Chapter 24

Evaluation of Civil Society Organizations’ Programs in San Diego City for Community Integration Policies of Refugee and Immigrant Women From MENA Region

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this chapter is to provide a detailed analysis and evaluation of the women civil society organizations in San Diego city for community integration of women from MENA region. To reach the objective of this chapter, a detailed portrait of these organizations was introduced. Then, the authors evaluated a significant program provided to refugee and immigrant women from MENA region for community integration policies. The model proposed by Marceau et al. (1992) and Marceau (2012) is considered a useful tool to accomplish the objective of this chapter. The authors investigated the rationale of the program through the analysis of reason of existence, the targets, objectives, and nature of programs. Moreover, they examined the implementation phase of the program through the analysis of inputs, interventions and activities, outputs, effects, and impacts of the program. The results of this research enabled the authors to introduce convenient proposals for the decision makers to elaborate further efficient and effective community integration policies for women from MENA region living in San Diego city.

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INTRODUCTION

Feminist movement or Women’s Liberation movement was presented in the literature in the late 1960s to defend the rights of women at the political, economic and social level. The feminist movement was a beginning for women empowerment for advocating their rights as an equal gender in the society (Collins, 2009).

The Feminist theory was introduced through three feminist movements. The first movement was concerned with the women’s voting rights in the 19th and early 20th Century. The second movement focused on women’s legal and social rights in the 1960s and the 1970s. The third movement started in the 1990s to present. This modern movement is devoted to continue the advocacy of gender equality (Cott, 1987; Humm, 1995; Beasley, 1999; Hawkesworth, 2006).

San Diego is a city on the Pacific coast of California, in the end south west of the United States. It is known as the eighth-largest city in the States and the second-largest in California. According the U.S. Census Bureau, as of 2016, San Diego population was more than 1.356 million. There is no accurate numbers of the Middle Eastern and North Africa (MENA) population within San Diego, however, according to the US resettlement agencies data base, San Diego considered as the second largest MENA community after Michigan State.

In America, a wide range of different ethnicities and race are registered as ‘white’ population, Middle Eastern are one of. According the San Diego county human development indicator, San Diego has 44.5% of the white population which includes the Middle Eastern and other ethnicities of different other origins (The City of San Diego, 2017)

Since the year of 2009, and due to the continuous conflicts in countries of the Middle East such Iraq, Somalia, Sudan and Syria, the number of the refugees’ arrivals in California and into San Diego County in specific has significantly increased. Iraqis outpaces those from other countries. Country of San Diego annual reports of 2016 and 2017 reveals that an average number of 3000-4000 individuals arrived from different Middle Eastern and Far East countries were Iraq and Syria are on the top of the list.

Since 2005, 16,424 refugees have been placed in San Diego County without adequate resources from the Federal Government to integrate them into our community. Almost 2/3 of these refugees have come from Iraq (Board of San Diego County Supervisors’ Report, 2012).

The impact of war trauma, social isolation and change in social status make acculturation difficult. Clinical studies show that rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among immigrants and refugee populations range from 39 percent to 100 percent, (compared with 1 percent of the general population) while rates of depression range from 47 to 72 percent. Adding to the challenge is that the government agencies and community organizations serving this population are not provided adequate resources and funding for refugee services (Board of San Diego County Supervisors’ Report, 2012).

Limited language skills makes it hard to help this population navigate through the application process and creates difficulties in accessing services that may eventually lead them to self-sufficiency. The application process is made more complicated by the limited availability of qualified translators to assist clients (Health and Human Services Agency, n.d.).
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