



The Shoe Project Survey Study Shows Major Positive Impacts on Participants

TORONTO (January 10, 2022) - In 2019 The Shoe Project (TSP) commissioned a professional survey of 25 participants (approximately 14% of total number of participants), five mentors and ten audience participants which showed its significant success in rebuilding immigrant women's lives.

Many immigrant and refugee women coming to Canada have left behind good careers which they have difficulty in recreating in Canada. They often are talented, well educated and have valuable work experience and reserves of resilience. While their potential is enormous, the trauma of migration and limited English writing and public speaking skills hold them back.

The unique TSP program offers a proven way to bring them up to speed to succeed in their new home through intense writing sessions, voice coaching and performance, all guided by senior Canadian writers and theatre artists. The workshops are organically formed safe spaces that enable a sense of belonging, creating friendships and networks. After public performances, alumnae activities continue in TSP's eight locations across Canada.

Concrete Benefits for Participants

100% both reported and demonstrated improved language skills.

100% found a network

47% found a job or other opportunity within The Shoe Project

94% gained or regained confidence

68% found real friends

Other Learning Outcomes Cited by Participants

- Being Yourself in a New World
- Renewal After Loss
- Public Speaking

- Self-Confidence leading to Self-Discovery
- Appreciation by the Larger Community
- A Sense of Community
- Cross-Cultural Connections
- Managing Loneliness and Social Isolation
- Practicing Freedom of Expression

Many women who participated in this project are lawyers and psychotherapists, educators, artists, journalists and health care professionals with leadership experience in their home countries. Others were nannies, home care workers, baristas, and homemakers. Lack of writing skill in English blocked their routes to follow their previous professions. This and other effects of coming to a new land damaged their self-confidence and sense of self, according to the researchers. Significant upgrading of English writing and speaking skills lifts spirits and improves opportunities. Other profound results are that through performing their stories, women find that their voices are heard and that they are not alone.

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About The Shoe Project

For the past ten years, The Shoe Project has been changing the way Canadians see immigrant and refugee women, through story and performance. Every journey begins with a pair of shoes. Our alumnae of 250 women from 62 countries credit The Shoe Project with changing their lives, giving them the skills, confidence and support to succeed in a new country. Many take on leadership roles in the organization. Led by professional Canadian writers and theatre artists, our workshops and performances lift the voices of women immigrants and refugees into Canada's national conversation.