



Attending the ACFAS Official Women Minority Language Communities Conference in Ottawa

2024 - 06 - 11

Outreach

On Tuesday, May 14th, PERT's Director of Policy and Research, Sta Kuzviwanza, and Policy Research lead, Morgan Gagnon, had the opportunity to attend and present at the « Les femmes dans les communautés de langue officielle en situation minoritaire » (Women in Official Language Minority Communities) conference, which was held as part of the [91st Congress of ACFAS at the University of Ottawa](#). The conference aimed to shed light on the diverse experiences of women who belong to official language minority communities throughout Canada. It was a great privilege to engage with diverse individuals and organizations working to support official language minorities across the country. The presentations at the conference covered a wide range of topics, from the history of Francophone feminist movements in Canada to the experiences of queer Francophone women and gender minorities accessing services in Canada. We strongly believe that adopting an intersectional perspective on language and gender is crucial for a holistic understanding of the challenges faced by minority language women across the country, and we were invigorated to learn from our Francophone OLMC peers.

Our team presented quantitative data on the socio-economic status and labour force characteristics of English-speaking women. Our presentation touched on how gender and language interact with respect to the employment experiences of English-speaking women in Québec. Our research demonstrated that English-speaking women in Québec, who make up 7.4% of Québec's population, have lower labour force participation rates, higher unemployment rates and lower incomes than English-speaking men. English-speaking women also tend to face greater employment and income challenges compared to their francophone counterparts and to both English-speaking and francophone men. For instance, the unemployment rate for English-speaking women in Québec stands

at 10.9%, while the unemployment rate for French-speaking women in Québec is 6.7%. Furthermore, the unemployment rate of English-speaking women in Québec has increased by 2.2 percentage points since 2017. English-speaking women also earn a lower median employment income than both English-speaking men and francophone women and men; English-speaking women earn approximately \$4,000 less per year than Francophone women. French-speaking men earn the highest median employment income in the province (\$41,600 annually). Ultimately, Finally, the data highlight an intersectional disparity in which women and linguistic minorities fare worse, and English-speaking women fare even worse. Preliminary data suggest that English-speaking women who are immigrants, visible minorities, and Indigenous also face greater labour market challenges than English-speaking women who are not.

In a Q&A session after the presentation, we discussed the similarities between the labour market disparities we observe in our community in Quebec and those experienced by francophone women in the rest of Canada. It was fantastic to connect with amazing individuals who are working to improve the lives and opportunities of language minorities across Canada, and we hope that these connections will lead to future collaborations.

We would like to express our gratitude to the Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise for their financial support of the research we presented at the conference « Les femmes dans les communautés de langue officielle en situation minoritaire », as well as for funding the conference itself. We would also like to thank ACFAS and the University of Ottawa for hosting the ACFAS conference and giving us the opportunity to meet with our colleagues from across Canada. Finally, we thank the QUESCREN team for hosting our session and for their incredible support.

Scott Guy, Policy Research Intern, Provincial Employment Roundtable.

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