



SOCIAL SCIENCE

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BANGLADESHI IMMIGRANTS' EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THEIR OCCUPATIONS IN CANADA

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Abstract: This study examines Bangladeshi immigrants' experience and perceptions about their occupations in Canada using both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected using face-to-face in-depth interview and thematic concepts were used to analyze the data. In general, the study finds that majority skilled immigrants are more likely to be employed in non-professional jobs with lower occupational prestige. However, those who obtain their education both in Bangladesh and Canada have higher probability of getting professional jobs in the Canadian labour market as compared to those who obtain their education only in Bangladesh. In addition, Bangladeshi immigrants' social network plays a pivotal role in getting jobs in the Canadian labour market. Policy implications for Bangladesh are discussed as well.

Keywords: Immigrants, occupation, labour market, Canada, Bangladesh

Introduction

Majority Research on immigration in the United States and Canada is dominated by quantitative methodology and has explored a variety of issues and concerns regarding immigrants' integration and assimilation into the mainstream society (e.g., Boyd, 2002; Boyd and Grieco, 1998, Massey, 1995; Portes and Zhou, 1995). A substantial number of research has looked at immigrants' occupational trajectories with compared to the native-born population (e.g., Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004; Akresh, 2008; Hou and Balakrishnan, 1996). However, limited attention has been devoted specifically to Asian immigrants' own experience and perceptions about their occupation in Canada in general and to Bangladeshi immigrants in particular. This study is a modest attempt to explore Bangladeshi immigrants' experience and perceptions about their occupation in Canada.

Canada is one of the highest migrant receiving countries in the world. Every year thousands of immigrants enter Canada for better living conditions. Thus, immigration has become a major determinant of population growth in Canada. In the first three months of 2010, 71% of population growth was attributed to net international migration, while only 29% was due to natural increase (Statistics Canada, 2010). Canada's immigration policy before 1960 was characterized by higher preference for immigrants from the United States and European countries. After the Second World War, Canada's immigration policy was designed to foster population growth and economic productivity through accepting more immigrants from other regions of the world (i.e. Asia,

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Africa, and South America). This change in immigration policy has facilitated an increasing number of immigrants' entrance to Canada not only under the skilled immigrant category but also under the family reunification category (i.e., spouse & dependents). Thus, Canada has become one of the major destination countries for Asian immigrants.

Research on Bangladeshi immigrants' experience and perceptions about their occupations bears greater significance in the context of Canada in general, and for Bangladesh in particular. For Canada, this research will help to determine immigrants' occupational success and income attainment to some extent, which might have significant impact on immigrants' integration related policy initiatives. For Bangladesh, this research will contribute to evaluate the performance of Bangladeshi immigrants in terms of occupational success and income attainment. This will pave the way for developing necessary programs in generating skilled workers in order to ensure increasing trend of remittances to Bangladesh, which is considered as the lifeline of Bangladesh economy.

The main objectives of this study are to look into the extent to which Bangladeshi immigrants like their occupation, benefits received, and perceived discrimination experienced in their occupation. Previous research shows that majority immigrants are employed in non-professional jobs even though immigrants' have higher educational attainment compared to their Canadian-born counterparts. In many cases, immigrants' educational and occupational accreditations are not recognized by the employers of the host society. As a result, immigrants have to work in non-professional jobs. Thus, the central question of this research is how do Bangladeshi immigrants perceive their occupations in Canada? Therefore, this study will not only explore the real situation that immigrants experience in their workplace in Canada but also will contribute to generate necessary programs and initiatives both in the sending and receiving countries of immigration.

Immigrants from Bangladesh come to Canada with an expectation of better education, occupation and to lead a better life. However, majority of these immigrants become quite frustrated in Canada for not getting professional jobs consistent with their educational background. As a result, majority of them work in retail stores (e.g., Wal-Mart and McDonald's) as low-end workers. These low paying jobs are usually known as "odd jobs" among immigrants. A number of previous research have found evidence in support of immigrants' higher concentration in low paying jobs (e.g., Akresh, 2008; Chiswick and Miller, 2005; Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2004; Boyd, 1984; Hou and Balakrishnan, 1996).

According to the Intervening Opportunities Model of Migration introduced by Stouffer (1940, 1960), the most important factor explaining migration between places is related to the availability of job opportunities in the receiving society. People migrate to another country because of expected higher job opportunities, higher wages, and better living conditions. However, in many cases, immigrants face various problems in establishing themselves in the job market. For this reason, Ram and Shin (1999:148) argued, "the growing visibility, lack of assimilation, and economic deprivation of new immigrants have become a focus of increased attention and public concern".

Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) examined race in the labour market by sending fictitious resumes to help-wanted ads in Boston and Chicago newspapers. They have randomly assigned African-American or White-sounding names. In general, they found that White names received 50 per cent more callbacks for interviews than that of African-American names. The authors suggest that African-Americans face differential treatment when searching for jobs and that might be still a factor in why they did poorly in the labor market. They have also found that the racial gap was uniform across occupation, industry, and employer size.

Akresh (2008) examined the occupational trajectories of legal US immigrants using data from the first wave of the New Immigrant Survey (2003 cohort). Overall, he found that both economic

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immigrants¹ and family immigrants² exhibited U-shaped pattern of occupational trajectories. Both male immigrants and female immigrants experienced downward trend of occupational prestige in first US job compared to their last job abroad. However, all categories of immigrants start to exhibit upward mobility in occupational prestige when their current US job is taken in to account compared with their first US job. The findings of this study raise the question of whether economic immigrants and family immigrants have similar success in the labour market. Chiswick et al. (2002) found that economic immigrants tend to have higher success in the labour market compared to family immigrants. They argued that economic immigrants have higher levels of education and better English-language ability compared to family class immigrants. For this reason, family class immigrants experience higher downward mobility in the labour market compared to economic immigrants. One important limitation of these researches is that they have neither compared immigrants' occupational success with that of the native-born population nor they did explore whether racial discrimination further compounded immigrants' downward mobility in the labour market.

Hou and Balakrishnan (1996) examine the integration of visible minorities in terms of education, occupation and income in contemporary Canadian society using data from the 1991 Canada Census. Essentially what they found was that though visible minorities tend to have a higher level of education, most of them were still under-represented in high status occupations and had incomes lower than what their educational and occupational achievements would merit. In addition, Blacks and South Asians had the lowest level of occupational success compared to their British, France or Canadian-born counterparts. The important question that remains to be answered is why some visible minority immigrants have relatively lower incomes than other groups? Hou and Balakrishnan argued, "income inequality on the basis of qualifications is most probably related to discrimination. All visible minorities experience a certain amount of income inequality. This suggests that visibility has an additional effect on income inequality in Canadian society" (1996:324).

Picot *et al.* (2008) examined poverty dynamics among recent immigrants to Canada using Statistics Canada's Longitudinal Immigrant Database and Longitudinal Administrative Databank. They found that the prevalence of poverty was very high among recent immigrants in Canada even during the period of high employment rate and despite having very high level of educational attainment. Therefore, this research raises the question of why immigrants have failed to transform their education and skills into success in the Canadian labour market.

Therefore, immigrants are disadvantaged in terms of occupational success and income attainment. Immigrants experience several types of discrimination in labour market of the host society, which eventually leads to their higher concentration in low paying jobs. An important limitation of the previous research is that immigrants' own experience and perceptions about their occupations in Canada were not addressed adequately. Majority of those research used aggregate data to analyze the patterns and trends of immigrants' occupational success in the host society. Therefore, analyzing individual level data collected through an in-depth interview to explore immigrants' experience and perceptions about their occupation in Canada deserves special attention.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Edmonton, Alberta during September 2008 to August 2009. Alberta is one of the richest provinces in Canada which is well known for its huge petroleum and natural gas reserves. Alberta is considered as one of the major destinations of immigrants to Canada because of its booming economy and the lowest unemployment rate during the last two decades.

1 "Economic immigrants" are those who get immigration status on the basis of point system. The point system is based on applicants' formal education, proficiency in English, and work experience.

2 Family immigrants are those who get immigration status under spouse and dependents category.

A large number of Bangladeshi immigrants moved to Alberta from other provinces of Canada during the same time. Thus, studying the occupational success of Bangladeshi immigrants in the context of a rapid economic development in Alberta might depict the true picture of their occupational trajectory.

The study was conducted using both primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected using face-to-face in-depth interviews. Four immigrants from Bangladesh who live in Edmonton were selected using purposive sampling procedure. The advantage of this sampling procedure is that even using a small sample size it is possible to maximize the probability of selecting samples that are representative of the population. We have selected equal numbers of males and females for the study in order to avoid the problems of error and bias. Because sampling errors are important concerns for social research that might have a negative impact on the validity and reliability of any research (Lofland et al. (2006). The reason for selecting only four immigrants for interview was to conduct in-depth interviews for reliable data that will reveal true picture of Bangladeshi immigrants.

In order to conduct the face-to-face in-depth interviews, approval was received from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board (REB). The reason for taking REB approval is to ensure that the probability and magnitude of possible harms implied by participation in the research is not greater than those encountered by the participants in his or her everyday life.

For this study, we have selected two types of immigrants from Bangladesh: (i) immigrants who have obtained their educational degree(s) in Bangladesh; and (ii) immigrants who have obtained their education both in Bangladesh and in Canada. This would facilitate the comparison between two groups and might be helpful to explore some distinguishing features about immigrants' perceptions about their occupations in Canada. Previous research shows that formal education is an important predictor of immigrants' success in labour market.

We have followed the interview guide accordingly. We tried not to ask leading questions or closed questions. This is a kind of safeguard against researcher's bias for answer of certain questions. Pseudonyms were used in all files and records to ensure confidentiality of the respondents.

Results

Canada has received an increasing number of economic immigrants during 1984-2008 (Fig. 1). Fig. 1 shows that Canada received the highest numbers of economic immigrants compared to family class, refugees and other immigrants during 1984-2008. There is a declining trend in number of refugees in Canada during the same period. The number of both male and female economic immigrants has increased during the period of 1984-2007, and greater number of female economic immigrants came to Canada as compared to male economic immigrants during the same period (Fig. 2). Majority economic immigrants intended to work in professional jobs during 1984-2008 (Table 1). For example, 54.7 per cent economic immigrants intended to work in professional jobs followed by skilled and technical (25.0%), managerial (14.6%), intermediate and clerical (3.5%), and elemental and labourers (0.1%) in 2008 (Table 1). This pattern is also true for both male and female economic immigrants over the same period. Table 1 shows that majority of male economic immigrants intended to work in professional jobs (53.8%) followed by skilled and technical (27.6%), managerial (9.8%), intermediate and clerical (5.7%) and elemental and labourers (0.1%) in 2008. For female economic immigrants, 54.4 per cent intended to work in professional jobs followed by skilled and technical (25.9%), managerial (13.0%), intermediate and clerical (4.3%) and elemental and labourers (0.1%) in 2008 (Table 1).

Fig. 1. Number of Permanent Residents in Canada, 1984-2008(Facts and Figures 2008: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Catalogue no. Ci1-8/2008E-PDF)

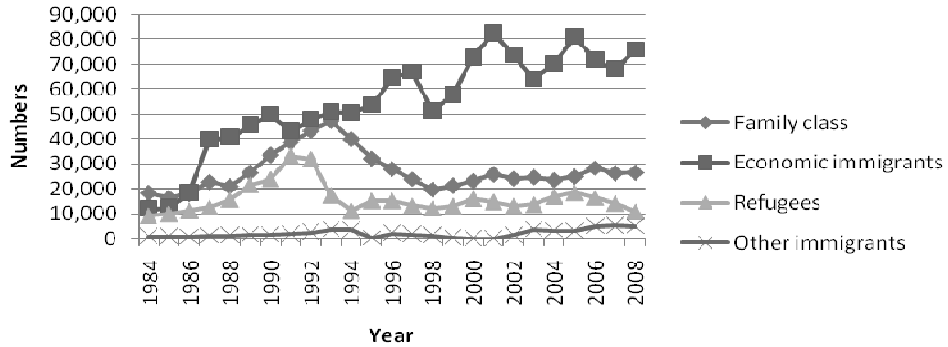


Fig. 2: Number of Permanent Residents in Canada by Gender, 1984-2008 (Facts and Figures 2008: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Catalogue no. Ci1-8/2008E-PDF)

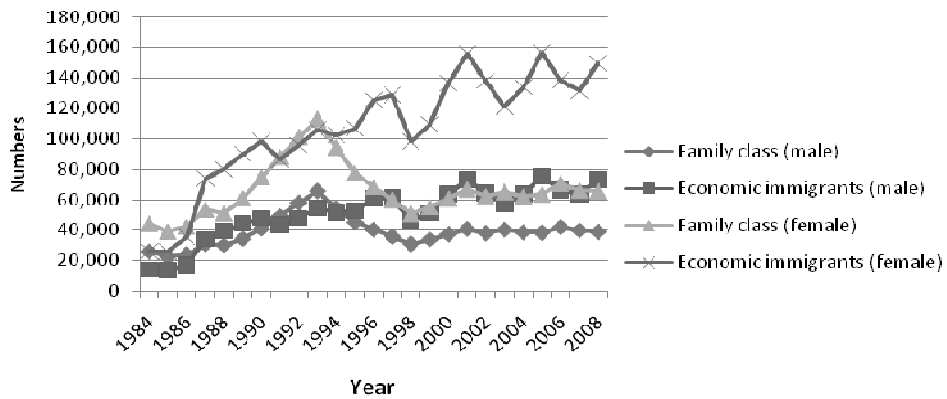


Fig. 3: Canada-Permanent Residents from Asian Countries, 1999-2008 (Facts and Figures 2008: Citizenship and Immigration Canada; Catalogue no. Ci1-8/2008E-PDF)

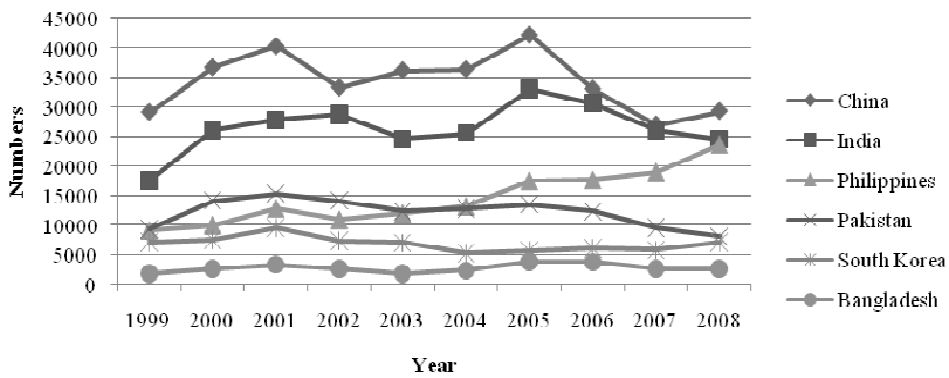


Table 1. Percent distribution of economic immigrants intending to work (Principal Applicants)
(Facts and Figures 2008: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Catalogue no. Ci1-8/2008E-PDF)

Occupational skill level	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Managerial	2.4	3.1	3.5	3.8	4.2	6.8	9.0	10.0	11.8	14.6
Professional	71.1	72.1	70.9	69.8	72.9	69.3	65.2	60.8	57.7	54.7
Skilled and technical	21.3	20.9	21.6	20.0	20.0	20.2	21.3	23.0	25.2	25.0
Intermediate and clerical	2.7	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.6	2.1	2.6	3.1	3.5
Elemental and labourers	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
Level not stated	2.4	1.7	1.6	1.3	0.6	1.1	2.3	3.5	2.1	2.1
									100.	
Males	100.0	100.1	100.1	97.6	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0	0	100.0
Managerial	2.1	2.6	3.0	2.9	3.3	4.9	7.4	7.8	8.4	9.8
Professional	58.8	64.2	64.1	64.0	70.2	66.9	61.6	59.1	55.9	53.8
Skilled and technical	27.7	23.9	22.4	24.0	20.4	21.8	23.4	24.2	26.5	27.6
Intermediate and clerical	5.7	5.2	5.4	5.6	4.9	4.8	4.0	4.2	5.7	5.7
Elemental and labourers	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
Level not stated	5.5	4.0	5.0	3.4	1.2	1.6	3.6	4.6	3.3	2.9
									100.	
Females	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0	100.0
Managerial	2.4	2.9	3.4	3.6	4.0	6.2	8.5	9.4	10.7	13.0
Professional	68.0	70.3	69.2	68.3	72.2	68.6	64.2	60.3	57.2	54.4
Skilled and technical	22.9	21.6	21.8	22.8	20.1	20.7	21.9	23.4	25.6	25.9
Intermediate and clerical	3.5	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.0	3.2	2.7	3.1	4.0	4.3
Elemental and labourers	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1
Level not stated	3.2	2.2	2.5	1.8	0.7	1.3	2.7	3.8	2.5	2.4
									100.	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	0	100.0

China was the first major source of skilled immigrants to Canada during 1984-2008 followed by India, Philippines, United States, United Kingdom, Pakistan, South Korea, France, Iran, Columbia, United Arab Emirates, Sri Lanka, Germany, Morocco, Algeria, Taiwan, Mexico, Lebanon, Romania, and Bangladesh (Table 2). Thus, among the top 20 source countries of skilled immigrants to Canada, Bangladesh's position is the 20th. According to the United Nations estimates of Population for 2010, Bangladesh has larger population (164.4 millions) than any of these countries except China (1340.0 millions), India (1187.9 millions), USA (310.3 millions), and Pakistan (170.6 millions). Figure 3 shows that Bangladesh has the lowest number of skilled immigrants to Canada compared to other Asian countries such as China, India, Philippines, Pakistan and South Korea during 1984-2008.

Table 2. Canada- Permanent Residents by Top 20 Source Countries, 1999-2008
(Facts and Figures 2008: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Catalogue No. Ci1-8/2008E-PDF)

Ranking	Source countries	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1	China	29147	36750	40365	33307	36252	36429	42292	33079	27013	29336
2	India	17457	26123	27902	28838	24594	25573	33146	30754	26052	24549
3	Philippines	9205	10119	12928	11011	11988	13303	17525	17718	19066	23724
4	United States	5533	5828	5909	5294	6013	7507	9263	10943	10449	11216
5	United Kingdom	4478	4649	5360	4724	5199	6062	5864	6542	8129	9243
6	Pakistan	9303	14201	15353	14173	12351	12794	13575	12329	9545	8052
7	South Korea	7217	7639	9608	7334	7089	5337	5819	6178	5866	7245
8	France	3923	4345	4428	3962	4127	5028	5430	4915	5526	6384
9	Iran	5909	5617	5746	7889	5651	6063	5502	7073	6663	6010
10	Colombia	1296	2228	2967	3226	4273	4438	6031	5813	4833	4995
11	United Arab Emirates	1755	3084	4523	4444	3321	4358	4053	4100	3368	4695
12	Sri Lanka	4728	5849	5520	4968	4448	4135	4690	4490	3934	4509
13	Germany	2901	2369	1846	1624	2098	2387	2635	3030	2555	4057
14	Morocco	1768	2560	3951	4057	3243	3471	2692	3110	3789	3907
15	Algeria	2034	2529	3009	3030	2786	3209	3131	4513	3172	3228
16	Taiwan	5483	3535	3114	2910	2126	1992	3092	2823	2780	2972
17	Mexico	1723	1658	1939	1919	1738	2245	2851	2830	3224	2831
18	Lebanon	1397	1682	2071	1723	2600	2673	3122	3290	3018	2827
19	Romania	3468	4431	5589	5689	5466	5658	4964	4393	3770	2754
20	Bangladesh	1825	2715	3393	2616	1896	2374	3940	3838	2735	2716

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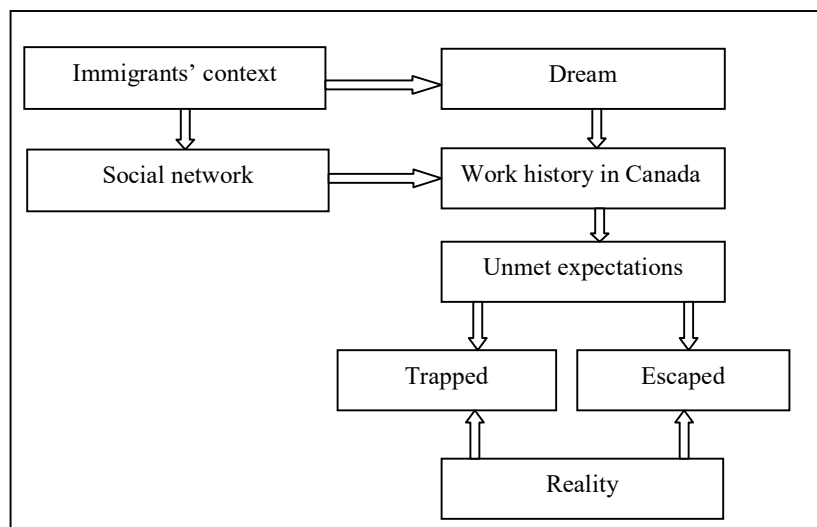
Immigrants' context: Zaman, a male immigrant of 32 years old, came to Canada in 2002 as an international student from Bangladesh to pursue Master Degree in Chemical Engineering at the University of British Columbia. Later he became permanent resident in Canada under skilled workers category. He obtained undergraduate and Master degree in Chemical Engineering from the Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET).

Reza, a male immigrant of 36 years old, came to Canada in 2006 from Bangladesh under skilled workers category. He was graduated in Civil Engineering from the Chittagong Institute of Technology (CIIT), Bangladesh. After completing graduation from CIIT, he used to work in a real estate company in Bangladesh. Although he was quite satisfied with his job he decided to immigrate to Canada for better access to health, education and employment opportunities. So he had to quit the job for immigrating to Canada. He has no formal education in Canada. However, he has participated in a training program on Civil Engineering at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NIIT) in 2008.

Jerin, a female immigrant of 30 years old, came to Canada in 2005 under skilled workers' spouse category. Jerin obtained Bachelor Degree in Geography and Environment from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. She had no job experience in Bangladesh. She also had no formal education and training in Canada.

Mesbah, a male immigrant of 29 years old, came to Canada in 2004 under skilled workers category. He obtained his Bachelor Degree in computer science from the North-South University of Bangladesh. He has also obtained another Diploma degree (2 years of duration) in Computer Software programming from the University of Toronto, Canada.

Fig. 4. Thematic framework: dream *versus* reality



Dream: The most common thing to all interviewees was that all of them had a dream behind their immigration to Canada. It was a dream of getting a professional job. They expected to have a bright future in terms of having better jobs, financial solvency, and providing financial support to their family members in Bangladesh. Zaman said,

“I had a long desire to go abroad...I came to Canada to obtain higher education in my area of specialization....Another reason for immigration was that I would get a better professional job in Canada which would bring financial solvency in my life....I would be able to provide financial support to my family members back home...I had imagined a different life...It's like a dream....a dream of a bright future” (34-40).

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Reza came to Canada with a view to solve their financial hardship. He also had the expectation of getting a better job in Canada which would eventually ensure socioeconomic security for his future generation. In addition, he expected to obtain better training and skills on modern technologies in Civil Engineering in Canada. He expected to have a work environment in Canada where there would be no discrimination based on race or immigration status.

Jerin expected to get a better job in Canada. By better job she means that it could be either administrative or any other official job. Regarding work environment she also expected to have a work environment where there would be neither racial discrimination nor salary discrimination.

Out of four interviewees, three interviewees were skilled immigrants. So they had higher expectation of getting better jobs in Canada. The expectation of getting a professional job does not mean that it has to be always in line with their formal education rather it means a better job in terms of better payments, work environment, and higher social status. The interviewees also dreamt a better work environment in Canada in which everyone would get equal benefits, everyone would cooperate with each other, and no one would become victim of discrimination based on color, race or ethnic origin. Mesbah said,

“My expectation in Canada was that I would get a better job in line with my educational background.....my expectation was.....an office.....where everyone will get equal benefits.....another expectation was that everyone would get promotion based on their work performance.....a friendly environment.....no bossing system.....these were my expectation”.

Work history in Canada: None of the four interviewees obtained professional job. All of them are working in non-professional jobs in retail stores. They receive an average payment of \$10.00 per hour. Full-time employees get more benefits compared to part-time employees. For example, full-time employees get health coverage, dental insurance, vacation payments and holiday payments, whereas part-time employees do not get these benefits.

Zaman got a job through one of his friends in a Call Centre at Vancouver at payments of \$10.00 per hour. Although there was an excellent work environment in the Call Centre, some customers misbehaved with them very often. Zaman was desperately looking for a professional job. He moved to Edmonton, Alberta in 2005. In Edmonton, he started working in Superstore during night shifts for \$12.00 per hour. In addition, he received 1.5 times payments for working overtime. As a part-time employee he did not get any other benefits such health insurance and dental insurance. One has to work at least three months to get other benefits. Zaman said,

“In the Superstore, half of the break was unpaid... it was difficult to work at night....I had to compromise a lot of things....I couldn't sleep well...I couldn't spend time with my family....it also had a very negative impact on my study....I did not like this job.... because I was not supposed to do this sort of work...but what other alternative do I have for survival?”

Zaman decided to quit his job at Superstore. He joined another company named UPS (United Parcel Service) as a part-time employee for \$13.50 per hour. He was responsible for unloading boxes and cartoons from trucks and loading them into delivery trucks. This was a very difficult job for him. He could not work more than two hours because of heavy workload. He said,

“It is difficult to survive here through doing these jobs.....Life seems meaningless to me....if they pay me \$20.00 per hour I can not justify this work for me....It seems to me that what I am doing....I was not supposed to do this type of work.....I did not obtain higher education to do this odd jobs in Canada...I do not know what should I do?”.

Reza was looking for a better job immediately after his arrival at Edmonton in 2006. He has submitted several applications for professional jobs but he did not get any call for interview. One of his friends helped him to find a job at MacDonald's as a full-time employee for \$10.00 per

hour. He called this type of work at MacDonald's as "labour job". He was not satisfied with this sort of "labour job". However, he has no other alternative for survival in Canada. There was no discrimination in payments among black and white or immigrants and Canadians. The only discriminatory behaviour reported by the interviewee was that sometimes he had to do cleaning tasks. He believes that the manager asked him to do cleaning tasks intentionally. Moreover, he also has some problems of working at night shifts. Reza said,

"the major problem for me is that sometimes I have to work in night shifts...I find it difficult to work in night shifts...I can not sleep well...my health starts to deteriorate.....If I work at night then I have to sleep at day time....in that case I do not get enough time to look for my expected jobs" (375-378).

Reza got a professional job in 2007 in a renovation company through one of his friends. He was hired on probation basis in the section of drafting and designing. The company wanted to observe his performance. Initially, the company agreed to pay \$17.00 per hour. After seven days, he was fired by the company because of his poor performance and lack of expertise communication skills. Reza believes that he should be given the opportunity to gather experience otherwise he would not be able to improve his skills.

Jerin was looking for a job to support her family since her arrival in Canada in 2005. One of her neighbours gave her information about hiring in a retail store. She got a job as a part-time cashier in the retail store in October 2005 for \$9.00 per hour. In addition she receives 4% vacation pay which was common to all. She is responsible for selling products, maintaining the cash accurately, to provide better service to their customers, doing baggage for customer's shopping, and keeping the front end neat and clean. She was given less benefits of health coverage and holiday payments compared to full-time employees.

Jerin was not satisfied with her wage rate in the retail store. She believes that her wage rate is too low in the context of a developed country like Canada. In addition, there is salary discrimination among employees. There are no rules and regulations regarding payments. For example, she has joined in the store more than one year ago but she is given lower payments than other employees who have joined recently. They cannot complain about these discriminatory practices in the store since they don't have any association for collective bargaining. She said,

"We don't have employee's union in our.....our management does not like it.....they don't want to see that employees are getting united for collective bargaining.....we can not protest any discrimination because we are not united.....we don't have any employee's union.....for this reason...they can exploit us...this is the worst thing in our store".

Jerin has to continue the job to support her family despite the discriminatory behaviour experienced in her workplace. She wants the management to introduce the employee's union in the store. She expects to get a better job in future. She is planning to obtain training on healthcare programs so that she can try again for better jobs.

Mesbah used to work in Pizza delivery at Toronto for three and half years for \$7.00 per hour. Overall, Mesbah liked his work and was satisfied with the payments he received. He did not experience any discriminatory behaviour in this work. However, he always expects to have a better job in Canada. His friends encouraged him to move to Edmonton for exploring better work opportunities. He moved to Edmonton in 2006. He got a full-time job in *Best Buy* (computer and other electronics) as a product expert. He is responsible for selling more products, providing best quality service to their customers, and making sure that customers are getting the right product. He gets \$10.00 per hour plus commission on total sales. In addition, he gets special commission for selling certain products. He is well satisfied with the payments he receives. Regarding other benefits he receives from *Best Buy*, Mesbah said:

"good facilities.....good environment to work.....for this reason I am not going to leave this job.....I like this job because I receive health benefits.....dental benefits.....all kinds of

benefits they are offering.....work environment is very good.....all are friendly.....no bossing practice.....everyone is like friends.....we have a very nice teamwork”.

Unmet expectations: Zaman did not get his expected job in Canada. He had submitted 25 applications for a professional job but did not get a single call for interview. He believes that it is really difficult to get a professional job in Canada without prior work experience. What seems to Zaman is that previous work experience, strong reference letters and a social network are important factors in getting a professional job in Canada. Zaman strongly believes that there is no discrimination in the Canadian labour market. He believes that the Canadian system is that applicants should have prior work experience and strong reference letters to get professional job. He strongly believes that if gets a professional job then he will get several other jobs gradually.

Verbal talks are the main components of interview but there are some non-verbal expressions that should be taken into consideration. For example, Zaman was quite frustrated with his current occupation in Canada. He does not like this sort of “odd jobs”. Earning dollars is not the first priority to him. He prefers to have a job which has higher social status. It is a kind of social recognition and mental satisfaction for them.

Reza also did not get any professional job despite submitting more than 40 applications. He even did not get a single call for interview. He was very frustrated about this situation. His perception about not getting a single call for interview was that Canadian employers were not recognizing his educational degrees and previous work experience obtained from Bangladesh. Reza said,

“No....I did not get my expected job in Canada...I have lot of psychological stress for not getting a professional job...sometimes I feel...I am passing a difficult time in my life”.

Jerin did not get her expected job in Canada. She believes that higher proficiency in English and prior job experiences in relevant sectors are two important factors in getting a professional job in Canada. Although it is not possible to get a professional job without some Canadian experience she had a different opinion in this regard. She believes that Canadian employers should hire new immigrants so that they can gather experience in Canada and gradually they would be able to give better service to their employers. She added that many immigrants had the potential to deliver quality service but if they were not given opportunities to work how they can prove their talent.

Trapped: Reza is in deep trouble regarding his future career in Canada. He has no formal educational degree and work experience in Canada. He finds it difficult to get a professional job in Canada. On the other hand, he has quit the job that he had in Bangladesh. He cannot go back to Bangladesh now. If he goes back to Bangladesh what he would tell to his friends and families? It is a matter of prestige for him. On the contrary, he is not satisfied with his current work in Canada. He has been trapped in a situation where it is very difficult for him to do well in the labour market. Reza said,

“I am in deep trouble regarding my future....I have left my job in Bangladesh for immigrating to Canada...now I am not getting any job here in Canada.....In such a situation it is difficult for me to go back to Bangladesh.....I will continue to apply for professional jobs....and will also continue to work in Tim Hortons.....If I do not get a professional job in Canada....I will prefer to go back to Bangladesh within few years....I am quite disappointed”..

Escaped: Zaman did not get a professional job in Canada. He obtained educational degrees both from Bangladesh and Canada. He is confident about getting a professional job. He believes that there is no discrimination in the Canadian labour market based on gender, colour or ethnic origin. He has a clear conception about the system of employment in Canada. He will try hard to get a better job. He believes that if he gets one professional job then he will get jobs one after another. He is not trapped in that sense. Even if he goes back to Bangladesh, he would be able to get a

better job and earn more money. Zaman said,

“Previous experience might be a factor.....and the jobs that I have applied for were very specific and relevant in the context of my educational background....so I have the confidence that I would be able to do those works accordingly....there are no scope of doubt about my capability” .

Jerin came to Canada under spouse category. Her expectation for a professional job is relatively lower than other skilled immigrants. She will try to get a better job in Canada otherwise would go back to Bangladesh. She is not in trapped in this sense.

Mesbah is satisfied with his current occupation. He will try to complete some other courses for his professional development. He is confident of getting a better job in future in Canada. He has an educational background both from abroad and in Canada.

Discussion

The increasing number of skilled immigrants during 1984-2008 suggests that Canada would receive more immigrants in coming years. Pattern of skilled immigrants by gender indicates that both males and females have equal opportunities of getting immigration to Canada.

It is evident that majority skilled immigrants intended to work in professional jobs. However, studies on the labor market participation of immigrants in Canada (e.g., Heibert, 1999; Norcliffe and Liu, 1996; Murdie, 1998; Pratt, 1997) showed that a vast majority of immigrants were likely to be employed in non-professional jobs, which ultimately led to lower levels of income as compared to the native-born. In connection with this, Boyd (1984) examined the occupational status of Canadian female immigrant employees in relation to the status displayed by native born women and by native and foreign born men. Essentially, what Boyd (1984) found was that both male and female immigrants had lower occupational status compared to their respective native-born counterparts.

Analysis of primary data shows that all of the selected immigrants came to Canada with an expectation of getting a professional job in Canada. None of them obtained their expected job in Canada. All of the four interviewees are working in non-professional jobs. All of them are frustrated to some extent for not getting their expected job. Reza, Zaman, and Mesbah came to Canada under skilled workers category. Hence, they have higher expectation of getting a professional job compared to Jerin who came to Canada under skilled workers' spouse and dependents category. In this case, the level and intensity of frustration is relatively lower for Jerin for not getting expected job than other skilled workers like Reza, Mesbah, or Zaman. Reza is trapped in such a situation where he finds it difficult to overcome. On the other hand, Zaman and Mesbah are in escaped position in terms of their future career in Canada. This is the reality.

Therefore, immigrants who obtained their education both in Bangladesh and in Canada are in much better position in the Canadian labour market than those who obtained their education only in Bangladesh. Previous research shows that the later group is disadvantaged in the labour market because their educational credentials are not recognized by the Canadian employers. Prior work experience in relevant sectors in Canada is also an asset in getting professional jobs for immigrants in Canada. This premise is consistent with recent research report conducted by Anisef et al. (2010) who examined whether or not different postsecondary pathways lead to successful employment outcomes among recent immigrants with prior university education. They found that those who obtained further job related training or education in Canada were more likely to improve their employment status in Canada compared to those who did not seek any job-related training and education in Canada. The authors argued that proper initiatives should be taken to ensure education and job related experience of adult immigrants so that they can effectively integrate themselves into the Canadian labour market.

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Conclusion

We did not look at the occupational success of second generation immigrants (i.e., immigrants' children who were born in Canada). A comparative analysis of occupational performance of first generation immigrants and second generation immigrants might provide better picture about the determinants of occupational success in the Canadian labour market. In future research, also specific focus should be given on assessing the impact of language proficiency (both English and French) on the occupational success of immigrants in the Canadian labour market.

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