

Does the two-stage immigration work for regionalization of immigrants? Effects of pre-landing Canadian experience on post-landing earnings trajectories across regions

Abstract

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Since the early 2000s, Canadian immigration policies have increasingly shifted toward two-step immigration as it has been seen as an effective strategy to improve the labour market outcomes of economic immigrants and their integration processes. More recently, two-step immigration has been applied to regional immigration programs to promote the attraction and retention of immigrants in smaller regions. It does so by selecting the immigrants from international graduates and temporary foreign workers, who are familiar with local institutions, assuming that they will have a smoother transition to the local labour market and increases the chances of retention. Existing research focuses on national results and shows that immigrants with pre-landing Canadian experience have better employment outcomes than those who do not. It is unclear, however, if the experience advantage applies across regions or it applies equally for gender and other sub-groups. Further, the economic outcomes at initial settlement stage are considered as a key factor for retention of immigrants in smaller regions, yet measurements of economic outcomes at sub-national levels has been limited. Instead of using dynamic longitudinal measures, they are measured with the repeated cross-sectional design, which makes it harder to isolate the effect of pre-landing experience on the long-term economic outcomes from other factors, such as relocating to different regions after landing. By applying the latent growth modelling approaches to the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), this study aims to estimate the advantage of pre-landing characteristics of Canadian immigrants on the post-landing earnings trajectory. Describing the variations of earnings trajectories of immigrants across regions, the paper considers its implication for regionalization of immigration policies.

Authors' Bios

Dr. Yoko Yoshida is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Western University. She is also affiliated with the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University, where she was the former Academic Director of the Atlantic Research Data Centre (2012-16). Her research and publications focus on immigration and integration of immigrants to Canada, social inequality, and race and ethnic relations. Over the years, she has used the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) to analyze the economic outcomes of immigrants, the retention of immigrants to Atlantic Canada, as well as integration process of refugee families and refugee children and youth in Canada.

Dr. Michael Haan is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at Western University. Previously Dr. Haan held an academic appointment as Winspear-Archer Research Fellow in Immigration and Social Policy at the University of Alberta (2005-10) as well as the Canada Research Chair in Population and Social Policy at the University of New Brunswick (2010-15). His research interests intersect the areas of demography, immigrant settlement, labour market integration, and data development. Dr. Haan is widely consulted by provincial and federal governments for policy

advice in the areas of immigration, settlement services, the Canadian labour market, and population aging.

Dr. Shane Goodwin is a Research Associate at Western University. His research currently explores economic outcomes of newly arrived immigrants and how these outcomes impact mobility in Atlantic Canada. His research interests blend the fields of epidemiology and demography, with particular interests in health-related quality of life and methods of capturing growth and transitions across time.