



PEEL IMMIGRATION LABOUR MARKET SURVEY FINDINGS

December 2009

Acknowledgements

The Region of Peel is grateful to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for funding the Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey.

Thank you to the research team at Ryerson University's Diversity Institute in Management and Technology for designing the research instruments, providing guidance throughout the research project from data collection, data analysis to report preparation: Dr. Margaret Yap; Dr. Wendy Cukier; Charity-Ann Hannan; Mark Holmes; Katherine Jeffery; and Lennie Lejasisaks.

Also, thank you to the PinPoint research team for analyzing the survey data and preparing the final report: Michelle P. Goldberg, Ph.D; Gerald Bierling, Ph.D; Sarah V. Wayland, Ph.D; and Charity-Ann Hannan.

We wish to acknowledge Lauren Rennie, Region of Peel, for managing all aspects of the research project and Cecilia Zhuang, Ph.D for assisting with the research design, developing interview protocols and conducting preliminary data analysis.

To the members of the Advisory Committee for their strategic guidance at key stages of the project and the many local businesses and community organizations who helped to disseminate the survey, thank you.

And most importantly, a special thanks to the 1,425 Peel residents who completed the survey and participated in various focus groups and interviews, without which this report would not be possible.

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About Us

About The Region of Peel

The Region of Peel is situated in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) at the heart of southern Ontario's major urban centres. It was incorporated in 1974 on the principle that certain community and infrastructure services such as public health, social services, ambulance services, water and sanitary sewers and waste collection, are most cost-effectively administered over a larger geographic area. The Region of Peel serves more than one million residents in the Cities of Mississauga and Brampton and the Town of Caledon.

The Region of Peel is recognized across the country as a leader in municipal government for its award-winning services and debt-free financial management. In October 2006, the Region of Peel received the Canada Award for Excellence (CAE) Gold Trophy from the National Quality Institute (NQI) – the first government in Canada to reach this level. The prestigious CAE is the highest level of recognition awarded by NQI to organizations that have successfully maintained a focus on organizational excellence, quality and continuous improvement.

The Region of Peel is governed by the Regional Chair and a 24 member Council, representing the Cities of Mississauga and Brampton and the Town of Caledon.



About The Diversity Institute in Management and Technology

The Diversity Institute undertakes research on diversity in the workplace and develops applications to improve practices in organizations.

Recognizing that diversity is a journey, the Diversity Institute works with organizations to develop customized strategies, programming and resources to promote new, interdisciplinary knowledge and practice about diversity with respect to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and ability.

The Institute collaborates with industry, government, non-profits and academics to:

- Research existing practices and evaluate programs;
- Explore barriers to full participation in the workplace;
- Develop fact-based policies and programs to help organizations attract, motivate and develop under-represented groups; and
- Provide customized training to support the development of diversity strategies.

Foreword



The Region of Peel is one of Canada's fastest growing municipalities. Largely driven by a steady flow of new immigrants, this growth has the potential to strengthen and enrich Peel's socio-economic and cultural resources.

With these benefits also comes the responsibility for providing supports and services, most importantly jobs, that meet the needs and skills of immigrants.

Unemployment and underemployment have significant costs to the community and the economy, particularly, to local businesses. Understanding where those gaps exist in our labour force is a critical step to finding appropriate jobs for our skilled workforce.

We are pleased to share the results of the Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey, providing an in-depth look at our local labour market. This research will help Peel to build programs, policies and strategies to support a skilled workforce with the goal of fostering a stable and healthy community that we can all be proud to call home.

David Szwarc

Chief Administrative Officer
Region of Peel

The Region of Peel's Human Services Plan (2009-2011) is focused on providing integrated services that address the complex needs of our clients, partners and other stakeholders.

The immigration strategy, included in the plan, is aimed at helping immigrants to integrate successfully into our community. The Immigration Labour Market Survey provides an evidence-based foundation for our work, to ensure we target our efforts, and limited resources, where they can be of greatest benefit.

Our goal is to use the findings of this study to inform strategies aimed at increasing access to employment opportunities for newcomers that use their skills and enable them to achieve their own ambitions. Their success benefits the entire community by increasing the number of productive and contributing members of our community.

We are grateful to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for funding to complete this work.

Janet Menard

Commissioner of Human Services
Region of Peel

In the not-too-distant future, 100% of the net labour force growth in Canada will be fuelled by immigrants. This has served as a wake-up call to many Canadian organizations encouraging them to revisit their talent strategies. Having a diverse workforce benefits not only immigrants but also the organizations in which they work. Previous research has shown that a diverse workforce is linked to higher productivity, enhanced profits, greater innovation and creativity. Organizations that effectively manage diversity also enjoy lower turnover, reduced absenteeism, increased employee satisfaction, and an increased ability to attract top talent.

Ryerson University serves the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and is proud to have the most diverse student population in the country. The University has a range of programs and services to ensure the highest quality student experience possible.

Ryerson's Diversity Institute undertakes research and helps organizations develop fact-based strategies to promote diversity. This most recent study will make an important contribution to knowledge about the labour market experiences of immigrants and will also aid in employers' understanding of how to develop more inclusive workplaces. The findings will also inform all levels of government, along with community agencies, on ways they can alleviate barriers faced by immigrants in the labour market. We appreciate the initiative the Region of Peel has taken in championing this study, and the support of the Government of Ontario.

Alan Shepard

Provost and Vice President Academic
Ryerson University



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Executive Summary

Over the past decade, immigration and secondary migration from other large cities like Toronto have transformed the landscape of Peel, making it one of the largest, most diverse, and rapidly growing municipalities in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2006). Most immigrants in Peel are highly educated and skilled yet they are having difficulty integrating into the Peel labour market. National and provincial research on immigrants' labour market integration confirms that many immigrants face numerous barriers to employment and as a result, have difficulty obtaining employment or employment that is commensurate with their skills and experience (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2002). Various factors have been researched, including the discounting of foreign education and work experience, an absence of professional networks among newcomers, lack of familiarity with Canadian workplace culture, changes in the Canadian labour market, and ongoing difficulties experienced by many people of colour in the labour market (Hiebert, 2006; Reitz, 2005).

Despite extensive research on immigrants' labour market experiences in Canada and Ontario, a lack of Peel-specific studies has created gaps in our knowledge for the region. The high levels of immigration and rapid population growth, declining labour market outcomes for newcomers, and lack of data about Peel gave rise to the need for the research described in this report. Ultimately, this research will provide information to government, local employers and community organizations about the labour market experiences of individuals in Peel, in order to determine which policies and programs can best help those looking for employment in this region.

This research is part of the Region of Peel's Immigration Strategy. The results of this survey will bring Peel Region one step closer to understanding the local needs and experiences of the immigrant population. The study also helps to narrow the gap in available data at the local level and may help respond to labour market contradictions reported by national and local data which points to increasing difficulties filling skilled job vacancies and the strong indications that immigrants bring much needed skills, yet experience significant difficulties obtaining work in their field. The study explores the barriers immigrants face, examines how they play out in Peel Region, and examines the strategies used by workers to help them become more successful in the Peel labour market.

Immigration is a key factor in Canada's population growth and a major contributor to its economic success. In particular, the labour market integration of newcomers is crucial to Canada's future economic prosperity. Canada is increasingly turning to immigration as a source of skills, knowledge, and labour force growth. Newcomers' failure to integrate into the labour market signifies a loss to workers as well as a loss to the broader society and economy (RBC Financial Group, 2005). Municipalities and regions that lack opportunities for economic integration could face stagnant economic and population growth, and even out-migration.

Research Objectives and Methods

This study explores the labour market experiences of immigrants in Peel using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative component includes a comprehensive survey of 1,425 immigrants and Canadian-born Peel residents aged 15 years or older who searched for a job and/or worked in Canada within the past 10 years. The survey asked respondents about their background education and experience, their experience searching for work in Canada, and their experiences in Canadian workplaces and society. The qualitative component includes focus groups and interviews with 33 respondents who self identified as principal applicants allowing them to share their labour market experiences in much greater detail.

Key Findings

The Peel study was designed to answer five key research questions. The findings of the survey were compiled and analyzed based on the quantitative responses from 1,425 surveys and the qualitative responses from 33 principal applicants. The research questions and the sample findings are as follows:

1. What are the labour market experiences of immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in Peel?

- Immigrants in our sample are not faring well in the Peel labour market on numerous measures; for instance: employment rates, income and career satisfaction. More specifically, of the immigrant respondents who have international work experience, only about one third were successful in obtaining their desired employment.
- Despite their educational credentials, immigrants in our sample do not receive the same income returns on their education. Immigrant respondents earn significantly less than their Canadian-born counterparts. While in our sample, an immigrant's income increases with length of time in working for their current employer and with obtaining more education in Canada, their income is still not commensurate with their Canadian-born counterparts.

a) To what extent do immigrants and Canadian-born individuals utilize their skills at work?

- Both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample report underutilization of their skills in their current job. Recent immigrant respondents are less likely to utilize their skills at work, but skill utilization improves with length of time in Canada, and through full recognition of credentials by employers.
- Results show a significant change in work industry after migration, as well as a change in occupation level for immigrants in our sample. While some immigrant respondents are able to improve their occupation level over time, most were not able to obtain employment in jobs at similar levels to what they held prior to arrival, especially those who had previously occupied managerial or professional occupations.
- Immigrants in our sample were more successful in obtaining their desired job if they reported that employers in Ontario accepted or partially accepted their previous educational credentials.

b) How satisfied are immigrants and Canadian-born individuals with their workplaces and careers?

- Immigrant workers in our sample did not differ significantly from Canadian-born workers on their workplace satisfaction perceptions.
- In general, respondents are positive about their places of work. They feel positive about their co-worker relations: 79% feel their co-workers treat them with respect and support; 66.9% feel supported by their managers; 66.3% reported that there were fair advancement processes in their workplaces; and 77.9% report being highly committed to their jobs. Most Peel respondents work in the same municipality where they live.
- Overall, Canadian-born individuals in our sample reported higher levels of satisfaction with their careers. However, after five years with their current employer, the career satisfaction levels of immigrants and Canadian-born respondents are almost the same.

- Immigrant respondents are not as satisfied with their career experiences in Peel as their Canadian-born counterparts. They report a lack of available individuals they could turn to for guidance and support within their organizations (more so in the private sector) and continue to explore other career opportunities.
- Of those in our sample currently seeking other job or career opportunities, most are looking within Peel Region.
- Respondents employed in the public sector, in particular immigrants, are more satisfied with their employment in Peel. They are more likely to be utilizing their skills, report higher levels of management and co-worker support including the availability of mentors. Immigrant respondents employed in the public sector report higher levels of commitment to their public sector organizations and higher career satisfaction.
- Canadian-born respondents were more likely than immigrant respondents to report having a mentor regardless of employment sector. Immigrant respondents in the public sector were more likely to report having a mentor than immigrant respondents in the private sector.

c) How do the experiences of principal applicants in the skilled worker category differ from those of other survey respondents?

- Skilled worker principal applicants in our sample are less satisfied with their labour market experiences in Peel compared to other immigrants. They were not very satisfied with their progress in finding a job in Canada, were not satisfied with meeting their career goals, goals for advancement, or goals for income.
- Despite having their education and experience assessed prior to immigration, skilled worker principal applicants in our sample are not more likely to be employed, are not earning more income nor are they able to find employment in jobs that utilize their skills.

2. What job search strategies, including use of employment services, do immigrant and Canadian-born workers use to obtain employment?

- Searching in the newspaper or asking for help from friends or family to get a job are strategies reported as used most often to find a job, but they do not necessarily help an individual in our sample get a job in their field.
- Immigrants are more likely to use formal employment and research strategies such as visiting employment centres and attending workshops. Networking/contacting employers were reported as the most helpful strategies; however, these are done less often by immigrants in our sample. Bridging programs and mentorship are also strategies that were used less often.
- One in four immigrants in our sample accessed some government-funded employment services, and just under one-third obtained more education and credentials in Canada.
- Although we know that immigrants in our sample are not utilizing some of the programs funded by governments that could help them, we need more research to uncover why.
- Despite knowing where to go for services, not all respondents were able to obtain the help they needed. Nearly 50 % of the sample of immigrants reported not getting the help they needed through these services.

- While language training is well funded and attended for many reasons, highly educated and proficient immigrants in our sample, in particular principal applicants, do not necessarily find them accessible or useful.
- In general, individuals in our sample were more satisfied with the services they received from community agencies than from government employment services.
- Highly educated and trained individuals in our sample reported lower levels of satisfaction with government and community services to help them find a job, as they felt the services did not meet their specialized needs.

3. How successful are immigrant and Canadian-born workers at getting promotions in their workplaces?

- Few respondents in our sample received promotions. Canadian-born respondents were more likely to apply for promotions compared to immigrant respondents and more likely to receive them. Immigrants in our sample were less likely to receive promotions regardless of whether they were working in the private or public sector.

4. What barriers do immigrant and Canadian-born workers identify in terms of obtaining employment and advancement in their careers?

- Lack of Canadian work experience was reported as the barrier faced most often for immigrants in our sample and correspondingly, lack of work experience was reported most often by Canadian-born individuals.
- Networking was a serious barrier for both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample but more significant for immigrants. Immigrants in our sample found that networking was a more serious problem for them as they felt new to the community and reported an inability to contact/connect directly with employers and had a lack of available job references from Canada.
- Lack of recognition of international credentials appeared in our data as an important barrier to employment.
- Discounting international credentials by employers or professional organizations within Canada is a serious problem. Recognition of credentials by Ontario employers appeared as a significant contributor to successful employment in our data.
- Immigrant respondents who had their educational credentials accepted by Ontario employers were more than twice as likely to be employed. They were more likely to get their desired job, a job that utilizes their skills, or a job of the same or higher rank than before arrival. Finally, they also reported higher career satisfaction rates.
- Despite the evidence that obtaining credential equivalency by Canadian employers makes a significant impact on career satisfaction, job status, skill utilization and helps immigrants get jobs in their desired occupations, it was not a highly utilized strategy. International credential recognition was reported as the second least likely job strategy utilized by immigrants in our sample.

5. What are the perceptions of immigrant and Canadian-born workers with respect to discrimination in Canadian workplaces, and how prevalent are personal experiences of discrimination?

- In general, individuals in our sample believed that immigrants face discrimination in Canadian workplaces. Immigrants, highly educated immigrants and the employed respondents were more likely to believe this was the case. Sixty percent of the immigrant respondents believe Canadians feel education obtained in non-westernized countries is inferior.
- In general, most of the sample reported that discrimination rarely happens to them, with no difference between public and private sector respondents. However, immigrant respondents, in particular, skilled worker principal applicants and Black and South Asian immigrant respondents are more likely to report discrimination happens to them often.

Recommendations

The key findings outlined above suggest that immigrants in our sample are not as successful transitioning into the Peel labour force as Canadian-born individuals. Furthermore, once they are in the workforce, they are not transitioning up or utilizing their skills to their full potential. The key findings point to several areas where action can be taken to help improve the situation.

This section highlights what key stakeholders, such as community organizations, government and employers can do to help improve the situation for workers in Peel Region based on the findings of the Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey.

Community Organizations

It is recommended that Community Groups in Peel:

1. Adapt their *service delivery* approach to address the identified barriers and lack of satisfaction with services.
2. Advocate for and offer appropriate *staff development* to enable services to better meet the labour market integration needs of today's diverse immigrants.
3. *Engage* employers as partners.

Employers

It is recommended that employers in the public and private sectors in Peel:

1. Create *policies* and offer in-house *programs/services* that proactively support employees utilizing their skills to their full abilities in their organizations.
2. *Invest* in their workplaces.
3. *Engage* with other stakeholders who have an interest in employment related access issues (e.g., other employers, employment service providers and community groups).

Government

It is recommended that government continue to support service delivery system(s) aimed at integrating internationally trained individuals into the Peel workforce by way of:

1. Resource investments.
2. Policy changes and ongoing research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research fills a gap and fills the need for specific information about immigrants' labour market experiences in Peel. In general, the results indicate that immigrants in our sample are not faring well in the Peel labour market on numerous measures, including employment rates, income and career satisfaction. Immigrants were also not likely to obtain employment in jobs that utilize their skills. In particular, highly educated immigrants were at a more serious disadvantage in the Peel labour market, as professionals and managers in our sample reported they were not able to find employment in jobs at similar levels to what they held prior to arrival. While the situation for immigrant respondents improves with length of time in Canada or working for their current employer, many immigrants are never able to secure employment in their desired jobs.

Reasons for this finding include lack of Canadian experience, lack of networks, and lack of recognition of international credentials. Discounting of international credentials was found to be a serious problem in the results and a significant contributor to labour market success. Immigrant respondents who indicated that employers recognized their international credentials were more than twice as likely to be employed, were more likely to obtain their desired job, a job that utilizes their skills or a job of the same or higher rank than prior to arrival. Finally they also reported higher career satisfaction rates. However, as 60% of immigrant respondents believe Canadians feel education obtained in non-westernized countries is inferior, we still have some work to do.

Community groups, employers and governments need to work together to solve this problem of underutilization of immigrant skills. Employment is the primary settlement need of most newcomers and it influences other aspects of settlement and opportunities, including where a person can afford to live, what services they access, what schools they or their children attend, and what opportunities they can afford. Employment is a tangible expression of social inclusion, granting newcomers belonging, acceptance and recognition. If we truly want to create welcoming communities, integrating immigrants into the labour market is the first step. Furthermore, as the labour market successes of Peel residents are a crucial component of the long-term growth and vitality of the Region, promoting positive labour market experiences among immigrants in particular should be a priority for everyone. If these demographic trends continue, they will account for an increasing share and could account for nearly all, if not all, of Canada's net labour force growth within the next decade. No region can afford to ignore this trend. Municipalities and regions that lack opportunities for economic integration could face stagnant economic and population growth – a serious consequence for all.

1. Introduction

Over the past decade, immigration and secondary migration from other large cities like Toronto have transformed the landscape of Peel, making it one of the largest, most diverse, and rapidly growing municipalities in Ontario. Each year, 25,000 to 30,000 immigrants arrive in Peel to join existing immigrant communities and form new ones (Statistics Canada, 2006). Most of Peel's immigrant population has arrived over the past two decades – but today they comprise just under half of the region's entire population (Statistics Canada, 2006). With 93 different ethnocultural groups currently living in Peel, the region is now more ethnically diverse than either Toronto or Ontario (Mohanty, 2007). Visible minorities made up 50% of the 2006 regional population, up from 38.5% in 2001. The regional population is growing quickly, increasing 17.2% between 2001 and 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006). Peel is the seventh fastest growing region in Canada, and second only to York Region in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Most immigrants in Peel are highly educated and skilled, are between the ages of 35 to 54, and participate or seek to participate in the labour market (Statistics Canada, 2006). Yet, the unemployment rate for recent immigrants age 25-54 with a university certificate, diploma or degree was 10% compared with 3% for the total population in Peel in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2006). Recent immigrants had a poverty rate of 33%, almost 2.5 times higher than the total population in Peel in 2006 (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, 2008). According to the 2006 Labour Force survey (Zietsma, 2007), immigrants who arrived in Canada less than 10 years ago were under-represented in professional and management jobs (such as management, finance, health and government) and over-represented in the lower skilled occupations (such as sales and manufacturing) in Peel. However, an exception to this pattern can be seen in science related professions.

National research on labour market integration indicates that the economic outcomes of immigrants have been declining. This research has found that many immigrants have difficulty obtaining employment that is commensurate with their skill level and work experience (Statistics Canada, 2005; Hawthorne, 2008). Various factors contribute to poor labour market outcomes, including the discounting of foreign education and work experience, an absence of professional networks among newcomers, lack of familiarity with Canadian workplace culture, changes in the Canadian labour market, and ongoing difficulties experienced by many people of colour in the labour market (Alboim, Finnie and Meng, 2005; Aydemir and Skuterud, 2004; Reitz, 2005; Teelucksingh and Galabuzi, 2005a).

Despite extensive research on immigrants' labour market experiences in Canada and Ontario, a lack of Peel-specific studies has created gaps in our knowledge for the region. Little is known regarding the profiles and skill sets of Peel's local labour force, or about the experiences of immigrants in Peel, as they attempt to gain access to their intended occupations upon arrival. Furthermore once they become employed we do not know the extent to which immigrants are able to utilize their skills and their satisfaction with employment and advancement opportunities. Also, while it is believed that the intersection of certain characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, language proficiency, (dis)ability, and length of time in Canada causes some immigrants to face multiple barriers to accessing the labour market (Hawthorne, 2008; Reitz, 2007a; Teelucksingh and Galabuzi, 2005b), the literature has not been as comprehensive in this area. Finally, few quantitative studies explore discrimination in the workplace, including hiring and promotion, for immigrants and Canadian-born populations (Wayland and Goldberg, 2009).

The confluence of these three sets of factors – high levels of immigration and rapid population growth, declining labour market outcomes for newcomers, and lack of data about Peel – gave rise to the research described in this report. It was in this context that the Region of Peel sought to develop a labour market survey in order to better understand various local labour market dynamics for immigrants and Canadian-born workers. Ultimately, this research will provide

information to government, local employers and community organizations about the labour market experiences of individuals in Peel, in order to determine which policies and programs can best help those looking for employment in this region.

The importance of this study is clear: immigration is a key factor in Canada's population growth and a major contributor to its economic success. In particular, the labour market integration of newcomers is crucial to Canada's future economic prosperity. Canada is increasingly turning to immigration as a source of skills, knowledge, and labour force growth. Newcomers' failure to integrate into the labour market signifies a loss to workers as well as a loss to the broader society and economy (RBC Financial Group, 2005). According to one study by the Conference Board of Canada, the loss to the Canadian economy from the discounting of immigrants' skills is between \$4.1 and \$5.9 billion each year (Bloom and Grant, 2001). Localities and regions that lack opportunities for economic integration could face stagnant economic and population growth, and even out-migration.

This report contains six sections. Section One introduces the study and situates the research in the current literature, while Section Two outlines the research process and methodology. Survey results are presented in Section Three, which reports on the overall labour market experiences of the sample in areas such as career and workplace satisfaction, advancement, labour market barriers, and job search strategies. It makes comparisons between the sample of immigrant and Canadian-born workers where results are significant. The specific experiences of principal applicant skilled workers are also examined here. Section Four explores the perceptions of immigrant and Canadian-born workers with respect to discrimination in Canadian workplaces, and the prevalence of personal experiences of discrimination. A summary of the results is presented in Section Five, and recommendations are provided in Section Six.

Background

Employment is the primary settlement need for most newcomers (Wayland, 2006). Employment usually provides the principal source of income and economic well-being for individuals and families. It also influences other aspects of settlement and opportunities, including where a person can afford to live, what services they access, what schools they or their children attend, and what opportunities they can afford. Finally, employment is a tangible expression of social inclusion, granting newcomers belonging, acceptance and recognition. Even intangibles such as self-esteem and mental health can be linked to employment (Wayland and Goldberg, 2009).

Immigrants to Canada arrive with considerable skills and experience, and more recent cohorts are arriving possessing even more than their predecessors (Statistics Canada, 2006). Immigrants who arrive as family members of a principal applicant in the economic class, in the family class, or as refugees or refugee claimants are not assessed through the points system (Thompson, 2000). Only about 20% of persons admitted to Canada between 1995 and 2004 were actually assessed by the points system as skilled worker principal applicants and business class migrants (Hiebert, 2006). Nonetheless, many of these other newcomers are highly educated and skilled as well (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Despite the high levels of human capital, immigrants are not faring well upon arrival on all types of measures, including participation rate, employment status, income level, job match, or job satisfaction. According to an analysis of Canadian Labour Force Survey (Gilmore, 2008), the unemployment rate for immigrants in Canada in 2007 increased slightly to 6.6%, while the Canadian-born rate dipped slightly to 4.6%. The same report found that almost all employment growth for immigrants was among established immigrants and the unemployment rate of very recent immigrants (within previous five years) was more than double that of the Canadian-born.

A related study by Statistics Canada found that university-educated immigrants aged 25 to 54 who arrived in Canada within the previous five years were less likely to be employed in 2007 than their Canadian-born counterparts (Gilmore and Le Petit, 2008). This was true regardless of the

country in which they obtained their degree. Immigrants who had obtained their degrees in Western countries (i.e., United States and Europe) including Canada had employment rates of 73% to 78%, much lower than the average of 90.7% for their Canadian-born, university-educated counterparts. Immigrants with degrees from other parts of the world fared worse. Employment rates for those with degrees from Asia were 65.5%, from Latin America were 59.7%, and from Africa were 50.9%. The gap in employment rates between degree-holding immigrants and the Canadian-born narrowed the longer an immigrant had been in Canada.

Not surprisingly, a higher unemployment rate translates into lower average income. Numerous Canadian studies have found a decline in the relative entry-level earnings of newcomers (Picot, 2004; Picot and Sweetman, 2005). The percentage of immigrants living in poverty was almost triple for those arriving between 1991 and 2001 compared to Canadian-born persons (Grant and Sweetman, 2004: 11-14). Employment rates and income provide a partial view of labour market experience, but they do not provide information on the type or skill level of the job obtained.

Research shows that many newcomers are working outside their fields, in positions that are not commensurate with their skills, and are earning well below their potential. For instance, data from the 2006 Census indicates that recent immigrants are over-represented in sales and service positions and under-represented in management positions (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2009: 23). The Facts are In! study by the Ontario government (MTCU, 2002) found that 60% of newcomers who took jobs outside their fields of expertise were still working in those jobs three years later. In other words, difficulties with labour market integration for newcomers have a long-lasting impact on a lifetime of earning potential.

There are numerous explanations for these declining outcomes, including the discounting of foreign credentials, the changing characteristics of immigrants (country of origin, education, language ability), increased discrimination, deteriorating labour market outcomes for new labour market entrants in general, fluctuations in macro-economic conditions, and others (Picot, 2004).

Some research posits that these declining economic outcomes are a result of the fiercer labour market competition faced today than by previous cohorts. Today's immigrants are highly educated, but the Canadian-born population is increasingly well-educated as well. As such, the relative educational advantage held by immigrants in the labour force has declined (Hiebert, 2006: 193; Reitz, 2005: 5-8). The increase in occupations requiring university education has also disadvantaged immigrants because many employers view foreign credentials as being more difficult to assess and do not always recognize them as equivalent (Reitz, 2005: 6).

Some or all of these factors may contribute to individual outcomes, but we do know that the impact of these disproportionately affects members of racialized communities. Visible minorities, whether immigrants or not, have lower labour market participation rates, higher unemployment rates, and the worst employment outcomes overall in Canada (Teelucksingh and Galabuzi, 2005b). Immigrants from racialized groups face even more disadvantages in the labour market (Reitz, 2007a). Black persons – whether immigrants or Canadian-born – report the highest levels of discrimination (Reitz and Banerjee, 2007).

A small but growing body of literature examines what happens to immigrants once they are hired, addressing job skills levels, job satisfaction, and issues surrounding promotion. A 2007 employee survey on employment difficulties facing visible minorities (Catalyst Canada & The Diversity Institute in Management and Technology, 2007) found that only 29% of the companies and firms in the survey reported having any process in place for recognizing foreign educational credentials. Perhaps as a result, 46% of the respondents with foreign educational credentials felt their education and training have been underutilized; only 29% of the respondents without foreign educational credentials reported the same feeling. This study identified the following workplace barriers facing members of different ethnocultural groups: “who you know” is more important than “what you know” when trying to make career progress; having fewer career

advancement opportunities than white/Caucasians; unfair talent identification process; absence of role models; and being held to a higher performance evaluation standard than peers. It was also reported that senior management leaders tend to recommend people of their own ethnicity for high-visibility assignments that lead to career advancement.

An analysis of the 2003 Canadian Workplace and Employee Survey (WES) found that workplace training and development did not help immigrants get ahead in their careers, even though it benefits other employees (Novicevic and Zikic, 2009). This study found that although immigrant and non-immigrant professionals were equally likely to undergo training and development initiatives funded by employers, immigrants did not report higher pay, promotions, or increased job satisfaction to the same degree as their non-immigrant counterparts. On average, immigrant professionals earned less than non-immigrants, had lower promotion rates and shorter tenure with their current employer, and were less-satisfied with their jobs and compensation.

This section contained a brief overview of the relevant literature informing the Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey. In brief, national and provincial data confirms that immigrants face numerous barriers to employment and as a result are not faring as well as their Canadian-born cohorts in the labour market. The current study recognizes those barriers, examines how they play out in Peel Region, and analyzes the strategies used by workers to become more successful in the Peel labour market.

The survey is part of the Region of Peel's Immigration Strategy. The results of this Survey will bring Peel Region one step closer to understanding the local needs and experiences of the immigrant population. The study also helps to narrow the gap in available data at the local level and may help respond to labour market contradictions reported by national and local data which point to increasing difficulties filling skilled job vacancies and the strong indications that immigrants bring much needed skills, yet experience significant difficulties obtaining work in their field.

More specifically, it can help inform two of the region's initiatives. First, it will provide data for the Peel Newcomer Strategy Group, a community collaborative co-sponsored with the United Way of Peel Region. The group was formed to help develop a system wide model for Peel to plan, fund and deliver services to respond and support the timely integration of newcomers. The Region of Peel recognizes the difficulties immigrants face in the local labour market and the need for local service delivery to help bridge those difficulties. To that end, the Region has been actively engaged in collaborations with the broader community on labour market and immigration issues. The research can be used as a basis for some of those discussions. At the second level, the results can inform the way services and supports are planned and implemented such that they attract and support newcomers. The Region of Peel is committed to developing long-term strategies and sustained processes with its partners to ensure that newcomer contribution to the community is maximized.

Local immigrant data on, for example, the economic, demographic, service delivery needs by geographic region, employment skill assets compared to economic needs/housing/social needs, and settlement and language service challenges are common requirements to support the Peel Immigration Strategy and its projects (e.g., the Peel Immigration Web Portal, funded by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration; and, Peel Immigration Discussion Papers, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada). To that end, data obtained from this research is relevant and useful to inform the direction of future initiatives.

Research Questions

The Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey begins to fill in some of these gaps in our knowledge. The study explores the labour market experiences of Peel's population to better understand their experiences as they attempt to obtain employment and advancement in the Peel Region. Specifically, the research addresses the following questions:

1) What are the labour market experiences of immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in Peel?

- a) To what extent do immigrants and Canadian-born individuals utilize their skills at work?
- b) How satisfied are immigrants and Canadian-born individuals with their workplaces and careers?
- c) How do the experiences of principal applicants in the skilled worker category differ from those of other survey respondents?

2) What job search strategies, including use of employment services, do immigrant and Canadian-born individuals use to obtain employment?

3) How successful are immigrant and Canadian-born individuals at getting promotions in their workplaces?

4) What barriers do immigrant and Canadian-born individuals identify in terms of obtaining employment and advancement in their careers?

5) What are the perceptions of immigrant and Canadian-born individuals with respect to discrimination in Canadian workplaces, and how prevalent are personal experiences of discrimination?

Because immigrant and Canadian-born respondents are included in the survey, we can answer these questions for each population as well as generate comparisons between immigrants and Canadian-born individuals.

The findings and suggestions included in this paper will enable the Region of Peel to advocate for, develop, and implement policies and strategies with others to address the needs of labour market participants in Peel. The labour market successes of Peel residents are a crucial component of the long-term growth and vitality of the Region. Immigrants accounted for roughly 70% of Canada's net labour force growth between 1991 and 2001 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007).

2. Research Process and Methods

This research project explores the labour market experiences of immigrants in Peel using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative component includes a comprehensive survey of immigrants and Canadian-born residents of Peel Region aged 15 and older who searched for a job and/or worked in Canada within the past 10 years. The survey asked respondents about their background education and experience, their experience searching for work in Canada, and their experiences in Canadian workplaces and society¹. The survey was made available online and in paper format. Between January and April 2009, 1,425 Peel residents completed the survey, of which 321 self identified as principal applicants. The qualitative component includes focus groups and interviews with respondents who are principal applicants. These were conducted between April and May 2009 allowing 33 respondents to share their labour market experiences in much greater detail. This report summarizes both the qualitative and quantitative research analysis of the data obtained from the 1,425 surveys and 33 interviews. For more details on the research process please see Appendix A.

Brief Sample Description

Of the 1,425 survey respondents, about 60% were immigrants. The sample resided in Mississauga (60.6%), in Brampton (35.7%) and in Caledon (3.7%). In total, 56.1% of the sample was employed. Of the employed individuals, 84.4% worked full-time and 76% held permanent positions. The Canadian-born individuals had considerable work experience, reporting an average of 18.6 years in Canada. Immigrants also reported extensive work experience, reporting 10.2 years on average in Canada. Canadian-born individuals had more years of work experience for their current employer as they reported working an average 5.6 years while immigrants reported working an average of 4.5 years for their current employer. For the employed Canadian-born individuals with earned income, their average annual income was \$46,723 and for the comparative immigrant employed respondents, their average income was \$39,301. The immigrant respondents were highly educated, 62.2% of immigrants reported having a university degree or higher, compared to 30.8% of the Canadian-born respondents. See Appendix B for a summary table of characteristics of the sample population.

Visible minorities account for 61.9% of all survey respondents, e.g. South Asian (16.8%), Black (11.5%), Chinese (8.7%) and Filipino (3.2%). Over half of the respondents were women (63.6%), living in Mississauga (60.6%) and working in the public sector (63.9%). The average age of the Canadian-born individuals in the sample was 35 years, and the immigrant's average age was 40 years.

The sample does differ from the broader population of Peel in several respects². The largest differences were in terms of gender, employment rate, sector of employment, ethnicity and where they work. Most notably, females are overrepresented in our sample (63.6% were female as compared to 47.4% in the Peel labour force). Also, Peel labour force data contains a much higher percentage of persons who were employed: 93.6% of the labour force were employed, as compared to 56.1% of the survey respondents.

¹ All data was obtained from people directly, thus the data reflect the personal perspectives of the research participants.

² Data sources for the characteristics of the Peel labour force include Statistics Canada Census data (Statistics Canada, 2006) and the Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey (Zietsma, 2007).

Respondents to our survey were also more diverse in terms of ethnicity: only 38.1% of our respondents were white, compared to 52.8% in Peel's larger labour force; 8.7% were Chinese, compared to 4.5% in the larger labour force; 16.8% were South Asian compared to 21.6% in the larger labour force; 11.5% were black compared to 8.1% in the larger labour force³.

The public sector, which includes employees in the government, hospital, universities and non-profit organizations is also overrepresented in our sample. A total of 63.9% of respondents worked in the public sector whereas only 22.5% of Ontario's population work in the public sector⁴.

Furthermore, in our sample, respondents were most likely to work in the same area municipality where they lived. Nearly 70% of respondents who lived in Mississauga also worked in Mississauga (compared to 45% in the census population), 65% of those who lived in Brampton also worked in Brampton (compared to 31.7% in the census population), and 33% of respondents from Caledon also worked in Caledon (compared to 19.8% in the census population).

³ While the sample overall was diverse, the groups of immigrants and Canadian-born individuals on their own are not. Among the survey respondents, the immigrant respondents are mainly visible minorities whereas the Canadian-born respondents are mainly white. As a result, it is difficult to delineate whether differences are appearing due to immigrant or visible minority status. In this report, we have focused more on immigrant compared to Canadian-born comparisons.

⁴ The use of Ontario as the comparison group is a result of unavailable public and private sector Peel data in the census employment information.

3. Labour Market Experiences

What are the labour market experiences of immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in Peel?

As is consistent with numerous national and provincial studies in the area of immigrant labour market integration (Gilmore, 2008; Gilmore and Le Petit, 2008; Statistics Canada, 2005, 2006; Hawthorne, 2008), immigrants in our sample arrived with considerable education and experience; but despite their education, skills and work experience, they are struggling in the Peel labour market.

Immigrants in our sample reported arriving on average with 12.1 years of international work experience and 62.2% reported having a university degree or higher (compared to 30.8% of the Canadian-born respondents). However, 60% of immigrant respondents were unemployed at the time of the survey compared to 40% of the Canadian-born respondents.

If immigrants are employed, they are more likely to be working in part-time (18.4% of immigrants as compared to 12.1% of Canadian-born individuals) or temporary jobs (27.2% of immigrants as compared to 20% of Canadian-born individuals), and not utilizing their skills at work (28.4% of immigrants strongly or slightly disagree that their skills are being utilized in their current position compared to 22.4% of Canadian-born individuals).

Employed immigrants with earned income and a Bachelors degree or higher earn about 75% of what their Canadian-born counterparts do (\$41,377 as compared to \$54,459). Furthermore, they were working in jobs with less occupational status than prior to immigration (49.2% were working in a job of lower status), have lower career satisfaction⁵ (59 for immigrants as compared to 74 for their Canadian-born counterparts), and have trouble getting their credentials accepted by Ontario employers (59.4% reported their credentials were not fully accepted).

Income/Earnings

As is consistent with previous studies (Grant and Sweetman, 2004), immigrants earn less than Canadian-born individuals. In our sample, the average income for all employed immigrants with earned income is \$39,301⁶ as compared to the average income for the employed Canadian-born individuals with earned income which is \$46,723. Based on these numbers, immigrants in our sample earn, on average, 84 cents for every dollar earned by Canadian-born respondents.

In our sample, we examined the earnings by ethnocultural group. White university educated employed individuals in our sample earned the most, reporting an average income of \$52,872, followed by Black educated employed individuals who reported an average income of \$48,125. Chinese educated employed individuals reported earning an average of \$41,087, while South Asian educated employed individuals earned the least, reporting earning an average of \$39,053.

⁵ Our survey collected perceptions from respondents in several areas (e.g., career satisfaction, skill utilization, discrimination, and others). Several items were grouped together to form scales. See Appendix C. The scale data is reported as a number out of 100, while the individual items are reported as percentages who indicated their agreement or disagreement with the items.

⁶ All income analyses in this report are conducted on employed individuals who report an earned income. There were 30 individuals (4.1%) who were employed but earned no income, so they were removed from the analysis. All income is reported in pre-tax dollars.

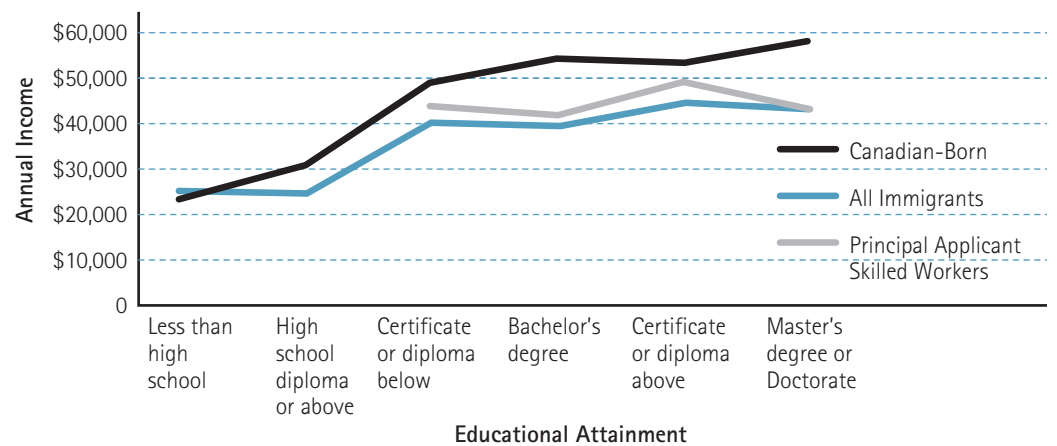
Immigrants in our sample are not faring well in the Peel labour market on numerous measures including for instance, employment rates, income, and career satisfaction. More specifically, of the immigrant respondents who have international work experience, only about one third were successful in obtaining their desired employment.

Table 1: Average earned income by Ethnocultural Group (for those with Bachelor's degrees or higher)

	N	Average income
White	141	\$ 52,872
Black	32	\$ 48,125
Chinese	46	\$ 41,087
South Asian	96	\$ 39,063

Obtaining a higher education often provides a return on investment in terms of earnings. However, the return on educational investment is more pronounced for Canadian-born individuals. Employed Canadian-born individuals with a Bachelor's degree or higher earned the most in the sample, reporting an average income of \$54,459. Employed immigrants with Bachelor's degrees or higher earned less than their Canadian-born counterparts. They earned an average of \$41,377, a difference of over \$13,000 per year, as compared to their Canadian-born counterparts' income. In other words, employed immigrants in our sample with a Bachelor's degree or higher earn on average 75 cents for every dollar earned by Canadian respondents with similar levels of education. Thus, while increases in education levels corresponds to an increase in their income levels, the relationship is less strong for immigrants than Canadian-born respondents. See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Income by Educational Attainment and Immigrant Status



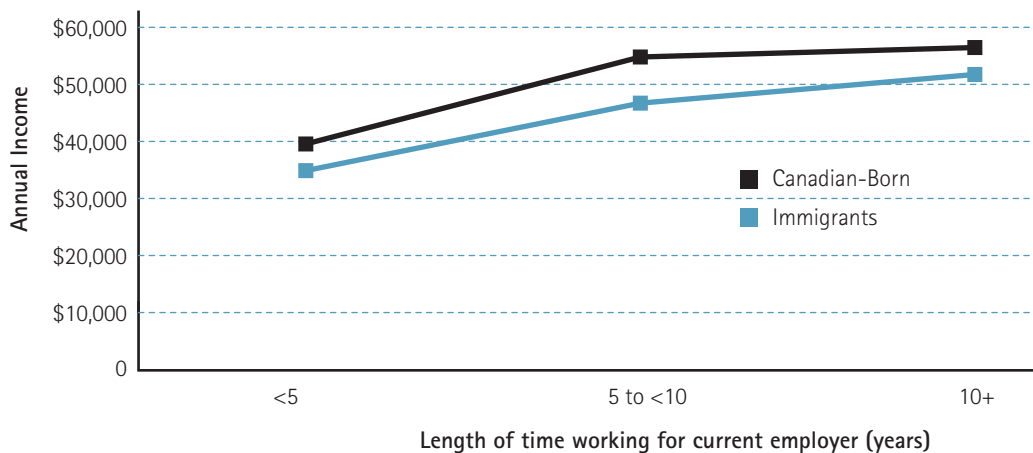
Part of this explanation could be as a result of where education was obtained. Most immigrants in our sample reported obtaining education outside Canada. Education earned by immigrants outside Canada is not always recognized by employers, professional organizations or educational institutions in Canada.

As expected, income levels in our sample rise with length of time working for one's current employer. However, immigrant respondents remain well below the income levels of Canadian-born individuals in the sample, even after 10 years or more working with the same employer. See Figure 2.

Despite their educational credentials, immigrants in our sample do not receive the same income returns to their education.

Immigrant respondents earn significantly less than their Canadian-born counterparts. While in our sample an immigrant's income increases with length of time in working for their current employer it still is never commensurate with their Canadian-born counterparts.

Figure 2: Income Over Time Working for Current Employer by Immigrant Status



Utilization of Skills in the Workplace

To what extent do immigrants and Canadian-born individuals utilize their skills at work?

Compared to an overall average of 70.5 for Canadian-born respondents, the immigrants in our sample who arrived in Canada less than 10 years ago rated their level of skill utilization in their current job 55.6 out of 100. However, immigrants arriving 10 or more years ago ranked their skill utilization higher, at 72.4. When comparing educated immigrants and Canadian-born individuals (those with Bachelor's degrees and higher), the disparity remains. Educated Canadian-born individuals reported a rating of 73.7 on their level of skill utilization compared with 62.9 for educated immigrants.

Immigrants in the focus groups and interviews were disappointed in the length of time it took them to utilize their skills in Canada. They admit that they do not expect to get a job in their same level of employment as in their previous country right away, however they recognize that is it a waste of talent that they were brought here for their skills and not able to use them. Most respondents indicated it took 6-10 years to be able to utilize their skills. As one highly educated skilled worker from Jamaica who arrived in 2008 but is currently employed stated:

"I don't expect to be at the same level as I left home with but I expect to be in the industry, to start somewhere even at a level or two below, then work to where I want to be."

When we examine the data by ethnocultural group we see that White university educated individuals in our sample were most likely to report that their job utilizes their full abilities (70.1%) followed by Blacks then South Asians. Chinese educated individuals in our sample were least likely to report utilizing their skills at work. Furthermore, about one third of all groups of university educated visible minorities in our sample reported not utilizing their skills at work.

Both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample report underutilization of their skills in their current job. Recent immigrant respondents are less likely to utilize their skills at work, but skill utilization improves with length of time in Canada, and through full recognition of credentials by employers.

Table 2: Skill Utilization by Ethnocultural Group (for those with Bachelor's degrees or higher)

I feel my job utilizes my full abilities	White	Chinese	South Asian	Black
No	33 22.4%	16 34.8%	38 35.5%	11 32.4%
Can't say	11 7.5%	11 23.9%	17 15.9%	3 8.8%
Yes	103 70.1%	19 41.3%	52 48.6%	20 58.8%
Total	147	46	107	34

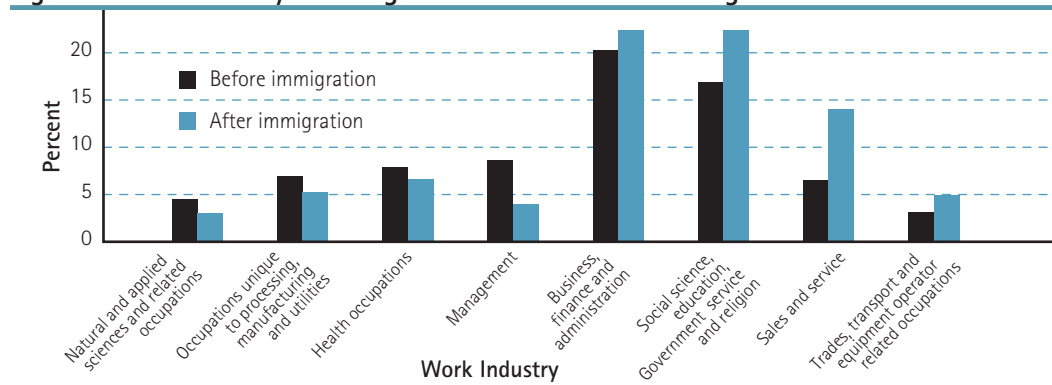
Our research is consistent with the literature that shows that recent immigrants are not as likely to utilize their skills immediately upon arrival, however as they spend more time in Canada, their perception that their skills are being utilized increases. While this improvement is positive, the question remains: what can be done to speed up this process? Our research shows that if an employer accepts an immigrant's educational credentials, they are more likely to report that they use their skills at work. Of those immigrants in our sample who had their credentials fully recognized by employers, their rating on the skill utilization scale increased to 71.2 from 45.8 reported by those who did not have their educational credentials accepted by an Ontario employer at all. Perhaps working with employers to understand international credentials would be a good step in helping immigrants utilize their skills at work more quickly.

Industry and Occupational Changes

In spite of their high levels of education and professional training, immigrants in our sample were under-represented in professional occupations and management/supervisory jobs and over-represented in the lower skilled occupations, such as sales and service, manual labour and clerical. Many immigrants in our sample arrive with experience in professional occupations but end up moving to lower skilled occupations upon arrival.

Our results are consistent with the 2006 census information for Peel. In addition to confirming this information, our research was able to capture the change in immigrant's work industry after migration. In our sample, there was a redistribution across industries where larger proportions of immigrants are working in Sales and Service industries and Social Science, Education, Government service and Religion industries, and smaller proportions working in management. See Figure 3. The findings suggest that immigrants are channeled into certain industries and may not be working in an industry that utilizes their prior education and work experience. These findings also indicate that more programs should be focused on assisting immigrants with experience in management obtain jobs in their fields. As is consistent with labour force data (HRDC, 2006) which indicates that there are shortages in service industries and manufacturing, our data indicates that immigrants are finding it easier to find jobs in these occupations.

Figure 3: Work Industry of Immigrants Before and After Immigration



Our data confirm a significant decrease in occupational status among immigrants in our sample upon arrival. Overall 45.2% of immigrants in the sample reported they were working a job of lower status than they were prior to immigration, 40.6% at the same status and 14.1% at a higher status occupation. Figure 4 (below) shows that immigrants whose previous occupation group was senior/middle manager, professional or supervisor/trades supervisor were often working in jobs well below in terms of skill level and skill type. Furthermore, 67.2% (355 out of 528) immigrant respondents reported supervising/managing others before coming to Canada, and of this 67.2%, only 25% (89) report that they currently supervise/manage others.

Figure 4: Change in Occupational Group After Immigration

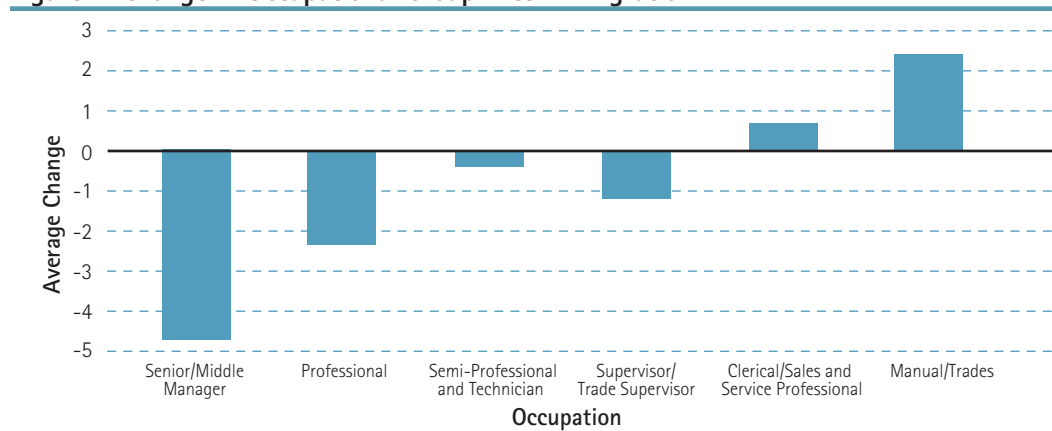


Table 3: Immigrants Change in Occupational Group After Arrival

Rank	Occupational Groupings ⁷	Groupings in Figure 4: Immigrants Change in Occupational Group after Arrival
1	Senior Manager	Senior/Middle Manager
2	Middle and Other Manager	
3	Professional	Professional
4	Semi-Professional and Technician	Semi-Professional and Technician
5	Supervisors	Supervisor/Trade Supervisor
6	Supervisors: Crafts and Trades	
7	Administrative and Senior Clerical Personnel	Clerical/Sales and Service Professional
8	Skilled Sales and Service Personnel	
9	Skilled Crafts and Trades Workers	
10	Clerical Personnel	
11	Intermediate Sales and Service Personnel	
12	Semi-Skilled Manual Worker	Manual/Trades
13	Other Sales and Service Personnel	
14	Other Manual Worker	

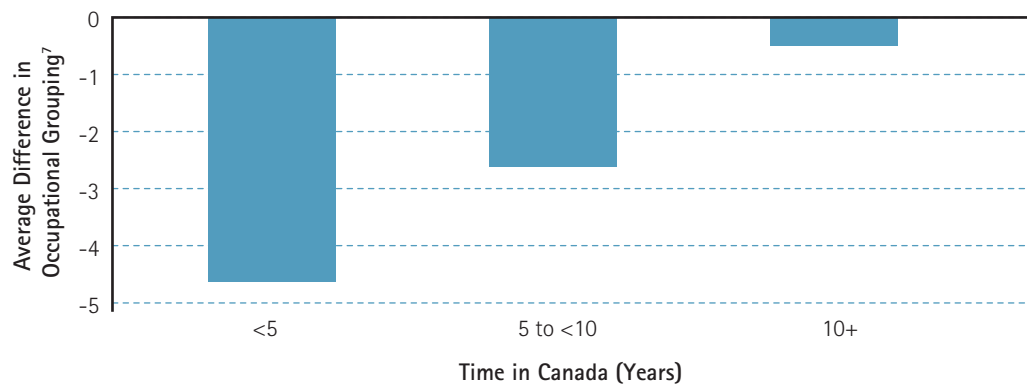
⁷ These Occupational Groupings are based on the Employment Equity Act Report's Employment Equity Occupational Groups (EEOG). These hierarchical groupings are based on National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes created by Statistics Canada. The two key job characteristics used as classification criteria in developing the NOC were skill level and skill type. The technical guide also provides a definition of each EEOG in order of rank (HRSDC, 2005).

There appears to be a significant change in work industry after migration, as well as a change in occupation level for immigrants was evident in our sample. While some immigrant respondents are able to improve their occupation level over time, most were not able to obtain employment in jobs at similar levels to what they held prior to arrival, especially those who had previously occupied managerial or professional occupations.

Immigrants in our sample were more successful in obtaining their desired job if they reported that employers in Ontario accepted or partially accepted their previous educational credentials.

While immigrants who have been in Canada longer (10 years or longer) are currently working in occupations more commensurate with those they held prior to immigration, there still exist some discrepancy beyond the 10 year mark. See Figure 5 below. This is particularly true for immigrants in higher status occupations such as management and professionals. As is consistent with previous research, once immigrants obtain employment outside their field of their expertise, it is very difficult to move back (MTCU, 2002). There could be many reasons for this result including being out of one's field for too long, age, or the need to remain employed in order to support a family. As many of the respondents in the focus groups and interviews indicated, they needed to obtain employment soon after arrival to support their families. Furthermore, they found it difficult to leave a secure job and take the risk to explore employment in their field as the need to continually earn income and support their families was more pressing. Many have settled on the fact that they will not obtain employment commensurate to their previous occupations and are hopeful that their children will be more successful.

Figure 5: Difference in Occupational Grouping (Current compared to Before Immigration) Over Time in Canada



Another successful highly educated skilled worker from India who is currently employed in a high level position in a large company provides the following advice:

and when you come here, you really have to start at the base again. That becomes sort of a real difficulty. So in effect, you have to change your line. You can't...probably very rarely can you be in your own line, so that's the reality

Another successful skilled worker from India, who arrived 1999 with a Masters degree in Human resources and is currently employed in a Director level job in a large company provides the following advice:

You know what, you'll be more successful here the more you forget about what you did back home, because it did not help me, and I see many people who are very successful in their home country, when they come here, they have to come to terms to dealing with that. I think that's what they end up struggling with for a very long time. So the sooner they learn to let go of their past [the better].

Immigrants in our sample were more successful in obtaining their desired job if they reported that employers in Ontario accepted or partially accepted their previous educational credentials. In total, 53.3% of immigrants who got their education accepted or partially accepted were successful in obtaining their desired job compared to the 83.3% who did not have their education accepted and who were not working in their desired job. It is interesting to note, however, that 46.7% who

did have their education accepted were still not successful in finding their desired job.

In sum, in our sample, there were larger portions of immigrants working in Sales and Service industries, and Social Science, Education, Government service and Religion industries, and smaller proportions are working in management compared to the distributions prior to immigration. Thus, the data indicate a significant change in work industry after migration, as well as a change in occupation level. Immigrants with experience in positions of higher skill levels are often not able to gain access to similar positions after arrival. While lower skilled immigrants are able to improve their situation, professionals and managers are not, even after a considerable length of time in Canada. This finding is consistent with other research that shows that many newcomers, especially highly educated immigrants, are working outside their fields, in positions that are not commensurate with their skills.

Workplace Satisfaction⁸

How satisfied are immigrants and Canadian-born individuals with their workplaces and careers?

In general, workers in our sample were moderately positive about their workplaces. Overall, there was no significant difference between immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample on their reported workplace satisfaction on several measures.

For example, on a 100-point scale the following are the ratings of the entire sample about their workplace experiences. Both immigrant and Canadian-born respondents report the following:

- Positive opinions about their co-worker relations; (i.e., they feel their co-workers treat them with respect and support). The average score for the whole sample was 79, immigrants reported 78.9 and Canadian-born individuals reported a score of 79.2. There were also no differences between immigrants and Canadian-born individuals who worked in private and public sectors.
- Only two thirds of the respondents felt they were treated fairly, supported and encouraged by their managers; and that there are fair advancement processes in their workplaces. Immigrants felt similarly supported by their managers as their Canadian-born counterparts (66% of immigrants feel supported by managers, Canadian-born 69%). Interestingly immigrants in the public sector felt more supported by their managers and reported more often that there were fair advancement processes than immigrants in the private sector (70.3% compared to 58.4% respectively).
- Despite these organizational issues, workers in our sample reported high levels of commitment to their organizations (reporting an average of 77.9 on the 100 point scale). However, public sector workers, scoring their commitment at 81.3 out of 100, were more committed than private sector, who scored their commitment at 72.6.

What this data indicates is that once immigrants obtain employment, they are highly committed to and are moderately satisfied with their workplaces. It appears, however, that employers have some work to do to make all their employees feel fairly treated in their workplaces. For more information on differences by sector please see Employment Sector section on page 32.

Immigrant workers in our sample did not differ significantly from Canadian-born workers on their workplace satisfaction perceptions.

While individuals in our sample may be satisfied and committed to their jobs, there is room for improvement in terms of helping all employees feel supported by their managers and in having transparent and fair advancement processes.

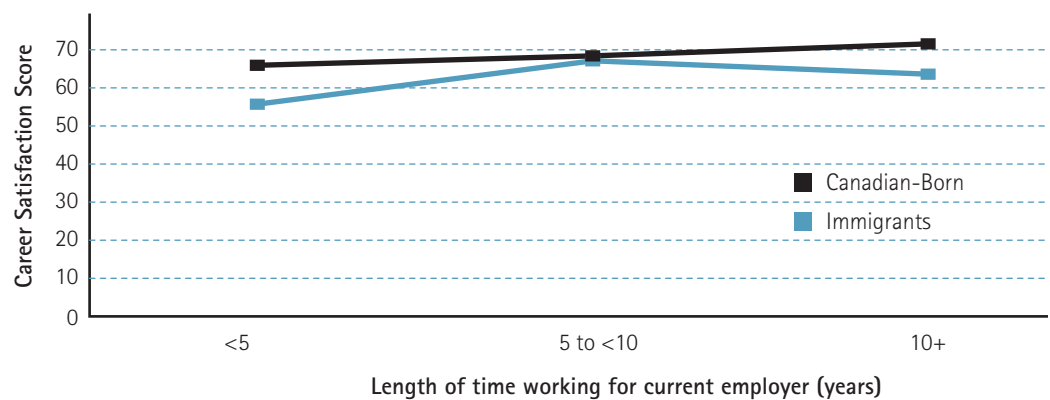
⁸ See Appendix C for a complete list of perceptual measures used in this report.

Career Satisfaction

While there is no difference on workplace satisfaction between immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample, there are differences between these groups on career satisfaction. Overall, Canadian-born individuals in our sample are more satisfied with their careers. When reporting their perceptions on a 100-point scale, the average rating for employed Canadian-born individuals is 67 while the average rating by employed immigrants is 58. Furthermore, public sector employees are more satisfied with their careers, reporting scores of 69.3 compared to 51.3 for private sector employees. Skilled worker principal applicants reported low satisfaction with their careers, with an average score of 54.

The positive news is that the longer an individual has been working for their current employer their career satisfaction increases, however, up to a point (see Figure 6 below). Furthermore, after five years with their current employer, the career satisfaction levels of immigrants and Canadian-born respondents are almost the same.

Figure 6: Average Career Satisfaction Scores by Length of Time Working for Current Employer



Some analyses were conducted to examine what factors are potentially associated with career satisfaction differences. Some of these results include the following:

- Respondents who received promotions within the last three years reported on average higher career satisfaction levels (68.8 compared to 59.5).
- Immigrant respondents who report that their international work experience was recognized also report that they were more satisfied with their careers (64.5 compared to 51.6 if their experience was not recognized).
- Immigrant respondents who report that their educational credentials were recognized by Canadian employers reported being more satisfied with their careers (62.9 compared to 56.0 if their credentials were not recognized).
- Respondents who indicate that they believe people do not face discrimination in Canadian workplaces report higher career satisfaction rates (64.0 compared to 45.6)
- Obtaining more education in Canada, using an employment agency or having a mentor in *one's current organization* does not correlate with higher career satisfaction rates.

The relatively lower career satisfaction scores for immigrants lead us to further explore job mobility plans. In total, 65.3% of the sample responded that they were looking for other job or career opportunities, while 69.2% of immigrants report that they are compared to 59.7% of Canadian-born individuals in the sample. The good news is that despite looking for other

Overall, Canadian-born individuals in our sample reported higher levels of satisfaction on average with their careers. However, after five years with their current employer, the career satisfaction levels of immigrants and Canadian-born respondents are almost the same.

'Mentor' here refers to informal supportive colleagues as opposed to formal corporate programs.

opportunities, most are looking in Peel (80.6% of Canadian-born respondents, and 73.6% of immigrant respondents) and very few are looking for jobs outside Canada (7.6%). See Table 4 below. The qualitative data does show that immigrants feel they cannot go back, as they have severed ties and because they are making a new life for their children. As one recently arrived highly educated principal applicant skilled worker who is currently employed as a security guard articulates:

Yes, it is challenging and frustrating because I have flown over 15,000 kilometers from Pakistan...It's not easy to go back.

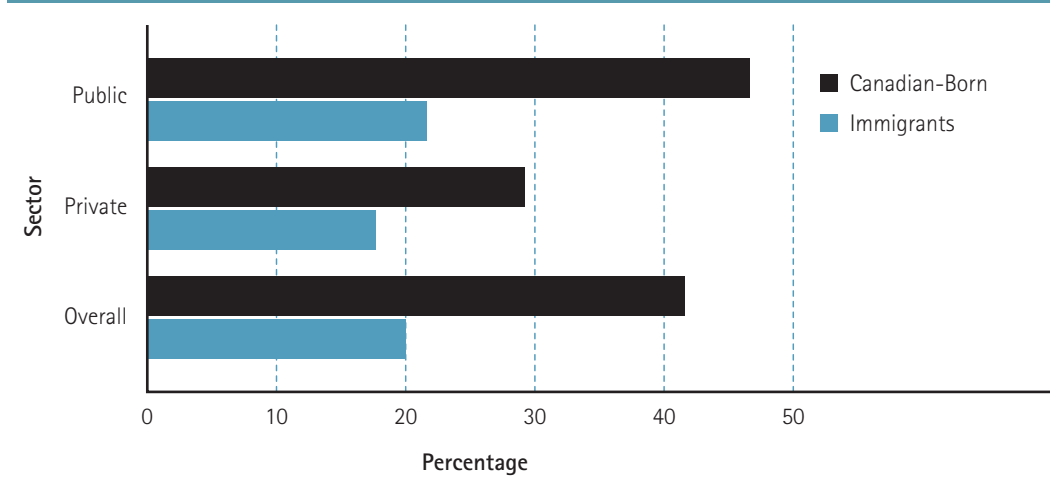
Table 4: Job Mobility Plans for Canadian-born individuals and Immigrants Searching for other job or career opportunities

	Canadian-Born	Immigrants
Currently searching for other job or career opportunities	59.7%	69.2%
Of those currently searching for other opportunities:		
Looking within the Region of Peel	80.6%	73.6%
Looking within GTA	53.1%	52.9%
Looking within Ontario	28.4%	28.6%
Looking within Canada	13.8%	21.7%
Looking outside Canada	7.6%	5.3%

Availability of Mentors

When workers were asked if they had access to a mentor in their organizations – an individual they can turn to for guidance and support – significant differences between groups appeared (see Figure 7). Thus, while 29.2% of Canadian-born individuals in the private sector reported having someone they can turn to for support and guidance, only 17.7% of immigrants in the private sector report the same. Interestingly, immigrants in the public sector show higher levels of mentor availability (21.6%), however this number is still considerably lower than their Canadian-born counterparts in the public sector (46.6%).

Figure 7: Workers Reporting Mentor Availability in their Organizations by Sector and Immigrant Status



Of those in our sample currently seeking other job or career opportunities, most are looking within the Region of Peel.

Canadian-born respondents were more likely than immigrant respondents to report having a mentor regardless of employment sector. However, immigrant respondents in the public sector were more likely to report having a mentor than immigrant respondents in the private sector.

Principal Applicants in the Skilled Worker Category

How do the experiences of principal applicants⁹ in the skilled worker category differ from those of other survey respondents?

According to Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), principal applicants in the skilled worker category are selected to come to Canada based on their education, official language ability, work experience, age, arranged employment and adaptability. The premise underlying this human capital model of immigrant selection is that those with education and experience would possess flexible or transferable skill sets that could adapt to the various, changing needs of the labour market in a knowledge-based economy (Thompson, 2000). As such, it is expected that principal applicants in the skilled worker category arrive with more human capital than other immigrants.

Of the 321 principal applicant respondents in the sample, there are 234 who were skilled worker principal applicants. The analyses in this section refer to this subset of the sample. The principal applicants in the skilled worker category were significantly more educated than the rest of the sample. Indeed, more than 9 in 10 (91.8%) of the skilled worker principal applicants arrived in Canada with a Bachelor's degree or higher. They also were more likely to come with more years of work experience. Furthermore, skilled worker principal applicants were more likely to arrive in Canada with professional/technical credentials or a license in their occupations. In total 38.3% of skilled worker principal applicants arrived with professional/technical credentials or a license in their occupations.

With these additional qualifications, and given that these individuals were selected to come to Canada on the assumption that their human capital will help them access the labour market, one would expect that the skilled worker principal applicants in the sample were doing better than other immigrants in the sample. However, they are not. The following numbers describe the labour market experiences of skilled worker principal applicants:

- In total, 59.5% of the skilled worker principal applicants in our sample were employed. This is significantly lower than the Canadian-born individuals in the sample with a Bachelor's degree or higher, who reported an employment rate of 89.4%.
- Employed skilled worker principal applicants earn an average annual income of \$43,583, as compared to an average annual income of \$54,459 for Canadian-born respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher.
- When they are employed, 69.4% of skilled worker principal applicants were working in permanent jobs and 85% in full-time jobs as compared to the Canadian-born educated sample, of whom 86.2% were working in permanent jobs and 90.7% were working full-time.
- A more serious problem is that just over half of the skilled worker principal applicants were successful in finding their desired job or were working in a higher or same status job.
- 54.1% felt their job utilized their full ability when 70.4% of the Canadian-born educated sample felt their job utilized their full ability.
- 58.1% felt their job was well matched to their skills. In comparison, 77% of the Canadian-born educated sample felt their job was well matched to their skills.
- Overall, skilled worker principal applicants were not very satisfied with their job search experiences in Canada, reporting an average score of 45.4 out of 100 when the Canadian-born educated sample reported an average score of 59.4.

⁹There were 321 principal applicants who also completed an additional 37 questions about their international work and educational experience in Ontario. The group of interest to this study is the principal applicant in the skilled worker class as these are the individuals who were assessed by Citizenship and Immigration Canada's points system.

- Principal applicant skilled workers reported an average score of 61.7 when asked whether they felt their current job utilized their skills, while the Canadian-born educated sample reported an average score of 73.7.
-
- In sum, when asked about their overall career satisfaction levels, principal applicant skilled workers reported an average score of 54, while the Canadian-born educated sample reported an average score of 73.9. When we break down career satisfaction further we see that:
 - 45.3% of Principal applicant skilled workers were satisfied with their goals for advancement compared to 75.7% of the Canadian-born educated sample, and
 - 43.8% were satisfied with their goals for income compared to 75% of the Canadian-born educated sample.
-

Skilled worker principal applicants felt their biggest barrier to employment and advancement was lack of financial resources. One fifth did take additional academic education upon arrival in Canada; however many felt the pressure to take jobs to support their families instead of upgrading or taking the time to find a job that utilizes their skills.

As one highly educated principal applicant skilled worker who is currently employed as a security guard articulates:

Because I have come here with my two kids, okay. I have to earn bread and butter. I can't afford to go to school or college for two years or three years. Then I am not sure when I get a Canadian degree. On the basis of that degree, how an employer will employ me when he has got a Canadian-born boy who's a fresh graduate, and I am forty five years of age?...So what I do, I do some other job. Sorry, I don't have job satisfaction being a security officer but I have to [support] my family so I am doing [it]...I have gone through the syllabus because I have been doing it my whole career. But after getting [the] certificate, what is the guarantee that I'll get [a] job? 'Cause I don't have any Canadian experience, so I think it is wasting time and money.

Many gave up and felt it was too late for them but felt it would be better for their children. As one highly educated principal applicant skilled worker who arrived with a PhD sums up nicely:

Yeah, but immigrants have the other side which is the families of the kids who get established, who go through elementary, high school, university and they are Canadians so we made the decision to immigrate mainly and mostly because of the children. When we ask within our community, 99% of the answers are because of the children. So you keep sacrificing even if you cannot establish your own career goals, you will be satisfied and go for less.

These skilled worker principal applicants were frustrated but have settled with the fact that they are making a better life for their children. The point about being selected to come to Canada for their skills and yet not understanding why they are not utilizing them upon arrival is articulated nicely by one highly educated principal applicant skilled worker who is currently unemployed:

I am not sure where the problem is. Especially that the government had already decided to take me here as a skilled worker, so I assume that I should be finding a job here but was not successful now...I have a family to worry about and I am not employed and it has been ten months, so I am no longer sure what the future is holding me to see and I just have to keep on hoping and not give up.

Skilled worker principal applicants in our sample are less satisfied with their labour market experiences in Peel than other immigrants. They were not very satisfied with their progress in finding a job in Canada, were not satisfied with meeting their career goals, goals for advancement, and goals for income.

Despite having their education and experience assessed prior to immigration, skilled worker principal applicants in our sample are not more likely to be employed, not earning more income nor are they able to find employment in jobs that utilize their skills.

Only 32.3% of principal applicant skilled workers were satisfied with their job search experiences in Canada and they reported low levels of satisfaction with the help they received from agencies: 47.5% reported they were not satisfied with the help they got from government agencies, and 34.8% were not happy with the help they got from community agencies. Mostly they felt the services did not meet their specialized needs.

Employment Sector

As indicated in the methods section, public sector¹⁰ employees are over-represented (63.9%) in the sample with the majority being Canadian-born respondents (74.5% of Canadian-born respondents work in the public sector compared to 55.3% of immigrant respondents).

When examining the representation of ethnocultural groups among immigrants in the private and public sector, there were also significant differences. White and Black immigrants are most likely to work in the public sector whereas Chinese immigrants were least likely. See Table 5 below for immigrant ethnocultural group differences and their employment by sector.

Table 5: Employment Sector for Top Five Immigrant Ethnocultural Groups

Please indicate which of the following you most identify with:

In which sector are you employed?	White	Black	Filipino	South Asian	Chinese	Total
Public (e.g. federal, provincial, municipal government, hospital, non-profit)	44 73.3%	37 82.2%	11 50.0%	55 49.1%	18 30.0%	165 56.92
Private (e.g. business or firm)	16 26.7%	8 17.8%	11 50.0%	57 50.9%	42 70.0%	134 43.08%
Total	60 100.0%	45 100.0%	22 100.0%	112 100.0%	60 100.0%	299 100.0%

While there is no difference in our sample between sectors on the number of years an individual has been working for their employer, those working in the public sector tend to stay in the same position within their organization for a longer length of time. For example, our overall sample working in the public sector reports an average of 4.6 years in the same position compared to an average of 3.9 years for private sector employees. Immigrants working in the public sector have more years of work experience in Canada (15.4 compared to 11.3 years if they work in the private sector).

There is also a significant difference between immigrants and Canadian-born respondents on their level of earned income by sector of employment. Immigrants in the private sector earned the least income (\$32,032) while Canadian-born individuals who work in the public sector earned the most (\$49,915). See Figure 8.

¹⁰ Public sector refers to individuals working in governments, hospitals, universities and non-profit organizations.

Figure 8: Average Annual Income Earned by Sector and Immigrant Status

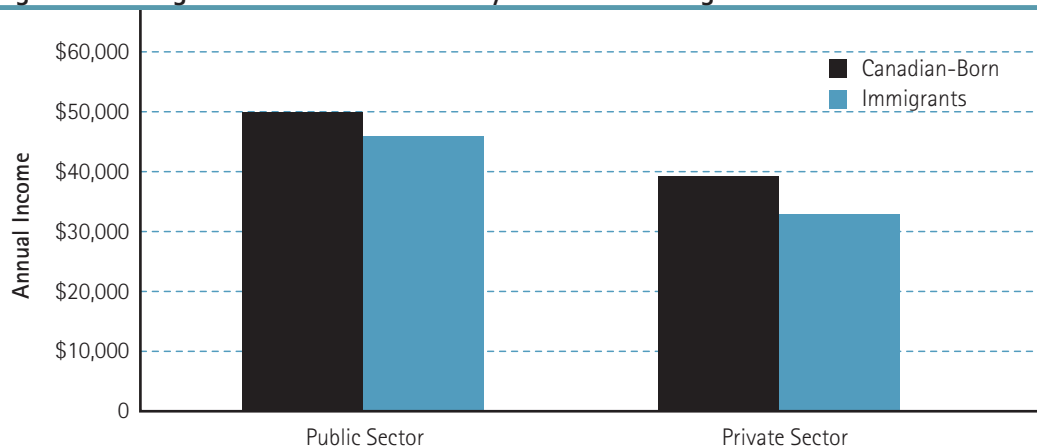


Table 6 illustrates the differences between our sample of immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in both the public and private sector on several measures of satisfaction. In most cases in the public sector, there were little or no differences between immigrants and the Canadian-born individuals on the measures. The exception is in job search satisfaction (Canadian-born respondents ranked their job search satisfaction 6.4 points higher than immigrant respondents). In the private sector, however, the differences between Canadian-born respondents and immigrant respondents are more pronounced. On all satisfaction counts, Canadian-born respondents scored higher than immigrants. Career satisfaction, (7.8 point difference), job search satisfaction (8.7 point difference) and skill utilization (13.8 point difference) are especially discrepant.

Table 6: Public and Private Sector Employee Perceptual Measure Scores by Immigrant Status

Measure	Public Sector			Private Sector		
	Canadian born	Immigrant	Difference	Canadian born	Immigrant	Difference
Career Satisfaction	71.5	67	4.5	56.8	49	7.8
Organizational Commitment	80.3	82.6	-2.3	74.7	70.6	4.1
Job Search Satisfaction	61.9	55.5	6.4	54.2	45.5	8.7
Manager Support	70.6	69.1	1.5	64.6	59	5.6
Organization Support	68.1	70.3	-2.2	64.2	58.4	5.8
Skill Utilization	70.6	72.3	-1.7	69.5	55.7	13.8
Co-worker Relations	78.9	80.9	-2	79.1	76.7	2.4

Note these are average scores reported on a 1-100 point scale.

In sum, respondents employed in the public sector, in particular immigrants, are more satisfied with their employment in Peel. They are more likely to be utilizing their skills, report higher levels of management and co-worker support including the availability of mentors. Immigrant respondents employed in the public sector report higher levels of commitment to their public sector organizations and higher career satisfaction.

Respondents employed in the public sector, in particular immigrants, are more satisfied with their employment. They earn higher incomes, are more likely to be utilizing their skills, report higher levels of management and co-worker support including the availability of mentors. Immigrant respondents employed in the public sector report higher levels of commitment to their public sector organizations and higher career satisfaction.

Immigrant respondents also indicated they were more satisfied with their public sector employment than immigrant respondents in the private sector. Immigrant respondents employed in the public sector reported higher levels of mentor availability are more likely to socialize with co-workers outside of the workplace, earn significantly more income, are more likely to utilize their skills and have the support of their manager and co-workers. In the end, they report higher levels of commitment to their public sector organizations and higher career satisfaction.

Job Search Strategies

What job search strategies, including use of employment services, do immigrant and Canadian-born individuals use to obtain employment?

The job search activities utilized for the entire sample can be grouped into four categories:

- **Formal employment search and research strategies.** These individuals were very active doing many things, from using employment services and agencies, job search consultants, recruitment firms, taking employment preparation/interview courses or seminars, including bridging courses (but not language training). These people were most likely to take work with a temporary agency and search advertisements online or in the newspaper. Finally, they asked family and friends for opportunities and researched the Canadian labour market.
- **Networking.** These people networked with friends and professionals in their fields, mostly employers or other professionals. They contacted employers or professional associations directly and found mentors and followed up on referrals from other employers.
- **Credential assessment and upgrading.** These individuals got their credentials evaluated and upgraded their education, credentials or language skills. They also did volunteer work. A few took co-op courses.
- **Used community agencies.** These individuals used community groups for help with their job search.

When asked what the most important thing was when looking for employment, the top three answers were:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. Networked, contacted employers | 20.2 % |
| 2. Fixed resume, upgraded interview skills (or paid someone for help) | 19 % |
| 3. Searched advertisements in newspapers or online | 11.7 % |

The open-ended responses revealed interesting comments. For example:

1. [I] demonstrated that my international experience is very relevant to Canada in my interviews, researched the companies thoroughly, and demonstrated high level of self confidence. I have had a great career in Canada and am very pleased to be here. I have had opportunities to move to the UK and US, but Canada is my country of choice.
2. I had to change my native name to my baptismal name (English name) because I was advised that my native name would discourage a potential employer, seeing that I have a foreign name and might not have enough "Canadian experience" and when I actually did it, I got interviews compared to when I had my native name written on my resume.

This second comment is consistent with a very recent study conducted by Oreopoulos (2009). In a study of six thousand resumes, he found that Canadian-born individuals' resumes with English names are more likely to receive a call back from employers compared to foreign-born individuals with non-English names. The study found a substantial amount of name discrimination: "More specifically, employer contact falls 40% when switching from a Canadian resume with a common English name to one with a common Indian, Chinese or Pakistani name" (p. 40).

Networking was reported as an important strategy for employment by the majority of the focus group/interview participants. As one highly educated skilled worker from Jamaica who arrived in 2008 and is currently employed stated:

I don't know what doesn't work but I know what does work is networking...Networking does work because I recognize here based on speaking to persons, based on what I've observed and perceived, that you have a better chance of getting into an organization if somebody knows you or you know that person. They tend to already have in their mind okay, they want to go through the interview process but they already have in their mind who they would like to see in this organization because they already know this person, they know what kind of fit they will have in this organization....That's one thing I have learned here...it's a big thing that's been said to me on several occasions and I've noticed it as well that knowing somebody already in the organization does help.

In general, job search strategies employed most often were searching in the newspaper or asking for help from friends or family to get a job. As is consistent with the literature, obtaining help from family and friends is one of the most often reported job search strategies, but it does not necessarily help an individual get a job in their field. Thus, while asking for help from family and friends was reported as one of the job search strategies done most often (71.4% of the total sample mentioned it, or 1009 people), it was only reported as the most important thing done by 1.7% of the people answering that question (21/1200). Until now, past literature has not shown how effective this strategy has been. This study, however, was able to break down help from family and friends and networking with other professionals in one's field to reveal that networking with professionals was felt to be more important than asking for help from any family and friends.

When we examine these results for different groups of individuals, we see that while all individuals were likely to search in the newspaper and ask family and friends, immigrants were more likely to utilize the first group of job search strategies, using formal employment and research strategies. They were more likely to visit employment centres (55.3%), research the Canadian labour market (41.9%), visit government/community agencies (39.7%), and attend workshops (38.3%), and career fairs (35.4%). In addition, 32% of immigrants obtained more education or credentials in Canada. Finally, 24.7% took language courses. Furthermore, while immigrants were somewhat likely to network and contact employers, they were less likely to do so in comparison to the Canadian-born individuals in the sample, and less likely to use referrals from another employer.

It is interesting to note that despite all the policy focus and funding the federal and provincial governments are placing in occupation-oriented settlement services, these job search strategies are the least used by this sample. For example, bridge training was the least reported strategy by our sample group of immigrants. One explanation is that bridge training courses are small, highly specialized courses relevant only to a limited number of distinct immigrants. More research is needed to uncover why immigrants are not utilizing these programs. Immigrants in the sample did, however, attend more general workshops (38.3%) and courses on finding a job (43.2%). The same holds true for mentorship as a strategy to find employment. Overall, it was reported as the

third least popular job search strategy (only reported by 15.4% of the sample). One of the highly educated skilled worker principal applicants who has been unemployed for 15 months, discusses mentorship:

Well, through my mentor I've been [networking]. Through my volunteering I've met one or two people who based on their backgrounds or their jobs, they have a wide network so I've been going through them as well. You know? It hasn't really materialized...anything that's really led me to a job. At least I've gotten to know more persons through there and they are aware of the fact that I am looking for a job, they know what area I'm looking for, they have copies of my résumé. I've had one person say I know someone in this organization and I think some day they'll be looking for a person in a particular position, I'm going to forward your résumé so things like that I've had a few instances of.

Foreign credential recognition is an interesting strategy to explore. Based on the results above, we see that getting your credentials accepted by Canadian employers has a significant impact on labour market success in many ways including helping immigrants get jobs in their desired occupations. Furthermore, it will be shown below that lack of recognition was a barrier reported by 19.1% of the immigrants responding to that question. However, it was the second least popular job search strategy. More research needs to explore why despite the recognition of this barrier and the benefits of international credential recognition, it is not seen as a valid job search strategy. Reasons such as access and availability, lack of knowledge or cost could be options to explore for example. From the qualitative data, it appears as if credential assessment is a costly endeavor, one that immigrants feel does not guarantee them a job without Canadian experience. They also feel frustrated by the fact they have already done the assessment prior to immigration. As one recently arrived highly educated principal applicant skilled worker who is currently employed as a security guard indicates:

Why they send us to World Education Services? It takes a lot of time and it consumes money... I was given immigration to Canada; all my credentials were assessed by the visa officer. My experience was considered. My language skill was considered. Everything was considered. After that I was given immigration to Canada. Here again, we have to go through the same process.

An engineer respondent also explains why they did not seek credential recognition, as they knew they were not going to get a positive outcome:

I didn't apply for the PEO yet, and the reason why is that my university back home do not respond to any credential evaluation, either from the University of Toronto or other bodies, so that put me in a situation that I cannot apply for the PEO because there is no way that they will recognize my credential.

Employment Services Used

Of all the respondents in our sample, 63% reported they knew where to go for employment services. In addition, 35.1% of respondents indicated that they used government or community agencies when searching for employment. Immigrants were more likely to report they used government or community agencies than Canadian-born respondents (39.4% compared to 28.0%). Immigrants tend to use many strategies when attempting to get a job. A comment by a highly educated skilled worker principal applicant who arrived nearly 10 years ago but is currently employed in security expands on this point:

"We always go for the training sessions, whatever is available. We also attend the seminars. We always attend the conferences and whatever the licenses required."

Searching in the newspaper or asking for help from friends or family to get a job are strategies reported as used most often to find a job, but they do not necessarily help an individual in our sample get a job in their field. Immigrants in our sample are more likely to use formal employment and research strategies such as visiting employment centres and attending workshops. Networking/contacting employers were reported as the most helpful strategies; however, these are done less often by immigrants in our sample.

Another highly educated skilled worker principal applicant who arrived in 2000 from the business administration/financial field indicates:

For my job search, when I came into Canada I contacted as many agencies as possible. I posted my résumé on all the possible websites – Workopolis and Monster and all those places. I [did a] HRDC course here on Dundas where they have the résumé writing workshops. I attended all that stuff and none of these worked.

Overall, 40% of the sample reported there was help they needed but had not received. While 69% of Canadian-born respondents reported that they were able to get the help they needed, 50% of immigrants reported the same. For immigrants, the top four services they were unable to receive were: job search assistance, financial help, counseling and information. For Canadian-born individuals, financial help was reported most often as the least accessible service.

When the data is explored in more depth by immigrant ethnocultural group, we see differences in access to services. Immigrant Filipinos were most likely to get the help they needed (61%) while Chinese, South Asian and Black immigrants were least likely to get the help they needed (all responding on average around 50%). Of the white immigrants in comparison, only 40.2% reported there was help they needed but not received. See Table 7 below for immigrant ethnocultural group comparisons.

Due to our sampling methods, the use of government and community services may be high in our sample as compared to the actual Peel population. However, our data does confirm that immigrants and visible minorities are not able to get the help they needed as nearly 50% of the sample of immigrants and some visible minority groups are not getting the help they need through these services.

Table 7: Job Search Services Needed but Not Received by Immigrant Ethnocultural Group

	Immigrant Ethnocultural Group					Total
	Filipino	White	South Asian	Chinese	Black	
Yes	14 38.9%	41 40.2%	96 47.5%	54 50.0%	48 51.6%	253 46.8%
No	22 61.1%	61 59.8%	106 52.5%	54 50.0%	45 48.4%	288 53.2%
Total	36 100.0%	102 100.0%	202 100.0%	108 100.0%	93 100.0%	541 100.0%

Despite knowing where to go for services, not all respondents were able to obtain the help they needed. Immigrant groups were less likely to get the help they needed.

Language Training

As is consistent with previous research, immigrants in our sample arrived in Peel reporting high levels of professional proficiency in English. On all the scales of speaking, reading, writing and listening, over 90% of all immigrants in the sample reported they have general professional ability or better. Despite these high levels of English language ability, language training was reported as a strategy for one quarter of the immigrants in the sample. Immigrants who took language training also reported they utilized other means of upgrading and volunteering as other job search strategies. These immigrants were not very likely to contact potential employers directly which could mean that they did not feel comfortable in English doing so. One other explanation for the reliance on language training or lack of comfort contacting employers could also relate to perceptions about accent. In total, 51.1% of the immigrants in the sample reported that they felt they spoke with an accent.

While language training is well funded and attended for many reasons, highly educated and proficient immigrants, in our sample, in particular skilled worker principal applicants, do not necessarily find them accessible or useful.

While language training is well funded and attended for many reasons such as making friends and learning about other settlement issues, it may not be well attended as it takes time away from job search and earning income to support one's family. Respondents in the focus groups and interviews indicated that they wished there was more flexibility in language course offerings so that they wouldn't have to take time away from work to attend. In our sample, 42 (13.1%) principal applicants reported that they took ESL and 51 (15.9%) reported they took other language training courses. A total of 29 principal applicants indicated that they met friends through these courses (9%).

Some of the respondents in the focus groups and interviews also indicated that principal applicants do not necessarily find these language courses helpful as they believe they arrive already possessing the necessary language skills. Others while may want to take these courses believe there is no time. One male principal applicant electrical engineer from China reported that:

Learning language and attending classes is time consuming and I have to support my family here while I was searching for a job.

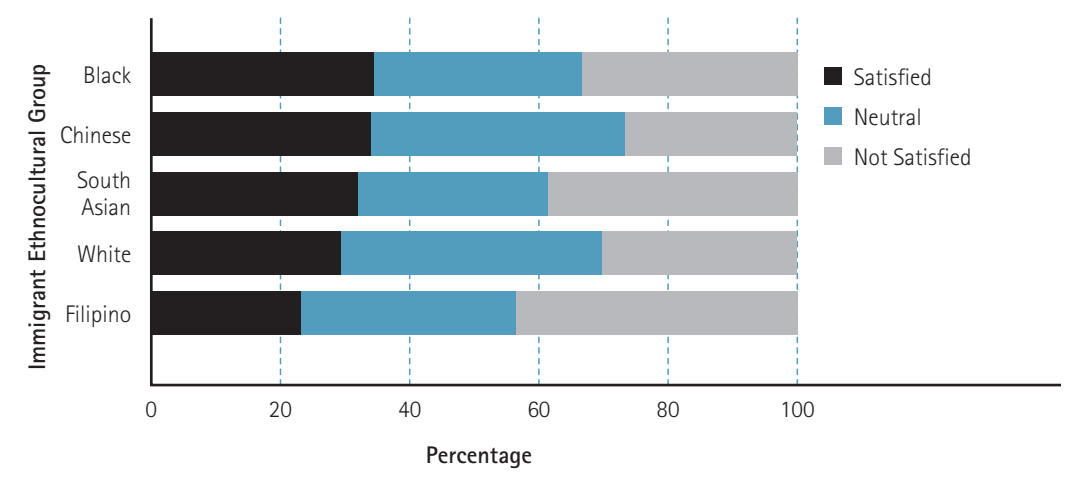
The point was reiterated by the other principal applicant male immigrant in his focus group who felt that even though he had the language, language classes are felt to be a requirement upon arrival:

"...as a way to start here in Canada, yet you have your family to support."

Service Satisfaction

On the whole, most survey respondents reported neutral opinions about the employment services they used. In general, survey respondents were more satisfied with the services they received from community agencies than from government employment services. While satisfaction levels between immigrant ethnocultural groups are similar, Black and Chinese immigrants reported they were most satisfied with the services they received from community agencies, and Filipino and South Asian immigrants reported most often they were not satisfied. See Figure 9 below. However, 73% of the whole sample did report that "Canada needs to offer more government programs to help people find a good job".

Figure 9: Satisfaction with Services Received from Community Agencies by Immigrant Ethnocultural Group



When services were discussed in the surveys or focus groups, many respondents felt that the services did not meet their individual needs. For example, the respondents felt the many services to help immigrants find a job are too general, they are not focused on each individual and each individual's needs. In particular, highly educated immigrant respondents felt this way. A more detailed comment on one of the surveys from a professional immigrant from India who has worked in Canada for more than 20 years also indicates the frustration with settlement services:

I have been very thorough in my job searching. I have accessed multiple sources of job postings and sought out assistance from those designated as professional employment counselors but this help has been 'not sufficient'. I grew up in Canada and have multiple degrees but the job search assistance available is not geared to someone like myself. I needed assistance to be placed in a job that suited my skills and ability but again and again I was offered assistance to prepare my resume or to learn how to prepare a resume. I was offered seminars on topics that were so juvenile or inappropriate for someone at my age and experience that it was frustrating. I was directed towards job sites on the internet which was really not helpful, since I had already located those job sites. I needed job placement assistance not motivational support that was hollow and delivered on cue, and in identical fashion to every single applicant who walked in the door. I didn't need to find that because I was a capable individual. I was a problem to the employment counselor who appeared to prefer individuals who didn't even want to learn to type their own resume. The most important thing I did when I was looking for employment was to send out dozens of resumes per week and be open to any and all kinds of employment regardless of whether or not it was in my field.

Other immigrants have indicated similar levels of frustration. As a highly educated skilled worker principal applicant who arrived in 2000 with a PhD states:

Most of the people [in the government community agencies], they are oriented to help people to get basic jobs, you know, but not at a higher skill level jobs, most of this community. But, you know, they should be at that.... the guidance person there, should be able to discern between what basic skill levels are and what the other skill levels are, you know, so those type of guidance may be helpful, but you know, the whole set up seems to be that it is towards people who are for basic jobs. So much focus is on résumé writing. You know, actually capacity to find people is not so much on résumé as really, you know, meeting people and talking to them and so on.

Many of the focus group and interview respondents echoed these points. They felt the courses were out of date and not relevant to their particular occupation. They suggested that the service workers have more specialized training to deal with highly skilled individuals and go beyond resume writing to include networking.

As a result, it is not surprising that individuals with more education reported lower satisfaction levels with the support they received from government agencies in finding a job. Only 23.6% of individuals with a Bachelor's degree or higher reported that they were satisfied with the services they received from government agencies. While individuals with less than bachelor's degrees also were not satisfied they were more satisfied (30.4% reported they were satisfied with the service they received). Highly educated immigrants in our sample were even more dissatisfied with government services to help them find employment as 43.8% reported they were dissatisfied and only 25% reported they were satisfied.

Highly educated and trained individuals in our sample reported lower levels of satisfaction with government and community services to help them find a job, as they felt they did not meet their specialized needs.

In sum, there is little difference between groups in our sample on job search satisfaction.

Over 50% of the visible minority immigrants in our sample are employed in jobs that are of lower status than their jobs held prior to arrival.

Job Search Satisfaction

Once again, individual respondents overall tend to report neutral opinions when it comes to their job search satisfaction level. When we examine the results by immigrant ethnocultural group, we see that the scores are very similar. See Table 8.

Table 8: Job Search Satisfaction by Immigrant Ethnocultural Group on a 1-100 Scale

Immigrant Ethnocultural Group	Average
White	51.2
Chinese	45.9
South Asian	45.8
Black	48.9
Filipino	46.6
Total	47.9

Advancement

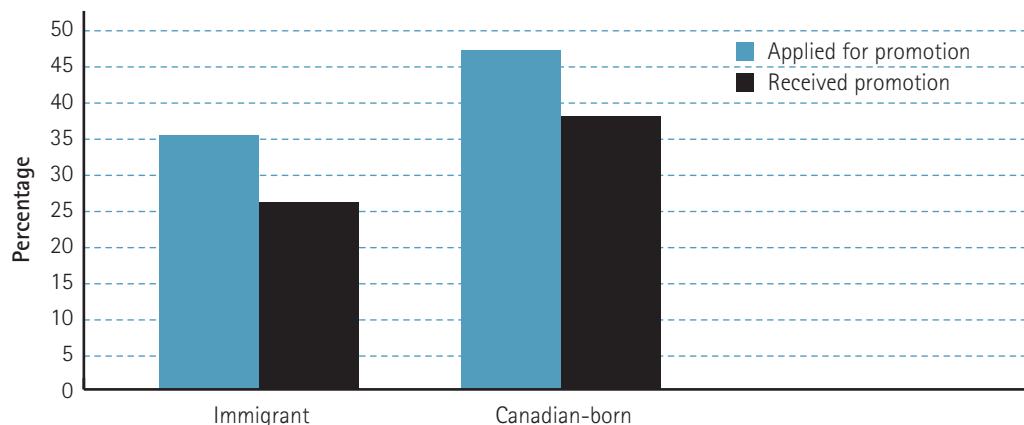
How successful are immigrant and Canadian-born workers at getting promotions in their workplaces?

In total, only one third of the entire sample of workers reported that they received a promotion in the last three years. In Figure 10 it can be seen that Canadian-born workers were more likely to apply for promotions compared to immigrant workers (47% compared to 36%) and more likely to receive them (39% compared to 27%).

Overall, respondents working in the public sector were more likely to report they applied for a promotion in the last three years (46.4% compared to 31.6% in the private sector). Over 40% of immigrants in the public sector reported applying for a promotion in the last three years; however, only 27.3% report receiving one. In contrast, in the private sector, only 28% of immigrants reported applying for a promotion in the last three years, and a similar percentage report receiving one (25%).

Immigrants in our sample were more likely to report working in a job of lower status than what they were doing prior to arrival in Canada. As was seen in the previous sections, immigrants are not utilizing their skills at work and not earning incomes equivalent to their Canadian-born counterparts. Table 9 examines the differences between immigrant ethnocultural groups on their abilities to advance in their occupations upon arrival and working in Canada. The table indicates that while white immigrants are more likely to be working in jobs that are higher than what they were doing prior to arrival, very few Chinese and South Asian immigrants in our sample were able to do the same.

Figure 10: Differences in Advancement by Immigrant Status



Few members of our sample received promotions. Canadian-born respondents were more likely to apply for promotions compared to immigrant respondents and more likely to receive them. Immigrants in our sample were less likely to receive promotions no matter if they were working in the private or public sector.

Table 9. Difference in immigrants' Previous Job ranking to current job ranking

		White	Chinese	South Asian	Black
Lower now	Count	12	22	46	13
	%	38.7%	52.4%	56.1%	52.0%
Same	Count	11	18	29	6
	%	35.5%	42.9%	35.4%	24.0%
Higher now	Count	8	2	7	6
	%	25.8%	4.8%	8.5%	24.0%
Total	Count	31	42	82	25
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Labour Market Barriers

What barriers do immigrant and Canadian-born individuals identify in terms of obtaining employment and advancement in their careers?

Overall there were four groups of barriers reported by respondents to the survey when looking for employment. These include:

- Lack of Canadian work experience, or experience and education not recognized.** Interestingly, this group reported discrimination and their accent as a barrier as well. It has often been reported in the literature that immigrants feel lack of Canadian experience is a proxy for discrimination.
- Lack of networks, mentors and help to find a job.** These respondents felt they do not know where to look for jobs and felt they have no help finding a job. They felt a lack of connections in the labour market, and an inability to contact/connect directly with potential employers, felt they do not have a mentor and felt that they do not know the city/town very well. Finally, they also reported that they cannot find jobs in their field and service agencies have not been helpful.

Immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample report lack of experience as a barrier to employment. For immigrants it is reported as both not enough experience but more often lack of Canadian experience.

Both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample also report lack of connections in the labour market and lack of ability to find jobs in their field of expertise as a barrier.

Networking was a serious barrier for both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in our sample but more significant for immigrants. Immigrants in our sample found that networking was a more serious problem for them as they felt new to the community, and reported the inability to contact/connect directly with employers and the lack of available job references from Canada.

- **Lack of skills and resources. Including the lack of language skills, education and work-related skills.** These individuals also faced other barriers such as lack of: affordable child care, driver's license/car, clothes and transportation.
- **Discrimination. This barrier was reported as a barrier by designated/disadvantaged groups who described themselves as too old or disabled.** They did not believe it was their education or experience at all or the inability to look for a job that was preventing them from obtaining a job; it was their disability, age, being out of the workforce for too long and lack of income as well.

When asked about the most difficult problem faced when looking for employment, the following were the top five responses:

1. Lack of skills and resources. Respondents felt they lacked experience, out of work too long (too old)/new graduate – 13.4%
2. Lack of Canadian work experience or previous work experience/education not recognized – 13.1%
3. Lack of response from employers – 11.1%
4. Poor economy/job market too competitive/no jobs – 8.7%
5. Lack of networks or references – 7%

When we examine the results by immigrant status, we see little difference between immigrants and Canadian-born individuals. Both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals report lack of experience (for immigrants it is reported as both not enough experience but more often lack of Canadian experience). Both groups also report lack of connections in the labour market and lack of ability to find jobs in their field of expertise as a barrier; however, immigrants report these two barriers more often. Immigrants in our sample also found that networking was a serious problem as they reported the inability to contact/connect directly with employers and the lack of job references from Canada more often than Canadian-born. Lack of connections in the labour market is also a serious barrier to advancement; in fact, immigrants who reported lack of connections in the labour market were more likely to be working in a job of lower level than in their previous country.

Networking was a serious barrier reported by most of the respondents in the focus groups and interviews. One highly educated skilled worker principal applicant who arrived recently with an engineering degree from Iraq and is currently unemployed explains why networking is a serious barrier for immigrants:

So, I think networking is the most important way to get a job here in Canada. Yeah, I tried it as far as I know people, but it's not efficient like...unfortunately, it wasn't fruitful, as well. I mean, it's hard when your community is limited, and numbers of population and the people that you know...but as far as I'm concerned it's the one and only way, yeah.

Another highly educated skilled worker principal applicant who has also recently arrived reiterates this point:

Online you do not get a reply because everybody says you've got to have friends, you've got to have people you know, you should know people around to get a job but how do you make this known when you do not have anybody else? I do have one or two cousins but sometimes relatives do not want to help you right? Based on my job search experiences, I feel that now it's only by talking to people you can get a job. It's not what you have on your papers or your qualifications they do not matter at all in this country.

Barriers such as not knowing where to look for a job, lack of child care, and disability did not show up as common barriers to employment for either immigrants or Canadian-born individuals. Despite small numbers of individuals reporting these barriers, individuals who report these issues as barriers were more likely to be unemployed. Furthermore, individuals who report lack of language skills as a problem when seeking employment were more likely to be unemployed along with individuals who reported lack of Canadian work experience.

Despite the fact that this study was conducted in the peak of the 2009 recession, the lack of jobs was reported as a barrier to employment by 8.7% of respondents. It was, however, mentioned often in the qualitative data as a contributor to their poor situation.

These results confirm previous research on the barriers to immigrant integration highlighting how more program and policy focus should be placed on helping immigrants obtain Canadian experience, helping employers recognize international work experience, and helping build connections in the labour market. One comment from the focus group stresses this point:

The employer has to change his attitude first and understand that the level of education is more or less the same in different countries. He must be educated by the immigration people and other people should tell him that education equivalence – once it is equal, it has to be accepted in part so...most of them are ignorant or they are more comfortable employing people who have been educated in this country rather than employ a newcomer simply because they're more comfortable. They're in their comfort zone.

Credential Recognition

The results of the survey reveal that international credentials are significantly discounted in Canada. Immigrants reported that their educational credentials were accepted outside Canada or for immigration purposes, but were less likely to be accepted by employers or professional organizations within Canada.

According to immigrant respondents, employers were more likely to accept educational credentials from persons educated in other countries if the credentials claimed were relatively low. In other words, employers were more likely to accept high school degrees or less, but less likely to accept post-secondary education credentials. When asked the extent to which institutions in Canada accepted international educational credentials, respondents answered that professional organizations only somewhat accepted post-secondary degrees, and were the least likely to accept post-graduate degrees.

Skilled worker principal applicants were less likely to have their credentials evaluated as equivalent by Ontario employers. This is mostly likely because these principal applicants have higher educational credentials and as we saw above, these degrees are less likely to be accepted. The

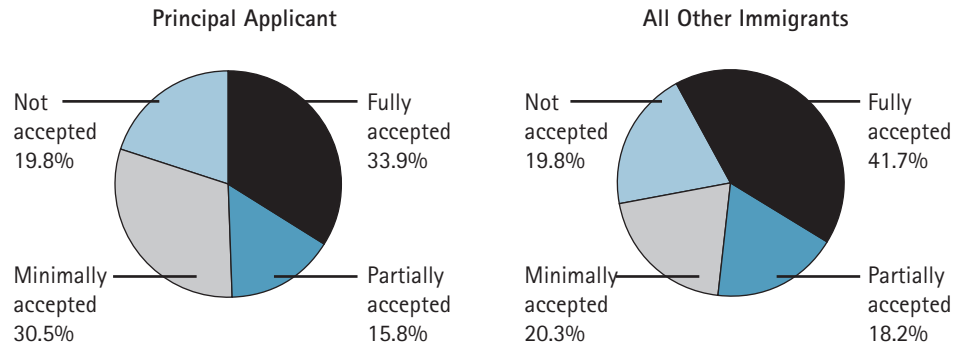
Discounting international credentials by employers or professional organizations within Canada appears as a barrier to employment. Recognition of credentials by Ontario employers appeared as a significant contributor to successful employment.

Immigrants in our sample who had their educational credentials accepted by Ontario employers were more than twice as likely to be employed. They were more likely to get their desired job that utilizes their skills, of the same or higher rank than before arrival. Finally, they also reported higher career satisfaction rates.

Lack of recognition of international credentials appeared as an important barrier to employment and a significant contributor to labour market success in our data.

common experience of immigrants reporting that their credentials were rated as equivalent for immigration purposes but not for employment seems to also hold true in our data. See Figure 11.

Figure 11: Level of Credential Recognition by an Employer in Canada



This comment from a very recent highly educated skilled worker principal applicant shows this point specifically:

I was selected as skilled immigrant, but when I came here, it was surprising for me that none of my experience...was considered. You all need either Canadian schooling or Canadian experience, and you must realize that nobody's going to give me a job. How can I get Canadian experience? [Is an employer] in Pakistan to provide Canadian experience? So, how I will get Canadian experience? Now I am working as a security officer, but that is not relevant to my previous job. When I apply, I know that when I will apply for any job in labor management or industrial relations, their first question will be, "have you got any Canadian experience in HR, in labor management?" I will say, "no," and I think I will never get any job in HR.

The data demonstrates that getting credentials evaluated as equivalent by Ontario employers is correlated with other important aspects of working life for immigrants. Obtaining credential equivalency is associated with these other aspects as follows:

- Immigrants who had their educational credentials accepted by employers were more than twice as likely to be employed (68% compared to 32%).
- Immigrants who had their educational credentials fully or partially accepted by employers reported higher career satisfaction rates. Immigrants who had their credentials fully accepted by employers reported an average satisfaction score of 63 on a 100 point scale, compared to immigrants who did not have their credentials recognized who reported an average score of 41. Even if their credentials were evaluated "below par," they were still more satisfied than if their credentials were not recognized at all.

- Immigrants who did not have their credentials accepted by employers were the most likely to be working in a lower ranking job than they were before arrival: 65% of immigrants who stated that employers did not recognize their credentials were working in a job of lower rank than before arrival.
- Having credentials recognized helped immigrants find their desired employment. Immigrants who did not have their credentials recognized were most likely not working in their desired job. Over 80% of immigrants whose educational credentials were not recognized reported that they were not working in their desired job.
- Immigrants who had their credentials recognized by employers were more likely to be working in a job that utilizes their skills. Immigrant respondents who had their credentials recognized, reported an average of 70.8 on the skills utilization scale. Immigrants who had their degrees partially/minimally accepted reported an average score of 66.3 and immigrants who did not have their credentials recognized who reported 48.1 on the scale.

Employment Discrimination Perceptions

What are the perceptions of immigrant and Canadian-born individuals with respect to discrimination against immigrants in Canadian workplaces, and how prevalent are personal experiences of discrimination?

The survey asked individuals about their feelings of discrimination against immigrants in Canadian workplaces. The average rating for the entire sample was 61.3 out of 100 indicating that respondents in our sample felt that immigrants do experience discrimination in Canadian workplaces. Immigrants perceive more discrimination than Canadian-born respondents, with the difference more pronounced for highly educated immigrants and also employed individuals. See Figure 12.

That said, the lack of Canadian experience was correlated with perceptions of discrimination as a barrier to employment and previous research indicates that once deconstructed, Canadian experience is often a proxy for discrimination against immigrants. Furthermore, 60% of immigrants in the sample believed Canadians feel that the education system in non-western countries is inferior compared to 15.4% of immigrants who did not believe this was the case. Nearly 40% of the Canadian-born respondents also believed that Canadians feel that the education system in non-western countries is inferior. Some immigrants in our sample also reported they felt discriminated against because of their accent (23.6% reported so, while 50.4% reported they were not), and 40.2% felt they would be respected more if they did not have an accent.

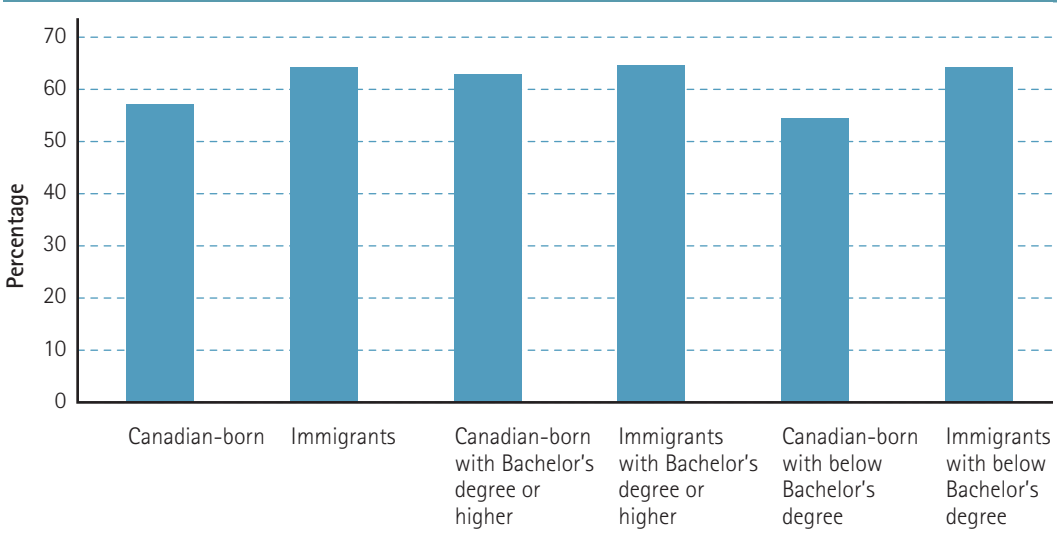
As one highly educated skilled worker principal applicant who arrived recently from Pakistan discusses.

Other than [Canadian] experience, accent [is a barrier for me]. Accent was...I work in the States and I work in the States for a year, never in America people have told me that I have a thick accent and over here, people...the first thing that they say that you have a thick accent. So, accent could be one of the possibilities and there is an undertone of discrimination I would say because marketing and human resources are the faces of the organization so most of the people, most of the organization, even though it's undertone, but if you go in the conferences you can really discreetly see that it's just mainstream jobs, you know, and people who are mainstream they are the people who have those positions, not the people of a different skin.

In general, individuals in our sample believed that immigrants face discrimination in Canadian workplaces. Immigrants, highly educated immigrants and the employed respondents were more likely to believe this was the case. Lack of Canadian experience is often taken to mean discrimination by immigrants as 60% of the immigrant respondents believe Canadians feel education obtained in non-western countries is inferior.

In general, most of the sample reported that discrimination rarely happens to them, with no difference between public and private sector respondents. However, immigrant respondents, in particular, skilled worker principal applicants and Black and South Asian immigrant respondents are more likely to report discrimination happens to them often.

Figure 12: Average Workplace Discrimination Perception Against Immigrants in Canadian Workplaces by Group



EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION

The survey also asked individuals to report how often they have experienced discrimination by an employer in the last five years.

Overall, 65% of the sample reported that discrimination rarely happens to them. However, when it is reported, immigrants are almost twice as likely to report it happens often (64.8% compared to 35.2% of Canadian-born individuals). There is no difference between public and private sector workers on being a victim of discrimination. However, skilled worker principal applicant survey respondents indicated that it occurred more often to them (12.6% compared to 7.4% of dependents).

The differences between immigrant ethnocultural groups on reported discrimination by an employer within the last five years appears in Table 10 below. While most immigrants responded that they were rarely the victim of discrimination within the last five years, 13.2% of South Asian immigrant respondents and 19.2% of Black immigrant respondents reported that they were often the victim of discrimination.

Table 10: Respondents Experiences of Discrimination in Last Five Years by Immigrant Ethnocultural Group

	White	Chinese	South Asian	Black	Filipino
Often	3.8%	4.7%	13.2%	19.2%	6.9%
Sometimes	19.0%	32.9%	33.8%	21.8%	27.6%
Rarely	77.2%	62.4%	53.0%	59.0%	65.5%

4. Summary of Results/Key Findings

1. What are the labour market experiences of immigrants and Canadian-born individuals in Peel?

- Immigrants are not faring well in the Peel labour market on numerous measures: for instance, employment rates, income and career satisfaction. More specifically, of the immigrant respondents who have international work experience, only about one third were successful in obtaining their desired employment.
- Obtaining more education in Canada helps immigrant respondents earn more income, especially for principal applicant skilled workers.
- Despite their educational credentials, immigrants do not receive the same income returns on their education. Immigrant respondents earn significantly less than their Canadian-born counterparts. While an immigrant's income increases with length of time in working for their current employer and with obtaining more education in Canada, their income is still not commensurate with their Canadian-born counterparts.

a) To what extent do immigrants and Canadian-born individuals utilize their skills at work?

- Both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals report underutilization of their skills in their current job. Recent immigrant respondents are less likely to utilize their skills at work, but skill utilization improves with length of time in Canada, and through full recognition of credentials by employers.
- Results show a significant change in work industry after migration, as well as a change in occupation level for immigrants. While some immigrant respondents are able to improve their occupation level over time, most were not able to obtain employment in jobs at similar levels to what they held prior to arrival, especially those who had previously occupied managerial or professional occupations.
- Immigrants were more successful in obtaining their desired job if they reported that employers in Ontario accepted or partially accepted their previous educational credentials.

b) How satisfied are immigrants and Canadian-born individuals with their workplaces and careers?

- Immigrant workers did not differ significantly from Canadian-born workers on their workplace satisfaction perceptions.
- Overall, Canadian-born individuals reported higher levels of satisfaction with their careers. However, after five years with their current employer, the career satisfaction levels of immigrants and Canadian-born respondents are almost the same.
- Immigrant respondents are not as satisfied with their career experiences in Peel as their Canadian-born counterparts. They report a lack of available individuals they could turn to for guidance and support within their organizations (more so in the private sector) and continue to explore other career opportunities.
- Of those currently seeking other job or career opportunities, most are looking within Peel Region.

- In general, respondents are positive about their places of work. They feel positive about their co-worker relations: 79% feel their co-workers treat them with respect and support; 66.9% feel supported by their managers; 66.3% reported that there were fair advancement processes in their workplaces; and 77.9% report being highly committed to their jobs. Most Peel respondents work in the same municipality where they live.
- Respondents employed in the public sector, in particular immigrants, are more satisfied with their employment in Peel. They are more likely to be utilizing their skills, report higher levels of management and co-worker support including the availability of mentors. Immigrant respondents employed in the public sector report higher levels of commitment to their public sector organizations and higher career satisfaction.
- Canadian-born respondents were more likely than immigrant respondents to report having a mentor regardless of employment sector. Immigrant respondents in the public sector were more likely to report having a mentor than immigrant respondents in the private sector.

c) How do the experiences of principal applicants in the skilled worker category differ from those of other survey respondents?

- Skilled worker principal applicants are less satisfied with their labour market experiences in Peel compared to other immigrants. They were not very satisfied with their progress in finding a job in Canada, were not satisfied with meeting their career goals, goals for advancement, or goals for income.
- Despite having their education and experience assessed prior to immigration, skilled worker principal applicants are not more likely to be employed, are not earning more income nor are they able to find employment in jobs that utilize their skills.

2. What job search strategies, including use of employment services, do immigrant and Canadian-born workers use to obtain employment?

- Searching in the newspaper or asking for help from friends or family to get a job are strategies reported as used most often to find a job, but they do not necessarily help an individual get a job in their field.
- Immigrants are more likely to use formal employment and research strategies such as visiting employment centres and attending workshops. Networking/contacting employers were reported as the most helpful strategies; however, these are done less often by immigrants. Bridging programs and mentorship are also strategies that were used less often.
- One in four immigrants accessed some government-funded employment services, and just under one-third obtained more education and credentials in Canada.
- Although we know that immigrants are not utilizing some of the programs funded by governments that could help them, we need more research to uncover why.
- Despite knowing where to go for services, not all respondents were able to obtain the help they needed. Nearly 50 % of the sample of immigrants reported not getting the help they needed through these services.
- While language training is well funded and attended for many reasons, highly educated and proficient immigrants, in particular principal applicants, do not necessarily find them accessible or useful.

- In general, individuals were more satisfied with the services they received from community agencies than from government employment services.
- Highly educated and trained individuals reported lower levels of satisfaction with government and community services to help them find a job, as they felt the services did not meet their specialized needs.

6. How successful are immigrant and Canadian-born workers at getting promotions in their workplaces?

- Few members received promotions. Canadian-born respondents were more likely to apply for promotions compared to immigrant respondents and more likely to receive them. Immigrants in our sample were less likely to receive promotions regardless of whether they were working in the private or public sector.

7. What barriers do immigrant and Canadian-born workers identify in terms of obtaining employment and advancement in their careers?

- Lack of Canadian work experience was reported as the barrier faced most often for immigrants and correspondingly, lack of work experience was reported most often by Canadian-born individuals.
- Networking was a serious barrier for both immigrants and Canadian-born individuals but more significant for immigrants. Immigrants found that networking was a more serious problem for them as they felt new to the community and reported an inability to contact/connect directly with employers and had a lack of available job references from Canada.
- Lack of recognition of international credentials appeared in our data as an important barrier to employment and a significant contributor to labour market success.
- Discounting international credentials by employers or professional organizations within Canada is a serious problem. Recognition of credentials by Ontario employers appeared as a significant contributor to successful employment in our data.
- Immigrant respondents who had their educational credentials accepted by Ontario employers were more than twice as likely to be employed. They were more likely to get their desired job, a job that utilizes their skills, or a job of the same or higher rank than before arrival. Finally, they also reported higher career satisfaction rates.
- Despite the evidence that obtaining credential equivalency by Canadian employers makes a significant impact on career satisfaction, job status, skill utilization and helps immigrants get jobs in their desired occupations, international credential recognition was reported as the second least likely job strategy employed by immigrants in our sample.

8. What are the perceptions of immigrant and Canadian-born workers with respect to discrimination in Canadian workplaces, and how prevalent are personal experiences of discrimination?

- In general, individuals believed that immigrants face discrimination in Canadian workplaces. Immigrants, highly educated immigrants and the employed respondents were more likely to believe this was the case. Canadian experience is often taken to mean discrimination by immigrants as 60% of the immigrant respondents believe Canadians feel education obtained in non-westernized countries is inferior.
- In general, most reported that discrimination rarely happens to them, with no difference between public and private sector respondents. However, immigrant respondents, in particular, skilled worker principal applicants and Black and South Asian immigrant respondents are more likely to report discrimination happens to them often.

5. Recommendations

The key findings outlined above suggest that immigrants in our sample are not as successful transitioning into the Peel labour force as Canadian-born individuals. Furthermore, once they are in the workforce, they are not transitioning up or utilizing their skills to their full potential. The key findings point to several areas where action can be taken to help improve the situation.

This section highlights what key stakeholders such as community organizations, government and employers can do to help improve the situation for workers in Peel Region based on the findings of the Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey. It also offers some solutions and strategies as examples of what can be done to respond to the key findings of this study in the areas recommended for action.

Community Organizations

It is recommended that community groups in Peel:

1. Adapt their service delivery approach to address the identified barriers and lack of satisfaction with services.

Examples of solution-based approaches in this area include:

- Ensuring a better ethnic match between staff and job seekers of specific ethnocultural groups who are not accessing services or indicate that existing services are not meeting their employment related needs.
- Offering more or adapting current service delivery options to better help immigrants obtain Canadian work experience as part of their job search strategies (e.g., work placements/co-ops).
- Offering more targeted assistance to individuals who have been out of the workforce for long periods of time or those starting a second career so that they can transition back into the workforce.
- Developing courses/workshops more suited to the employment related needs of highly educated immigrants. These courses could include strategies around career advancement, critical skills portfolio development, formal networking, how to contact employers directly and offer targeted resume and interview skills for higher level jobs.
- Offering various options for language training and other courses (e.g., daytime, evening, part-time options).

2. Advocate for and offer appropriate staff development to enable services to better meet the labour market integration needs of today's diverse immigrants.

Examples of solution-based approaches in this area include:

- Providing training to employment staff on a variety of topics such as local and national labour market trends, global economy, employment in the 21st century and international talent, so they can better meet the needs of the internationally trained job seeker.
- Establishing a formal system that strengthens the employment professional's network and facilitate the transfer of service delivery expertise (e.g., implement and take advantage of front-line professional development days).

3. Engage employers as partners.

Examples of solution-based approaches in this area include:

- Involving employers in course design and program development to ensure courses are up to date and relevant for individuals accessing the labour market at all job levels.
- Establishing employer engagement strategies based on the post-recession hiring needs of employers and establishing partnerships that support relevant employer participation (e.g., mentors or hosts of job placements).
- Recognizing employers who have shown leadership in hiring immigrants and use them as ambassadors to engage others.

Employers

It is recommended that employers in the public and private sectors in Peel:

1. Create policies and offer in-house programs/services that proactively support employees so that they can utilize their skills to their full abilities in their organizations.

Examples of solution-based approaches in this area include:

- Implementing talent management systems that identify under-utilized skills of new and longer term employees available to employers in their workplaces.
- Offering work placements, on-job training, internship, co-ops to help job seekers expand their Canadian work experience in jobs matching their skills.
- Establishing in-house mentoring initiatives where junior employees are matched with more senior employees who have some natural connection (e.g., work specialization, career aspirations, etc.).
- Implementing bias-free, transparent hiring and advancement processes and progressive human resources practices that encourage individuals to achieve their potential.
- Utilizing competency based assessment mechanisms to strike a balance in the hiring process so that hiring decisions are made on applicants' demonstrated skills and not solely on their formal credentials.
- Ensuring human resources practices do not perpetuate systemic discrimination in the Canadian workforce and preclude using lack of Canadian experience as a requirement to hire recent immigrants.

2. Invest in their workplaces.

Examples of solution-based approaches in this area include:

- Increasing understanding of foreign academic credentials, institutions and trends (e.g., Foreign Credential Recognition - FCR).
- Improving linkages with existing credential evaluation services.
- Introducing workplace development standards that support sensitivity, cross-cultural and diversity training on a regular basis for staff at all levels.
- Encouraging (and compensate) employees to become mentors outside the workplace to new immigrants in corresponding occupations.
- Offering interest-free loans and other incentives to employees who upgrade their credentials to meet skill needs of their employer.

3. Engage with other stakeholders who have an interest in employment related access issues (e.g., other employer, employment service providers and community groups).

Examples of solutions-based approaches in this area include:

- Seeking out award-winning and model employers in the same sector, to learn from their hiring and promotion practices.
- Working with employment service providers and community groups to ensure that workshops and services are relevant and applicable.
- Share the energy and stories of champions to engage other employers.
- Participating in community initiatives that help facilitate immigrants' access to relevant employment.

Government

It is recommended that government continue to support service delivery system(s) aimed at integrating internationally trained individuals into the Peel workforce by way of:

1. Resource investments

Examples of solution-based approaches in this area include:

- Subsidizing co-ops/internships for recent immigrants to get Canadian work experience.
- Expanding and enhancing employment information on the online immigration portal (e.g., www.immigrationpeel.ca). This could include up-to-date and realistic information about:
 - navigating and networking in the Canadian labour market.
 - the actual labour market experiences of all groups of immigrants. Immigrants could be provided with realistic information before they arrive about the length of time it would take to obtain a job in their field and the costs of upgrading in order that they are prepared financially upon arrival.
 - how to get credentials assessed and the likelihood of being accepted by employers.
 - sample Canadian resumes.
 - how to network and contact employers and other professionals in their field prior to arrival.
- Marketing the benefits of hiring immigrants by linking such hiring to the bottom line and employers' specific needs. Share immigrant success stories in the media to educate employers of the caliber of talent and skills that immigrants bring to Canada and how employers who have hired immigrants have benefitted.
- Providing funding to scale up formal mentoring programs and credential assessment services as part of the full suite of employment services.
- Funding projects that explore options for alternative employment service delivery models.
- Funding research and development of competency-based assessment mechanisms.
- Assisting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) who are looking for talent but who lack the resources to create policies or offer in-house programs/services to support employees.

2. Policy changes and ongoing research

Examples of solution-based approaches in this area include:

- Recognizing employment services as a distinct component of immigrant settlement and integration and design policies that address systematic barriers service delivery processes.
- Implementing policies that facilitate the timely transition of highly educated and trained immigrants who have the most difficulty utilizing their skills in the labour force.
- Mitigating employment expectation levels of highly educated and trained immigrants that are indirectly or directly influenced by the immigration process.
- Improving access to affordable childcare options for job seekers involved in paid and unpaid work placements.
- Working with community groups to explore reasons for the low satisfaction with services, low numbers using community groups, bridge training and mentorship programs (e.g., research could explore if reasons relate to access, availability, lack of knowledge or cost).
- Examining the feasibility and value added benefits of incentive programs for employers to recruit, employ and promote immigrants.
- Exploring what is it about the public sector that makes it a more satisfactory place to work and share this with the private sector.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research fills a gap and fills the need for specific information about immigrants' labour market experiences in Peel. In general, the results indicate that immigrants in our sample are not faring well in the Peel labour market on numerous measures, including employment rates, income and career satisfaction. Immigrants were also not likely to obtain employment in jobs that utilize their skills. In particular, highly educated immigrants were at a more serious disadvantage in the Peel labour market, as professionals and managers in our sample reported they were not able to find employment in jobs at similar levels to what they held prior to arrival. While the situation for immigrant respondents improves with length of time in Canada or working for their current employer, many immigrants are never able to secure employment in their desired jobs.

Reasons for this finding include lack of Canadian experience, lack of networks, and lack of recognition of international credentials. Discounting of international credentials was found to be a serious problem in the results and a significant contributor to labour market success. Immigrant respondents who indicated that employers recognized their international credentials were more than twice as likely to be employed, were more likely to obtain their desired job, a job that utilizes their skills or a job of the same or higher rank than prior to arrival. Finally they also reported higher career satisfaction rates. However, as 60% of immigrant respondents believe Canadians feel education obtained in non-westernized countries is inferior, we still have some work to do.

Community groups, employers and governments need to work together to solve this problem of underutilization of immigrant skills. Employment is the primary settlement need of most newcomers and it influences other aspects of settlement and opportunities, including where a person can afford to live, what services they access, what schools they or their children attend, and what opportunities they can afford. Employment is a tangible expression of social inclusion, granting newcomers belonging, acceptance and recognition. If we truly want to create welcoming communities, integrating immigrants into the labour market is the first step. Furthermore, as the labour market successes of Peel residents are a crucial component of the long-term growth and vitality of the Region, promoting positive labour market experiences among immigrants in particular should be a priority for everyone. Immigrants accounted for roughly 70% of Canada's net labour force growth between 1991 and 2001 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007). If these demographic trends continue, they will account for an increasing share and could account for nearly all, if not all, of Canada's net labour force growth within the next decade. No region can afford to ignore this trend. Municipalities and regions that lack opportunities for economic integration could face stagnant economic and population growth – a serious consequence for all.

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*Added to the 601 on-line completions, we received a grand total of 1,425 surveys.

Appendices

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- Appendix A – Research Process and Methods
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Appendix A: Research Process and Methods

In March 2008, the Region of Peel obtained funding from the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities to conduct the Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey in collaboration with Ryerson University's, Diversity Institute in Management and Technology. This research project explores the labour market experiences of immigrants in Peel and involves both quantitative and qualitative components. The project was overseen by an Advisory Committee with representatives from the Private, Non-Profit and Public sectors. A team of staff and volunteers, lead by a Project Manager, carried out the activities of the project. Specialized resources such as transcription and language translation services and web-based survey technology were used to support the project. Key contributors to the project are listed in Appendix F.

The survey was developed by Ryerson University's, Diversity Institute in Management and Technology and pilot tested by 44 focus group participants. The survey tool consists of 160 questions that ask respondents about their background education and experience, their experience searching for work in Canada, and their experiences in Canadian workplaces and society. These individuals also provided additional information about their international work and additional Canadian education experiences. The survey took approximately 25 to 60 minutes to complete depending on the individual profile of the respondent. A total of 70 surveys were completed in Punjabi, Urdu and Chinese.

The online survey was conducted between January to April, 2009. Immigrants and Canadian-born residents of Peel Region age 15 and older who searched for a job and/or worked in Canada within the past 10 years were invited to complete the survey. Disseminating the survey to the Peel community was a result of the collective efforts of more than 36 local service providers and 14 private businesses. See Appendix D and E. Extensive promotion of the survey included the use of paid ethnic and mainstream newspaper/television ads, distribution of flyers to homes, letters, telephone and door to door cold calls to local businesses as well as email communication to numerous distribution lists, live television interviews and presentations to settlement/employment service providers and the broader community. As an incentive to complete the survey, participants were entitled to enter a draw for a \$250 gift certificate. Respondents who completed the paper survey were given a \$2 Tim Horton's gift certificate as a token of appreciation.

While it was our intention to collect a sample that would be representative of the Peel labour force, we faced difficulties in obtaining a large enough sample of immigrants using online survey methods. As a result of using local employers and community agencies, including Service Canada, Employment Insurance and Ontario Works offices, we were able to obtain an additional 824 paper copies (see Appendix D). The paper surveys were then manually inputted into a database by a designated team of Region of Peel staff and volunteers. Of the 1425, 321 identified themselves as Principal applicants. The data was analyzed by using the most recent Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 17.0) software.

In addition to the quantitative survey data, 33 qualitative face-to-face interviews were conducted in April and May 2009 with Principal applicants to get a more in-depth understanding of the strategies and successful career paths of immigrants. This report summarizes the results of both the qualitative and quantitative research analysis of the data obtained from the 1,425 surveys and 33 interviews.

Appendix B: Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Total survey responses: 1,425

Immigrant Status	Canadian-born	40.1%
	Immigrant	59.9%
Immigration Category	Skilled Worker Principal Applicant	16.4%
Gender	Male	36.4%
	Female	63.6%
Residence	Mississauga	60.6%
	Brampton	35.7%
	Caledon	3.7%
Average Age	Canadian -born	35 yrs
	Immigrant	40 yrs
Living With Dependent Children	Canadian-born	38.3%
	Immigrant	61.1%
Average Income*	Canadian-born	\$46,723
	Immigrant	\$39,301
Top Five Ethnicities in Peel	White	38.1%
	Chinese	8.7%
	South Asian	16.8%
	Black	11.5%
	Filipino	3.2%
Bachelors Degree and Above	Canadian-born	30.8%
	Immigrant	62.2%
Employment Status	Employed Canadian-born	60%
	Employed Immigrants	53.4%
Employment Permanent	Canadian-born	80%
	Immigrant	72.8%
Work Full-Time	Canadian-born	87.9%
	Immigrant	81.6%
Average years of Canadian Work Experience	Canadian-born	18.6
	Immigrant	10.2
Sector	Public	63.9%
	Private	36.1%
Other Study Groups	Youth	13.0%
	Disabled	7.0%
	Aboriginal	1.4%

*Refers to employed individuals with earned income

Appendix C:

PERCEPTUAL MEASURES USED IN PEEL IMMIGRATION LABOUR MARKET SURVEY

JOB SEARCH SATISFACTION

Sample Items:

- I am satisfied with my job searching experiences in Canada.

- I am satisfied with the quality of support that I have received from community organizations in finding a job.

- I am satisfied with the quality of support that I have received from government agencies.

- I am satisfied with the level of progress I have made in finding a job to-date.

CAREER SATISFACTION SCALE

Sample Items:

- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.

- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.

- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.

- I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Sample Items:

- I tell my friends that my employer is great to work for.

- My values and my employer's values are very similar.

- I am glad I chose this employer to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.

- I really care about the success of my employer.

SKILL UTILIZATION SCALE

Sample Items:

- I feel that my work uses my full abilities.

- My job gives me a chance to do the things I feel I do best.

- I feel that my job and I are well matched.

ORGANIZATION SUPPORT SCALE

Sample Items:

- I believe my organization does a good job identifying skills and abilities of people.
- I believe my organization does a good job promoting the most skilled people.
- I believe I have the opportunity for personal development and growth in my organization.
- I believe I have as equal a chance of obtaining career advancement opportunities as my coworkers.

COWORKER RELATIONSHIP SCALE

Sample Items:

- My coworkers treat me with respect.
- My coworkers treat each other with respect.
- My coworkers give me the support I need to do my job.
- My coworkers keep me informed on matters that may impact my work.

MANAGER SUPPORT SCALE

Sample Items:

- My manager makes an effort to learn about my career goals and aspirations.
- My manager recognizes me when I accomplish something substantial in my job.
- My manager gives me helpful feedback about my performance.
- My manager treats me fairly.

DISCRIMINATION IN CANADA SCALE

Sample Items:

- In Canada, people face discrimination because of their accents when they seek employment.
- In Canada, immigrants' educational credentials and work experience are often not recognized.
- Canadians do not appreciate the cultural background and traditions of immigrants.
- Canadians feel that the education system in non-westernized countries is inferior.

Appendix D: Sources of 824 Completed Paper Surveys

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Access Employment
AUDMAX Inc.
Brampton Multicultural Community Centre
Brampton Neighbourhood Resource Centre
Catholic Cross Cultural Services
Region of Peel Learn, Play Care Centres
Chinese Association of Mississauga
Gateway Centre
Mississauga Board of Chinese Professionals and Businesses
Mississauga Chinese Association
Region of Peel Ontario Works Offices
Palestine House Educational & Cultural Centre
Peel District Labour Council
Peel Living Buildings
Peel Multicultural Council
Regeneration
Service Canada EI Offices
TCCSA

PRIVATE BUSINESSES

A&P Supermarket
DGN Marketing
Rona Canada
Shoppers Drug Mart
TD Bank
T&T Supermarket
Wal-Mart Canada

Appendix E: Survey Dissemination Sources

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Brampton Board of Trade
Caledon Community Services
Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre
Malton Neighbourhood Services
Mississauga Board of Trade
Mississauga Business Enterprise Centre
Mississauga Community Connections
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants – OCASI
Peel Adult Learning Centre
Peel Children's Aid Society
Peel District School Board
Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board
PowerAde Centre
Professional Engineers of Ontario
Regional Municipality of Peel
Ryerson University, Diversity Institute of Management and Technology
Sheridan College of Applied Arts and Technology
The Centre for Skills Development & Training
Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Centre - TRIEC
United Way of Peel Region
University of Toronto - Mississauga Campus

PRIVATE BUSINESSES

Advent Finance Group
Meadowvale Information Technology & Engineering Inc. (MITE)
Pitney Bowes Canada Ltd.
Promation Engineering
Royal Bank of Canada
Sherwood Copy
To-Day Magazine

Appendix F: Project Contributors

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

NAME	ROLE	ORGANIZATION
Paul Brophy	Provincial Government and Funder Representative	Senior Development Officer, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities
Shalini da Cunha	Service Provider	Executive Director, Peel Halton Dufferin Training Board
Dr. Paula DeCoito	Service Provider	Executive Director, Peel Social Planning Council
Guilherme Dias Canada	Private Sector Representative	Director Strategic Talent Management, Pitney Bowes
Rodel Imbarlina-Ramos (Peel/Halton)	Service Provider	Manager of Corporate and Stakeholder Relations Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) Secretariat
Norm McLeod	Regional Government and Service Provider	Manager Strategic Policy and Research, Region of Peel
Bhupinder Sanghera	Labour Representative	Brampton-Mississauga and District Labour Council

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

NAME	ROLE	ORGANIZATION
Lauren Rennie	Project Manager	Region of Peel
Cecilia Zhuang	Research Specialist	Region of Peel
Michelle Chand	Administrative Support and Data Entry	Region of Peel
Giancarlo Cristiano	Social Policy Analyst	Region of Peel
Louay Eskandar	Coordinator, Demographic & GIS Data Mapping and Analysis	Region of Peel
Thura Al-Windawi	Facilitator / Interviewer and Data Entry	Region of Peel
Alicia Sullivan	Facilitator / Interviewer and Data Entry	Region of Peel
Henry Chang	Research Assistant	Region of Peel
Kannan Mukhtar	Data Entry Clerk	Region of Peel
Mona Desai	Data Entry / Support Clerk	Region of Peel

RESEARCH EXPERTS

NAME	ROLE	ORGANIZATION
Dr. Margaret Yap	Co-Investigator	Director, Diversity Institute in Management and Technology & Assistant Professor, Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University
Dr. Wendy Cukier	Co-Investigator	Founder, Diversity Institute in Management and Technology and Associate Dean, Academic, Ted Rogers School of Management, Ryerson University
Charity-Ann Hannan	Research Associate	Diversity Institute, Ryerson University
Mark Holmes	Research Associate	Diversity Institute, Ryerson University
Katherine Jeffery	Research Associate	Diversity Institute, Ryerson University
Lennie Lejasisaks	Research Associate	Diversity Institute, Ryerson University
Dr. Michelle P. Goldberg	Research Consultant	PinPoint Research
Dr. Sarah V. Wayland	Research Associate	PinPoint Research
Dr. Gerald Bierling	Research Associate	PinPoint Research
Charity-Ann Hannan	Research Associate	PinPoint Research

SUBCONTRACTORS / SPECIALIZED RESOURCES

ROLE	ORGANIZATION
Online Survey Data Base	Clear Picture Corporation
Survey Language Translation	Centre for Education and Training, Translation and Interpreter Services
Focus Group / Interview Transcription	Justdicta
Marketing Materials / Report Design	Communications Division, Region of Peel

