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The Role of a Voluntary Organization in Vancouver**

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**Toward Minority Group Rights and Inclusive Citizenship for Immigrants:
The Role of a Voluntary Organization in Vancouver¹**

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¹ The author wishes to dedicate this paper to Lilian To, a community leader and activist, who devoted her life to fighting for the rights of immigrants through her leadership of SUCCESS. The author also wishes to acknowledge the support of RIIM.

Abstract: This is a second in a series of paper on the history and development of SUCCESS - the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society. As Canada is becoming more ethnoculturally diverse as a result of increasing immigration, the question is whether liberal democracy can accommodate heterogeneous needs and barriers that immigrants may encounter in the process of adapting to a new society. This study reveals that by providing culturally- and linguistically-appropriate services, SUCCESS has increased the access of Chinese immigrants to settlement and other social services, which they were entitled to but deprived of, owing to the failure of the state and mainstream social service agencies. As a transitional institution, SUCCESS has helped immigrants ease the process of settlement, adaptation, and integration. The special programs and services that SUCCESS provided for immigrants were not unjust privileges; they were the first step in the process for immigrants to achieve fairness, justice, and equality. The study demonstrates that minority group rights supplemented individual rights and freedoms and enhanced democratic citizenship. It challenges the view of liberal universalism and provides an alternative model to interpret minority group rights, citizenship, and democracy.

Keywords: minority rights, citizenship, Chinese immigrants, immigrant service organizations

INTRODUCTION

Community-initiated voluntary associations play a valuable role in immigrant societies, such as multicultural Canada. They are, however, not always seen as benign, self-motivated, or altruistic institutions. Where immigrants are all too frequently viewed as a drain on societal resources, ethnic organizations are also viewed as threatening national unity, diluting Canadian identity, and promoting ghettoization and separatism. Other critics raise specific questions about it, such as whether the state should use taxpayers' money to fund these organizations. Still others argue that all Canadians should be treated equally, and that allocating special resources to support such organizations would undermine Canadian democratic principles and erode norms and practices of democratic citizenship.

This study explores, in detail, the way in which one ethnic organization in Vancouver, called SUCCESS - United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society, was founded in 1973 for exactly the opposite reasons. The failure of the government and mainstream organizations to provide accessible social services for Chinese immigrants led to its initiation. The study investigates the role of SUCCESS in building a support and citizenship community for Chinese immigrants in Vancouver. It examines the founding, historical development, and social contributions of SUCCESS.

This chapter falls into five parts. The first examines the theoretical framework, followed by a review of the historical, social, and political context in which SUCCESS emerged. The third focuses on the research design. The fourth reports the research findings. The fifth analyzes the social contributions of SUCCESS.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Citizenship Debate

The success of contemporary Western societies like Canada can be partially attributed to the adherence to liberal democratic principles, including fairness, justice, and the protection of individual rights and freedoms. However, Canada is becoming an increasingly ethno-culturally diverse society. The 2001 Census of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2003) reveals that as of May 15, 2001, 18.4 per cent of Canada's total population were born outside the country, and that 13.4 per cent identified themselves as visible minorities. People come to Canada from different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. In the process of adapting to the new society, they have heterogeneous needs and

encounter many barriers. We usually find ourselves in a debate over whether liberal democracy can accommodate such needs, the role ethnic organizations should play in the settlement and adaptation of immigrants, and the relationship between minority group rights and democratic citizenship. At the centre of this debate lies the concept of citizenship, particularly in relation to immigrants' membership in the national community.

Two schools of thought are usually represented in this debate: traditional liberalism and cultural pluralism. Traditional liberals (Bissoondath 1994; Gwyn 1995; Rawls 1971) advocate a culturally neutral state, where citizens deal fairly with each other and the state deals equally with all, regardless of how we conceive our ends. They believe in universal rights and citizenship, and maintain that the promotion of minority group rights restricts individual rights and freedoms and erodes the norms and practices of responsible citizenship. Rawls's (1971) "justice as fairness" is a good example of this argument. He places the protection of individual rights, along with non-discrimination provisions, before collective goals. Traditional liberals also oppose multicultural policies. In his critique of multiculturalism, Bissoondath (1994) argues that maintenance of ethnic heritage and identity is injurious to national allegiance and unity. He rejects using taxpayers' money to fund ethnic organizations. Bissoondath (1994) also points out that, instead of promoting integration, ethnic organizations dilute Canadian identity and encourage ethnic "ghettoization." When translating liberal universalism into practice, traditional liberals tend to adopt a difference-blind approach in addressing immigrants' needs and barriers, maintaining that people are essentially the same, and therefore, require similar modes of service and intervention. According to Bissoondath, Canada should not aim at preserving differences but at "blending them into a new vision of Canadianness, pursuing a Canada where inherent differences and inherent similarities meld easily" (p.224).

The liberal perspective has been criticized as "unrealistic," "unacceptably 'thin,'" and "unfair" (Bloemraad 2000). Bloemraad maintains that thought experiments concerning an "original position" are unrealistic because such a position never existed; furthermore, they ignore the critical point that no one is born an atomized, rational actor. She continues to argue that, because it fails to recognize that being part of a community is a primordial good, the liberal conception of citizenship is unacceptably thin. A person's ethnic and cultural heritage must be recognized as part of the individual so as to encourage participation by all (Walzer 1982). Bloemraad also criticizes the liberal universal citizenship as unfair. According to Tamir (1995) and Young (1995), governments cannot be culturally neutral. The notion of a neutral state embodies a dangerous and oppressive illusion. Strict adherence to the principle of equal treatment merely sustains the status of privileged groups and perpetuates

oppression and inequality (Young 1995). Taylor (1993, 1994a, 1994b) also adds his criticism of liberal neutrality. He fears that liberal neutralism prevents citizens from pursuing certain legitimate collective goals through their political institutions. He maintains that a single-principle neutral liberalism cannot suffice, and that it has to allow space for other goods. He notes further that the reality of plural societies may require us to modify neutral liberalism. As an alternative, Young (1995) and Taylor (1994) propose “differentiated citizenship” and “deep diversity” respectively to acknowledge and accept plural ways of belonging. The multiple conceptions of citizenship act as a means to guarantee group rights and group representation.

Minority Group Rights

According to Kymlicka and Norman (2000), minority groups can be divided into four categories: 1) national minorities; 2) immigrant minorities; 3) religious groups; and 4) *sui generis* groups. These groups have different histories, needs, aspirations, and identities, and face different kinds of challenges. For example, Canada’s national minorities (i.e., aboriginal peoples and French Canadians) are different from immigrants (Kymlicka 1995, 1998). The former are seeking various forms of self-government and demanding special recognition to maintain their status as culturally distinct and self-governing societies within Canada, whereas immigrants wish to integrate into mainstream society. Although immigrants want to modify the institutions and laws of mainstream society to make them more accommodating of cultural differences, their goals differ from those of national minorities. In Canada, ironically, one of the major mechanisms for accommodating cultural differences is “the protection of civil and political rights of individuals” (Kymlicka 1995: 266), which are highly suspicious of collective goals. They are insufficient to meet the needs of ethnic groups. These common rights need to be supplemented by specific “group rights” that recognize and accommodate particular ethno-cultural practices and identities.

The rights of ethno-cultural minorities, or minority rights in short, can be defined as “a wide range of public policies, legal rights, and constitutional provisions sought by ethnic groups for the accommodation of their cultural differences” (Kymlicka and Norman, 2000, p.2). The heterogeneous nature of ethnocultural groups determines that there are three categories of group-specific rights: self-government, polyethnic, and special representation rights (Kymlicka 1995, 1998). Levy (1997), on the other hand, regards Kymlicka’s classification of group rights as too broad. He classifies minority group rights into eight categories: exemptions, assistance, self-government, external rules, internal rules, recognition/enforcement, representation, and symbolic claims. In this context, assistance rights are more relevant to this research. According to him, “assistance rights are claims for help in

overcoming obstacles to engaging in common practices” (p.29). Two common clusters of assistance rights are discussed here: language rights, and subsidies to a variety of cultural and linguistic institutions and associations.

Because of language difficulties, speakers of the minority language may not be able to interact with the state or receive state protection and benefits. They may be prevented from voting, using the courts and the schools, or having access to the bureaucracy. Accordingly, they need special provision to overcome this obstacle, but special provision is costly. Supporters of assistance rights argue that the costs are less important than the injustice that takes place because of speakers of the minority language being denied access to the activities and services to which they are entitled. Another group of assistance rights is subsidies to a variety of cultural and linguistic institutions and associations. These could be direct subsidies or special tax credits as contributions to such associations. These special state measures are designed to help cultural groups preserve their cultural integrity and heritage to the same degree as the majority culture.

Minority rights are beyond the common provisions of civil and political rights of individual citizenship in a liberal democratic society. Proponents of minority rights (Kymlicka and Norman 2000; Tamir 1995; Taylor 1994; Young 1995) typically see group rights as supplementing individual rights. They argue that the promotion of group rights can actually enhance citizenship. They point out that minority groups seek these rights to allow them to do things or get access to services which members of the majority culture already enjoy. They seek special provision because of culturally specific disadvantages or because the desired common activity is out of the reach of members of non-dominant groups. Minority rights are needed to prevent the ongoing stigmatization of ethno-cultural minorities, to encourage alienated groups to come to identify with the larger society and to become full members of the community. They show that refusal to grant recognition and autonomy to such minority groups is likely to provoke even more resentment and hostility, alienating them further from their identity as citizens of the larger state. Kymlicka and Norman (2000) also emphasize that the relationship between the minority group rights and democratic citizenship is more complicated than it appears, that it requires actual empirical investigation in specific contexts, and that no conclusion should be drawn *a priori*.

HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Chinese immigrant group is one of the oldest in Canada, and its history is probably the most unsettling (Li, 1998). The first group of Chinese arrived in Victoria on June 28, 1858, from California

in search of gold and new development opportunities. Originally they came predominantly from the southern Chinese coastal provinces of Guangdong (or Kuangtung) and Fujian (or Fukien). Most of them were single men with rural origins. As the gold fields petered out, the Chinese found employment as domestic servants, coal miners, and seasonal workers in the salmon canning industry (Tan and Roy, 1985). Chinese workers were used extensively during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR).

The proliferation of the Chinese on the West Coast was perceived as a threat to the mission of the government to build a white *British* Columbia. The Chinese signified an ancient and medieval baggage of distinctions between “West” and “East,” civilized and barbarian, master and slave, Christian and heathen, white and non-white (Anderson, 1995). With the completion of the CPR, the Chinese were no longer welcome. In 1885, the government of Canada imposed a \$50 head tax on all incoming Chinese, increased to \$100 in 1900, and to \$500 in 1903. When it was found that it was not effective enough to keep the Chinese out of Canada, the Federal Government passed a restrictive Chinese Immigration Act in 1923, which virtually prohibited all Chinese immigration into Canada until its repeal in 1947. Besides the head tax and the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act, the Chinese also faced other kinds of discrimination. Since they were not allowed to vote, they were prohibited from entering certain professions such as law, medicine, or accounting. Further, they were denied the opportunity to acquire Crown land (Tan and Roy, 1985).

The founding and historical development of SUCCESS mirrored, and was influenced by, the national immigration policy. From Confederation to the 1960s, the selection of immigrants was based on racial background, with the British and Western Europeans being the most “desirable” citizens, the Asians the “unassimilable” and, therefore, “undesirable.” After the Second World War, the Canadian immigration policy continued to be “highly restrictive” (Knowles 1997) despite external and internal pressures for an open-door policy.

In the mid-1960s, Canada was experiencing “the greatest postwar boom” (Whitaker 1991: 18). Skilled labour was required to help Canada build its expansionary economy, but Europe as the traditional source of immigrants was not able to meet the needs of Canada because of the economic recovery there. Thus the Canadian government turned its recruitment efforts to the traditionally restricted areas – Asia. In 1967 a “point system” was introduced by the Liberal government, which based the selection of immigrants on their “education, skills and resources” rather than their racial and religious backgrounds (Ibid., p.19). According to Whitaker, this new system represented “an historic watershed,” and “it did establish at the level of formal principle that Canadian immigration policy is ‘colour blind’” (Ibid., p.19). However, the new selection method was criticized for being “in

favour of some racial groups and against others” (Mattas 1996: 100). Whitaker (1991), however, believes that the new system might have stacked the deck against poor immigrants from Third World countries.

Whitaker pointed out further that the “point system” was successful in reversing the pattern of immigration to Canada away from Europe toward Asia and other Third World countries. By the mid-1970s there were more immigrants arriving from the Third World than from the developed world, the largest number coming from Asia, followed by the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa (Ibid., p.19). Among the Asian group, many were from Hong Kong.

To understand the founding of SUCCESS, besides understanding the historical, social, and political context in the receiving country, it is also important to review the context from which the immigrants came. According to Wong (1992), there have been three major waves of emigration from Hong Kong since the end of the Second World War. The first occurred between 1958 and 1961 owing to dramatic changes in Hong Kong’s agriculture. The second wave was triggered by a political crisis, the 1967 riot. It was a spill-over of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) in China. It began with a demonstration led by local communists, but ended with violence and terrorism. Threatened by bombs and political instability, thousands left Hong Kong for popular destinations, in particular the United States and Canada. Many of them were members of the Hong Kong elite.

The third wave of emigration described by Wong began in the 1980s. According to the 1984 Sino-British Agreement on the future of Hong Kong, the colony would become a special administrative region under the rule of China. Many of the residents who were worried about their future began to leave Hong Kong. Among them, a large number found homes in Canada. Wong described this latest group of emigrants as “predominantly ‘yuppies’ - young, educated, middle class professionals” (Ibid., p. 4).

RESEARCH DESIGN

The central guiding question for this research was: How did a community-initiated voluntary organization like SUCCESS respond to the changing needs of an ethnic community in a multicultural society? Two major qualitative research methods were used to conduct this study: document analysis and personal interviewing. The selection of research methods derived from the nature of this research as an interpretive study, and its attempts to understand people’s lived experience with the organization. The document analysis included SUCCESS annual reports, newsletters, the minutes of

its Annual General Meetings, important speeches, and program brochures. Twenty interviews were conducted with the Executive, Board members, and Program Directors. Time and space did not permit interviews with clientele, so their views of this organization were not represented here. In addition to the two major methods, site visiting and participant observation as a volunteer were used as complementary methods to help me contextualize what was read and heard about the organization. Multiple data sources and methods indicated that this study adopted a triangulation approach which ensured the credibility of the research. For the analysis of the research, a four-stage process was developed: (i) identifying main points, (ii) searching for salient themes and recurring patterns, (iii) grouping common themes and patterns into related categories, and (iv) comparing all major categories with reference to the major theories in the field to form new perspectives. The four-stage process assured that there was frequent interplay between the data and theory.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The Founding of SUCCESS

Among the Chinese immigrants who arrived in the 1960s, many did not speak good English. In particular, among the group who came under the family reunion category, many arrived in Vancouver with little or no English at all. Owing to language difficulties and cultural barriers, many immigrants had problems in accessing mainstream social service agencies for assistance. Thus, a gap was found between the mainstream society and the Chinese community and actions were required to address this gap. In her interview, Maggie Ip, the founding Chair of SUCCESS, explains:

We found the gap. There was no bridge. There were always these two isolated groups of people and the gap was in between. The gap was really the cultural and language barriers.

In 1973, SUCCESS was founded out of this context in response to the failure of government agencies and mainstream organizations to provide accessible social services for newly arrived Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong. Discussions with the early founders of SUCCESS and analysis of SUCCESS documents reveal five purposes for the founding of SUCCESS: (i) to bridge the gap in social services between new Chinese immigrants and service agencies, (ii) to act as a united voice in the Chinese Community, (iii) to educate Chinese immigrants about their rights and responsibilities, (iv) to help immigrants become independent and productive citizens, and (v) to promote integration. Maggie Ip notes:

I also want to make sure that the final goal of every program that SUCCESS runs is eventual integration. We have a program, whether the program is welcome or not is secondary. We have to look at the program. OK, why are we offering this program, because this program will help immigrants eventually become a member of the society. This is a guiding principle. We develop the program as such that this is our eventual aim.

Historical Development

To facilitate an understanding of the historical development of SUCCESS between 1973 and 1998, its twenty-five year history may be divided into three stages for convenience. This division was made on the basis of a general review of the history of SUCCESS, its programs and services, and its organizational development.

Stage One: 1973 - 1979, Founding and Establishing Stage

During Stage One, following its establishment, the Society successfully sponsored its first project, the Chinese Connection Project, between 1973 and 1977. It was a three-year demonstration project funded by Health and Welfare Canada. Its objective was to study existing gaps, provide the much needed link between immigrants and social service agencies, and pressure agencies to modify their policies to provide better services. During this stage, SUCCESS provided direct and referral services to meet the needs of individual immigrants. Meanwhile, they worked with mainstream organizations to sensitize their service approaches to non-English speaking clients. In addition, SUCCESS also participated in advocacy activities, such as forming a special task force to pursue discussions on the publication of the Green Paper which contained proposed new immigration policies in the Citizenship Act. Volunteer development also began during this stage. The spirit of voluntarism, mutual help, and self-help was manifested through sponsoring refugees from Vietnam in collaboration with other Chinese ethnic organizations. All their programs and services were very popular. Jonathan Lau, the Coordinator of the Chinese Connection Project, commented on the programs and workshops they run. He said:

In each workshop we have close to 100 people attending. We used the Strathcona Community Centre in those days. Each time we have a full house. I remember in one of these workshops I did on immigration, I used the Strathcona Community Centre, free space to run those kind of workshops, it's a full house. The whole building was packed, people attended about immigration, about manpower, manpower training, manpower eligibility, about UIC, about educational system. Every time it's packed.

Despite the high popularity of the Society, SUCCESS encountered financial difficulty when the Chinese Connection Project came to an end in 1977. In order to continue with the services, Board members, staff, and volunteers all worked together to overcome the difficulties and rebuild the Society. Many of them contributed to the rebuilding process by volunteering their services. Stage One ended by winning recognition from mainstream organizations in joining the United Way in 1979. K. C. Li, Chair of SUCCESS from 1975 to 1981, shared his view about joining the United Way:

The United Way is also a very respected and prestigious organization in the community. It represents 100 agencies in the Lower Mainland. It's a major fundraising organization for all charity organizations. To be accepted by the United Way is a very respectful organization. SUCCESS was the first Chinese organization which joined the United Way. Again it's good for the prestige of SUCCESS. It put SUCCESS on the map.

Stage Two: 1979 – 1989, Developing and Maturing Stage

Demographic changes of Chinese immigrants in Vancouver in the 1980s contributed to the extension of SUCCESS programs and services to Vancouver South and Richmond during Stage Two. In the late 1980s, there was a big increase of Chinese immigrants primarily from Hong Kong. Meanwhile, many early Chinese immigrants moved out of Chinatown and settled in areas in South Vancouver. These demographic changes had a major impact on the general development of SUCCESS during this period. One manifestation of such impact was the establishment of the Kingsway Community Outreach Project in 1984, which later became its first branch office on Fraser Street. The Project aimed at developing a sense of community and encouraging community participation among Chinese-Canadians in the Kingsway neighbourhood. It marked a very important step for the development of SUCCESS outside Chinatown. Nicholas Lo, a former program manager of the outreach project, made the following comments:

According to government statistics, lots of Chinese-speaking people choose to move out of Chinatown area and live in another part of Vancouver. In the Kingsway area, around 18 to 23% of local residents are Chinese speaking. That is why we want to start some services in that area to see whether it is necessary to have a branch office so that people don't need to take a long trip to Chinatown office to get the service they needed.

Another response to the demographic changes was the opening of SUCCESS's second branch office in Richmond in the summer of 1989 because an increasing number of Chinese immigrants were settling in this suburban area. According to Wilfred Wan (1989), Chair of SUCCESS from 1989 to 1990, this new office immediately attracted over 150 volunteers and quickly became an important

part of the rapidly expanding new immigrant Chinese community in Richmond, offering, among other things, career consultation and job referral services.

Significant developments during this stage include: (a) the first Walk With the Dragon Walkathon event in 1985, (b) joining the United Way of Lower Mainland in the same year, and (c) approval in principle the proposal to build a permanent SUCCESS Social Services Complex and Extended Care Facility for seniors. Besides providing programs and services, SUCCESS did not forget its roles in advocacy and fighting for social justice. It participated in the debate over W5 Campus Give Away and the Dim Sum Diary incidents. In the first incident, the CTV program W5 charged that foreign students from China were taking educational opportunities away from (white) Canadians at the expense of Canadian taxpayers, on the basis of exaggerated statistics and erroneous and offensive portrayal of Canadian citizens of Chinese origin as “foreign” students. In the “Dim Sum Diaries,” the accents of new Chinese immigrants and their stereotype behaviour were satirized. SUCCESS participated in the national campaign against the first, and led a protest against the second. As a result, the CTV issued two apologies, and CBC withdrew the Dim Sum Diary with a public acknowledgement that the program had adversely affected many Chinese, particularly the more recent immigrants. In commenting on its advocacy role, Angela Kan, Executive Director of SUCCESS between 1977 and 1986, stated:

In the early days, it was very difficult because the community was not prepared. The host country was not prepared... I also talked to the media, that's where we fought for civil justice. The media was not very sympathetic, a lot of time when they talked about Chinese community it was just drugs and gangs.

The Society also strengthened its public relations, fundraising, membership, and volunteer development. As a result of its dedicated hard work and compassion, it won a number of awards and recognition from the Chinese community and community at large. Although its influence on mainstream society was not obvious at this time, it had become a well established organization by the end of Stage Two. In commenting on its influence, Maurice Copithorne, a former Board member of SUCCESS, recalls:

At least in those days it wasn't that obvious. Of course it has become a tremendous influential organization. In those days, they weren't doing things like organizing meetings for the Prime Minister to meet, which they have done in more recent years. As I recall, completely concerned with social welfare. Secondly, they had a number of professional social workers involved. It was a very professional approach and I was always impressed.

Stage Three: 1989 – 1998, Expanding and Transforming Stage

Stage Three was characterized by expansion and transformation. With 1997 approaching, the people of Hong Kong were worried about the returning of their territory to China. There was an influx of immigrants from that region. The new demographic changes created more opportunities for SUCCESS to grow and expand on a much larger scale than the previous years. Among the most recent group, there were more business and independent immigrants than before. Their needs for services were different from their early counterparts. To respond to the new demographic changes, SUCCESS expanded its programs and services to business and employment training. When asked whether this new undertaking was in contradiction with SUCCESS's original mandate to help Chinese immigrants overcome language and cultural barriers, Thomas Tam, Program Director of Small Business Development and Training, stated:

I would like to say it is an extension of our services based on the same mandate. For new immigrants, we also help them to overcome cultural and language barriers in doing businesses or in getting employment. For the Canadian community at large, we help to bridge newcomers and local people, and eventually for the well-being of everybody. I think this is an extension of our services based on the old mandate.

The 1990s also saw many Mandarin-speaking Chinese emigrating from Taiwan and Mainland China to Vancouver. They came from different linguistic backgrounds and their needs for services were different from those of immigrants from Hong Kong. SUCCESS also set up special centres to accommodate the needs of Mandarin-speaking immigrants. In response, the Society hired and placed six Mandarin-speaking staff members in 1992 to provide Mandarin services and programs at each branch office. As the population of Mandarin-speaking residents in the Lower Mainland continued to grow, SUCCESS opened a Mandarin Service Centre in the Oakridge area in Vancouver in 1994. A second Mandarin Service Centre in Chinatown was established in July 1996. Mason Loh, Chair of SUCCESS from 1994 to 1998, claimed that the new initiatives would gain more support for SUCCESS and benefit its own development:

I personally say Mandarin services are going to be the biggest thing for SUCCESS in the next five to ten years. If the Hong Kong immigration numbers start to really drop, then we don't really need a lot of Cantonese abilities. We really need to have stronger Mandarin language capability to service the next wave of immigrants.

Following the opening of its first two branch offices (Fraser and Richmond Offices) during Stage Two, SUCCESS set up another 6 branch offices in Stage Three as a result of meeting the changing community needs. SUCCESS extended its services to the communities of Burnaby, Coquitlam, Port-Coquitlam, Port-Moody, and Surrey. During Stage Three, SUCCESS has continued to build bridges on both sides. Regular consultations and presentations were made to schools, parents,

and community groups to promote social awareness and inter-group relations. Equally the Board of Directors and staff members served on over twenty committees of the City Council, the School Board, government departments, and social service organizations. Lilian To, former CEO of SUCCESS, explains the importance of building bridges on both sides.

Our clients should not be focusing only on the immigrant population, our clients should also be the mainstream. We have to have the employers be willing to hire immigrants before they can even get a job. We have to work with employers and help them understand where the immigrants come from, and help them to understand they can contribute to their businesses. So our target now is not only immigrants, but also mainstream communities. I have to say that there is still a lot of work we have to do with mainstream organizations, mainstream communities, or mainstream employers. That is our target now.

Stage Three also witnessed the completion of the 26,000 square-foot New Social Service Centre, home of its Head Office. To many people, this meant permanence and stability, a symbol of pride, and a sense of belonging. By the end of Stage Three, SUCCESS had developed into a holistic, multi-service agency providing a comprehensive array of programs and services based on community needs.

Major Changes in SUCCESS

SUCCESS experienced great changes between 1973 and 1998. These changes were manifested in the growth of the organization, the expansion of programs and services, and changes in its mandate. First, the fiscal growth of SUCCESS during its first 25 years was most evident. When it was founded in 1973, the organization employed only four full-time professional social workers. By 1998, it had a professional team of over 200 people. At its initial stage, it was funded by less than \$100,000 a year; when it reached its 25th anniversary, its annual budget has reached \$8 million. The number of clients receiving its programs and services skyrocketed from its initial 2,000 client contacts a year to over 200,000 by 1998. Physically, the organization has grown from a 300-square foot office in Chinatown to an organization with multiple satellite offices in the Greater Vancouver area with headquarters in a 26,000-square foot Social Service Building of its own.

Other important changes were seen in its programs and services. In the 1970s, its lack of resources limited its provision to basic settlement services such as language interpretation and information services. By the 1990s, it was providing a whole range of programs, including airport reception, settlement services, language training, counselling services, small business development and training, employment training and services, and group and community services. It was no longer just a single-focus organization providing only settlement services; it has become a well-established

multi-service community organization. Some of these programs have remained constant throughout this 25-year period because the needs have remained more or less unchanged. For example, ESL (English as a Second Language) programs within the Language Training and Settlement Services area have remained important for all non-English speaking immigrants to help them acquire the language skills necessary for full participation in society. Programs in the Business Development and Employment Training areas are responding to increases in the number of business and professional immigrants. Its holistic approach helps immigrants become competent, socially, culturally, linguistically, and economically.

Further changes which were not as noticeable as the former two were those in its mandate. SUCCESS was established in 1973 as a demonstration project, which was supposed to terminate three years after. Its mandate was mainly to help non-English speaking Chinese immigrants through providing basic immigrant settlement services, with the assistance of bilingual social workers who could speak both English and Chinese. Its situation in 1998 demonstrated that SUCCESS had become a multicultural and multiethnic organization. Its clientele comprised immigrants from non-Chinese ethnic backgrounds, including those from mainstream society. To reflect the demographic changes of its clients, its professional team has also become ethno-culturally inclusive. Its programs and services were made available in many languages other than Cantonese and English.

Clearly, this study demonstrates that the changes which took place in SUCCESS were many. The organization has grown exponentially and strong enough to be noticeable not just in the Chinese community but also in mainstream society. Its focus was three fold: providing professional services and education programs, advocating on behalf of immigrants, and facilitating citizenship education and community development. These changes have made the organization less marginalized than during its early stages, a point of view supported by Mason Loh:

We are reaching out in our work. We are reaching out to the mainstream, the media, government, all around... SUCCESS is large enough. When it does something, it is noticeable not just in the Chinese community, but in the mainstream as well.

This study also reveals that many social forces have contributed to the evolution of SUCCESS. First, the profile of immigrants changed owing to changes in Canadian immigration policies, such as the adoption of the "point system," the introduction of the business immigrant category, and the opening of the immigration division in the Canadian Embassy in Beijing. A consequence of the most recent policy change was the increase of professional and business immigrants, especially those from Taiwan and China. Second, the needs of newly-arrived immigrants differed from those of their early counterparts, and SUCCESS responded to meet these changing

needs. Another force that influenced the changes in SUCCESS was government funding. Through funding requirements, the government encouraged SUCCESS to extend its programs and services to other ethnic communities. Other elements that contributed to the changes in SUCCESS included an internal democratic electoral system, professionalism, a politically neutral stand, and timing. Finally, most important of all, SUCCESS had a dedicated team, including the early founders, board members, volunteers, and staff members. It was their shared compassion, empathy, dedication, and common experience that were formative influences in propelling SUCCESS to its current stage.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

During its first twenty-five years of existence, SUCCESS has contributed greatly to the ethnic Chinese community and Canadian society at large. Its contributions touched both practical and theoretical fields of minority group rights, citizenship, immigration and integration. Its social impact was extensive.

In a very real sense, this study challenges the argument that minority group rights restrict individual rights and freedoms, and it demonstrates that minority group rights supplement and further enhance individual rights and freedoms. It shows that SUCCESS has had a great impact on the Chinese community itself. Chinese immigrants benefited immensely from its programs and services. By providing culturally- and linguistically-appropriate services, SUCCESS has increased the access of Chinese immigrants to settlement and other social services, which they were entitled to but deprived of, owing to the failure of the state and mainstream social service agencies. SUCCESS acted as a mediator between the individual immigrants and the state. It provided a means to investigate the dynamic between individual immigrants' agency and the structural or institutional constraints they face in exercising that agency. As a transitional institution, it has helped immigrants ease the process of settlement, adaptation, and integration. To many immigrants, SUCCESS was a stepping stone for them to integrate into mainstream society. Meanwhile, it is also an important entrance for government agencies and mainstream organizations to approach a hard-to-reach ethnic community. Furthermore, it helped create a safety network, a home, and a community to which Chinese immigrants felt they belonged. The experience of SUCCESS has shown that ethno-racial organizations could be a more effective alternative other than mainstream organizations, because they are more closely connected with and responsive to ethnic community needs.

Equally helpful, this study challenges the view of universal citizenship. It confirms the argument that granting equal individual rights alone was not sufficient to achieve inclusive citizenship. To build a society to which all citizens feel they belong, universal citizenship had to be

complemented by differential citizenship. The special programs and services that SUCCESS provided for immigrants were not unjust privileges; they were the first step in the process for immigrants to achieve fairness, justice, and equality. The whole process of the historical development of SUCCESS displayed the collective efforts of the Vancouver Chinese community in responding to unjust and unfair treatment of an ethnic group. Allocating the necessary resources and support to Chinese immigrants helped correct the disadvantages that Chinese immigrants suffered within difference-blind institutions. It also enhanced democratic and independent citizenship because failure to recognize and accommodate their special needs was more likely to alienate further the Chinese from identifying with the larger society and becoming full members of the community. In this way the study provides an alternative model to interpret citizenship and democracy.

Again, the study demonstrates that SUCCESS built a citizenship learning community. It reveals that SUCCESS adopted a community-based participatory approach in promoting new citizenship learning. It built an infrastructure which incorporates activities that required engagement and collaboration among a number of stakeholders. Besides acquiring knowledge and skills, more importantly it helped immigrants foster a sense of critical consciousness while educating them about their rights and responsibilities. In such a learning community, learning is fundamentally socio-cultural and socio-political. It involves constructing complex social relationships between the immigrant community and society at large.

No less, the study reveals that the role of SUCCESS in citizenship education is two-sided. Through its community development events and activities, SUCCESS has contributed to sensitizing the mainstream organizations about their service approaches and changing public attitudes towards immigrants. It has helped enhance mutual understanding between immigrants and mainstream society, hence shortened the social distance between the two groups. One of the most important contributions was that SUCCESS has played a significant bridging role between the two communities.

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