent pointed out that "Lots of landlords will agree to rent to you over the phone, but in a face-to-face situation they refuse to rent to you."

Table 7 examines service utilization patterns, including the types and number of services accessed. Service use was measured by having respondents provide a list of all services utilized, their level of satisfaction with each, and whether each service met their needs. The vast majority believed that most of the services they were accessing met their needs. As part of the third survey respondents were asked to rate the overall quality of services in Winnipeg compared to their home community. The vast majority (73 percent) stated Winnipeg's services were better, 24 percent felt they were the same and 3 percent stated they were worse.

Table 6: Change in Housing Circumstances

	First Time Urban Movers	Repeat Movers to Winnipeg	Non Reserve Movers
Condition of Residence (T1)			
Good	36.6	36.7	53.0***
Fair	45.1	45.0	34.9*
Poor	18.3	18.3	12.0
Condition of Residence (T3)			
Good	39.2	35.5	44.1**
Fair	54.4	56.0	48.3
Poor	6.4	8.4	7.6
Change in Condition (T1-T3)			
Improved	40.7	32.1	31.2**
Stayed the same	42.2	39.7	41.6
Became Worse	17.0***	28.3	27.3
Affordability of Housing (T1)			
No trouble	43.9	51.0	53.2*
Some difficulty	42.4	36.5	36.7
Very difficult	13.6	12.5	10.1
Affordability of Housing (T3)			
No trouble	70.8*	73.3	72.0
Some difficulty	26.2	20.8	21.3
Very difficult	3.1	5.9	6.7
Change in Affordability (T1-T3)			
Improved	48.1	41.3	39.0*
Stayed the same	26.7***	42.4	39.0
Became worse	25.2	16.3***	22.1
Crowded Housing (T1)			
Not crowded	63.0	64.5	74.4
Somewhat crowded	21.9	25.5	20.7
Very crowded	15.1	10.0	4.9***
Crowded Housing (T3)			
Not crowded	64.0*	72.9	64.8
Somewhat crowded	31.2	23.5**	30.3
Very crowded	4.8	3.6	4.8
Change in Crowding (T1-T3)			
Improved	27.4	28.8	24.0
Stayed the same	45.2	50.5	47.4
Became Worse	27.4	20.7***	28.6

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 7 shows that employment, education and medical services were the most frequently used services. As shown, First Time Urban Movers utilized the fewest overall number of services. This group scored low with respect to the number of employment based services but high with respect to services related to children such as daycare. One woman stated:

> We need better services for Aboriginal people in all aspects. We need more Aboriginal people to advocate for Aboriginal people to better access services in the area of housing. [We] need to teach Aboriginal people to have pride in themselves and their cultures so they can speak for others.

Table 7: Access to Services at Time 1

	First Time Urban Movers	Repeat Movers to Winnipeg	Non Reserve Movers
Types of Services Accessed			
Employment	31.1	30.4	29.2
Education	15.6	20.7*	18.2
Housing	8.1	9.2	5.8
Medical	20.0	21.2***	13.0
Services for Children	5.2***	1.1	1.3
Recreation	2.2	0.0***	2.6
Transportation	1.5	4.9**	1.9
Support	10.4	8.7	5.2**
Aboriginal	6.7	6.5	7.8
Social	48.9	54.9	37.0**
Legal	4.4	0.5***	2.6
Number of Services Accessed			
0	14.1	6.5	12.3
1	57.8	54.9	48.7
2	17.0	21.2	20.1
3	5.9	8.7	10.4
4 or more	5.2	8.7	8.4
Average	1.30**	1.67	1.74

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

A number of respondents saw the need for more and better services for Aboriginal people. One man wanted to see "advocacy services for Aboriginal newcomers so they understand the system. They [Aboriginal agencies] should be doing their own social assistance services." While few respondents accessed housing related services, many expressed concern that there were no groups or agencies helping people find housing. One respondent commented: "There should be better housing services for low-income Aboriginal applicants so we can have decent housing."

We conclude our discussion of the survey results by highlighting our main findings. First Time Urban Movers did not access the right supports to make the tran-

sition smoother. On the other hand, Repeat Movers to Winnipeg seemed to be able to better navigate the complexities of service access within an urban setting. It appears that with more experience or through repeat moves, migrants are able to better understand what is and is not available to help. Nevertheless a large number of Indigenous movers are not able to find a place of their own and end up living in temporary settings.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

We have presented an exploratory examination of the experiences of Indigenous populations moving to an urban setting, a shift that becomes more and more important as the percentage of Canada's Aboriginal population continues to urbanize. Our results highlight the profound connection many Indigenous persons have with their home communities, kinship networks and relationships to the land. Our study highlighted the extent to which on-reserve conditions play a role in the way migrants view urban settings as better, even though they are often crowded conditions. Much more research is needed on the extent to which the quality of home locations affects residential assessments and in turn contributes to the residential churn. Our findings reinforce our belief that Aboriginal residential mobility and migration patterns are unique with respect to the general Canadian population (Smith, 2006). To better understand these patterns will require data sources and research methods that reflect the cultural context of Aboriginals. Such research needs to take into account the oppression, racism and discrimination that affect the daily lives of members of this minority group (Newbold, 2004).

The most important factor is related to the provision of housing and related services to alleviate the significant number of people unable to find independent housing. This must include better assessing the availability and provision of housing for Canada's Indigenous population. What is clear is that much of the urban housing market has not been designed for large or extended families.

Aboriginal movement between places must be supported with consideration for the provision of better housing supports both on and off reserve and for return moves to the city. Frequent or high mobility is unfortunately often perceived to be negative or associated with instability of households as opposed to having deeper connections between places and with traditional lands, cultural and kinship networks.

However, high mobility must also be viewed as the result of poor quality housing, bad neighborhoods and the increasing social and economic marginalization of Indigenous populations. Thus, attention must be given to dealing with social isolation and economic marginalization.

A particular policy challenge that will be difficult to achieve relates to the provision of housing both on reserve and off-reserve. On reserve, the funding of capital grants

and operating subsidies for housing is a federal responsibility. However, off-reserve, the matter is more complicated owing to the jurisdictional wrangling of provincial and territorial governments and the changing nature of housing programs. Funding for new social housing was curtailed in 1993 as a cost-cutting measure by the federal government and most provinces joined suit (Norris et al., 2004b). However, over the past two decades, Aboriginal housing groups have increased their presence in urban centers including Winnipeg (Distasio and Mulligan, 2008). What is encouraging in the Canadian context is the recognition of the importance of Aboriginal ownership of housing and its critical role in providing appropriate housing through partnerships with the three levels of government. In the case of Winnipeg, there are nearly 800 units of housing owned by a number of Aboriginal housing agencies, with much of this housing scattered throughout the city, offering families and individuals a choice in locations, including ones outside of the inner city.

A further policy implication is in the area of service provision to those transitioning from reserves or rural and northern communities into cities. As Prout (2009) asserts, the re-conceptualization of Indigenous spatiality must incorporate the variety of interactions that Aboriginal persons have with mainstream services. We have begun to assess this by highlighting the distinct challenges facing first time urban movers. This is the group most vulnerable to housing instability and outright homelessness. Furthermore, the fact that fifty percent of the study sample was unable to secure housing over an eighteen month period remains reason enough for significant policy intervention.

In exploring the mobility patterns and residential stability of Indigenous movers to an urban setting, we have sought to assess the reasons why Indigenous movers left their home communities and the supports they needed to transition to urban living when they arrived. Most moved for employment, education, a range of broadly based family considerations or a lack of housing in their home communities. However, it was upon arrival into the city that the experiences of these migrants fundamentally changed from more traditional conceptualizations of migration patterns and into a much more unique experience. The immediate needs of movers were to find safe and secure housing, despite initial reasons for leaving their last community. It was during this transition that many remained highly mobile not only within the city but more importantly, back and forth to home communities. It is the movement back and forth between urban settings and home communities that sets Indigenous mobility apart from other groups within the Canadian context, especially for those moving for more than housing deficiencies.

To further examine the factors related to structural issues (lack of available and affordable housing, social and economic marginalization and inadequate supports) an analysis was undertaken using the perspective of migration experience. This included looking at first time urban movers versus those who had moved more frequently in their past, including living in Winnipeg or previous occasions. This analysis revealed more detail about mobility in that it was found that first time urban movers tended to fare worse in terms of accessing services and supports and in finding housing but remained somewhat secure in living with friends and family.

The results mean that more attention must be paid to first time urban movers as well as assessing what changes are needed to support residential stability and reduce levels of mobility (either in home communities or within urban settings) that are directly related to poor quality housing and crowded conditions.

More attention also needs to be given to Aboriginals with ties to multiple locations, including home reserves and other communities. There is little doubt that housing is needed in urban centers that matches the requirements of Aboriginal households (larger household sizes and perhaps having accommodation for extended family). The fundamental challenge that remains is whether it is practical or possible to deal with multiple locations and frequent moving given the inability of the Canadian housing market to respond to the needs of households in poverty. Thus, a unique challenge will be to find ways to support Indigenous migration i.e. to address needs in home communities and in cities where an increasing number of Indigenous movers are residing.

Despite the obvious challenges facing many Indigenous movers to Winnipeg, what stands out is their strong resiliency despite the crowding and the frequent moving. Building on this strength will surely result in even more gains in providing safe, affordable housing and a higher quality of life.

NOTES

1. While the term "Aboriginal" has historically been used in Canada to refer to North American Indians, increasingly the term "Indigenous" is becoming more common. Both terms appear within this article and are described in more detail in the following section.
2. Canadian Council for Social Development low income cut-offs for 2005, adjusted for cities in excess of 500,000 accessed: http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/fs_lico05_bt.htm
3. City of Winnipeg Customized Census Profiles (accessed http://winnipeg.ca/census/2006)
4. The use of the term "family reasons" was cited often by participants and represents a range of issues including leaving crowding situations on reserves, leaving abusive situations, and wanting to locate closer to family members in the city. As such this term is broadly related to familial social situations both on-reserve and in home communities as well as those in urban settings.

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